

2 Maccabees 12:43-46

A reading from the second book of Maccabees

Judas, the ruler of Israel,
then took up a collection among all his soldiers,
amounting to two thousand silver drachmas,
which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice.
In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way,
inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view;
for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again,
it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death.
But, if he did this with a view to the splendid reward
that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness,
it was a holy and pious thought.
Thus he made atonement for the dead
that they might be freed from this sin.

The Word of the Lord.

Job 19:1,23-27

A reading from the book of Job

Job said:

“Ah, would that these words of mine were written down,
inscribed on some monument
with iron chisel and engraving tool,
cut into the rock forever.

This I know: that my avenger lives,
and He, the Last, will take his stand on earth.
After my awaking, He will set me close to Him,
and from my flesh I shall look on God.

He whom I shall see will take my part:
these eyes will gaze on Him and find Him not aloof.”

The Word of the Lord.

Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31

A reading from the book of Proverbs

A capable wife who can find?
She is far more precious than jewels.
The heart of her husband trusts in her,
and he will have no lack of gain.
She does him good, and not harm,
all the days of her life.
This fine woman seeks wool and flax,
and works with willing hands.

A good wife puts her hands to the distaff,
and her hands hold the spindle.
She opens her hand to the poor,
and reaches out her hands to the needy.

Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain,
but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
Give her a share in the fruit of her hands,
and let her works praise her in the city gates.

The Word of the Lord.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes

For everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones,
and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to seek, and a time to lose;
time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

A time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

What gain have the workers from their toil?
I have seen the business
that God has given to everyone to be busy with.
He has made everything suitable for its time;
moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds,
yet they cannot find out what God has done
from the beginning to the end.

The Word of the Lord.

Song of Songs 2:8-14

A reading from the Song of Songs

The voice of my beloved!
Look, he comes,
leaping upon the mountains,
bounding over the hills.
My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag.
Look, there he stands behind our wall,
gazing in at the windows,
looking through the lattice.

My beloved speaks and says to me:
“Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away;
for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.
The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.

“Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.
O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,
in the covert of the cliff,
let me see your face,
let me hear your voice;
for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.”

The Word of the Lord.

Song of Songs 8:6-7

A reading from the Song of Songs

The bride speaks of her beloved:

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm;
for love is strong as death, passion fierce as the grave.
Love's flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame.
Many waters cannot quench love,
neither can floods drown it.
If one offered for love all the wealth of his house,
it would be utterly scorned.

The Word of the Lord.

Wisdom 3:1-9

A reading from the book of Wisdom

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,
and no torment will ever touch them.
In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died,
and their departure was thought to be a disaster,
and their going from us to be their destruction;
but the righteous are at peace.
For though in the sight of others they were punished,
their hope is full of immortality.
Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good,
because God tested them and found them worthy of Himself;
like gold in the furnace He tried them,
and like a sacrificial burnt offering He accepted them.
In the time of their visitation the righteous will shine forth,
and will run like sparks through the stubble.
They will govern nations and rule over peoples,
and the Lord will reign over them forever.
Those who trust in Him will understand truth,
and the faithful will abide in Him in love,
because grace and mercy are upon His holy ones,
and the Lord watches over His elect.

The Word of the Lord.

Wisdom 3:1-6,9

Short Form

A reading from the book of Wisdom

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,
and no torment will ever touch them.

In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died,
and their departure was thought to be a disaster,
and their going from us to be their destruction;
but the righteous are at peace.

For though in the sight of others they were punished,
their hope is full of immortality.

Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good,
because God tested them and found them worthy of Himself;
like gold in the furnace He tried them,
and like a sacrificial burnt offering He accepted them.

Those who trust in Him will understand truth,
and the faithful will abide in Him in love,
because grace and mercy are upon His holy ones,
and the Lord watches over His elect.

The Word of the Lord.

Wisdom 4:7-15

A reading from the book of Wisdom

But the just man, though he die early, shall be at rest.

For the age that is honorable comes not with the passing of time,
nor can it be measured in terms of years.

Rather, understanding is the hoary crown for men,
and an unsullied life, the attainment of old age.

He who pleased God was loved;
he who lived among sinners was transported—

Snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind or
deceit beguile his soul;

For the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right
and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent mind.

Having become perfect in a short while, he reached the fullness
of a long career;

for his soul was pleasing to the Lord,
therefore He sped him out of the midst of wickedness.

But the people saw and did not understand,
nor did they take this into account.

Because grace and mercy are with His holy ones,
and His care is with His elect.

The Word of the Lord.

Sirach 44:10-15

A reading from the book of Sirach

These were godly people,
whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten;
their wealth will remain with their descendants,
and their inheritance with their children's children.

Their descendants stand by the covenants;
their children also, for their sake.
Their offspring will continue forever,
and their glory will never be blotted out.

Their bodies are buried in peace,
but their name lives on generation after generation.
The assembly declares their wisdom,
and the congregation proclaims their praise.

The Word of the Lord.

Sirach 51:8-12

A reading from the book of Sirach

I remember the mercies of the Lord, His kindness through ages past;
For He saves those who take refuge in Him,
and rescues them from every evil.
So I raised my voice from the very earth,
from the gates of the nether world, my cry.
I called out: "O Lord, You are my father,
You are my champion and my savior;
Do not abandon me in time of trouble,
in the midst of storms and dangers.
I will ever praise Your name
and be constant in my prayers to You.
Thereupon the Lord heard my voice,
He listened to my appeal;
He saved me from evil of every kind
and preserved me in time of trouble.
For this reason I thank Him and I praise Him;
I bless the name of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 25:6-9

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

On this mountain the Lord of Hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,
of rich food filled with marrow,
of well-aged wines strained clear.

The Lord God will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;
He will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of His people
He will take away from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.

It will be said on that day,
“Lo, this is our God;
we have waited for Him,
so that He might save us.

This is the Lord for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation.”

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 35:1-6a,10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.”
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 41:8-10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

But you, Israel, my servant,
Jacob, whom I have chosen,
the offspring of Abraham, my friend;
you whom I took from the ends of the earth,
and called from its farthest corners,
saying to you, “You are my servant,
I have chosen you and not cast you off”;
do not fear, for I am with you,
do not be afraid for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 57:15-19

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

For thus says the high and lofty one
who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:
I dwell in the high and holy place,
and also with those who are contrite and humble in spirit,
to revive the spirit of the humble,
and to revive the heart of the contrite.
For I will not continually accuse,
nor will I always be angry;
for then the spirits would grow faint before me,
even the souls that I have made.
Because of their wicked
covetousness I was angry;
I struck them, I hid and was angry;
but they kept turning back to their own ways.
I have seen their ways, but I will heal them;
I will lead them and repay them with comfort,
creating for their mourners the fruit of the lips.
Peace, peace, to the far and the near, says the Lord;
and I will heal them.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 61:1-3

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

The servant of the Lord said:

“The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
He has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion —
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 65:17-21

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord:

I am about to create new heavens and a new earth;
the former things shall not be remembered
or come to mind.

But be glad and rejoice forever
in what I am creating;
for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy,
and its people as a delight.

I will rejoice in Jerusalem,
and delight in my people;
no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it,
or the cry of distress.

No more shall there be in it
an infant that lives but a few days,
or an old person who does not live out a lifetime;
for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth,
and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed.
They shall build houses and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

The Word of the Lord.

Lamentations 3:17-26

A reading from the book of Lamentations

My soul is bereft of peace;
I have forgotten what happiness is;
so I say, "Gone is my glory,
and all that I had hoped for from the Lord."

The thought of my affliction and my homelessness
is wormwood and gall!
My soul continually thinks of it
and is bowed down within me.
But this I call to mind,
and therefore I have hope:

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is Your faithfulness.
"The Lord is my portion," says my soul,
"therefore I will hope in Him."

The Lord is good to those who wait for him,
to the soul that seeks him.
It is good that one should wait quietly
for the salvation of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Ezekiel 34:11-16

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel

Thus says the Lord God:

“I myself will search for my sheep,
and will seek them out.

As shepherds seek out their flocks
when they are among their scattered sheep,
so I will seek out my sheep.

I will rescue them from all the places
to which they have been scattered
on a day of clouds and thick darkness.

“I will bring them out from the peoples
and gather them from the countries,
and will bring them into their own land;
and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel,
by the watercourses,
and in all the inhabited parts of the land.

“I will feed them with a good pasture,
and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture;
there they shall lie down in good grazing land,
and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

“I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep,
and I will make them lie down,”
says the Lord God.

“I will seek the lost,
and I will bring back the strayed,
and I will bind up the injured,
and I will strengthen the weak.
I will feed my sheep with justice.”

The Word of the Lord.

Ezekiel 37:12-14

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel

“Therefore prophesy, and say to them,
‘Thus says the Lord God:
I am going to open your graves,
and bring you up from your graves, O my people;
and I will bring you back to the land of Israel.

‘And you shall know that I am the Lord,
when I open your graves,
and bring you up from your graves, O my people.

‘I will put My Spirit within you, and you shall live,
and I will place you on your own soil;
then you shall know that I, the Lord,
have spoken and will act,’” says the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Daniel 12:1-3

A reading from the book of the prophet Daniel

“At that time Michael, the great prince,
the protector of your people, shall arise.
There shall be a time of anguish
such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence.
But at that time your people shall be delivered,
everyone who is found written in the book.
Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,
some to the everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky,
and those who lead many to righteousness,
like the stars forever and ever.

The Word of the Lord.

Micah 6:6-8

A reading from the book of the prophet Micah

“With what shall I come before the Lord,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

“Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

The Word of the Lord.

Zephaniah 3:16-20

A reading from the book of the prophet Zephaniah

On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
The Lord, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
He will rejoice over you with gladness,
He will renew you in His love;
He will exult over you with loud singing
as on a day of festival.
I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.
I will deal with all your oppressors at that time.
And I will save the lame and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.
At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the people of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.