

Psalm and Readings Thursday 24th June 2021

Psalm 50

The mighty one, God the Lord,
speaks and summons the earth
from the rising of the sun to its setting.
Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God shines forth.
Our God comes and does not keep silence,
before him is a devouring fire,
and a mighty tempest all around him.
He calls to the heavens above
and to the earth, that he may judge his people:
'Gather to me my faithful ones,
who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!'
The heavens declare his righteousness,
for God himself is judge.
'Hear, O my people, and I will speak,
O Israel, I will testify against you.
I am God, your God.
Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you;
your burnt-offerings are continually before me.
I will not accept a bull from your house,
or goats from your folds.
For every wild animal of the forest is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.
I know all the birds of the air,
and all that moves in the field is mine.
'If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
for the world and all that is in it is mine.
Do I eat the flesh of bulls,
or drink the blood of goats?
Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and pay your vows to the Most High.
Call on me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.'
But to the wicked God says:
'What right have you to recite my statutes,
or take my covenant on your lips?
For you hate discipline,
and you cast my words behind you.
You make friends with a thief when you see one,
and you keep company with adulterers.
'You give your mouth free rein for evil,
and your tongue frames deceit.

You sit and speak against your kin;
you slander your own mother's child.
These things you have done and I have been
silent;
you thought that I was one just like yourself.
But now I rebuke you, and lay the charge before
you.
'Mark this, then, you who forget God,
or I will tear you apart, and there will be no one
to deliver.
Those who bring thanksgiving as their sacrifice
honour me;
to those who go the right way
I will show the salvation of God.'

Malachi 3: 1-6

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the
way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will
suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of
the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is
coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can
endure the day of his coming, and who can stand
when he appears?
For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers'
soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver,
and he will purify the descendants of Levi and
refine them like gold and silver, until they present
offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the
offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing
to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former
years.
Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will
be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers,
against the adulterers, against those who swear
falsely, against those who oppress the hired
workers in their wages, the widow, and the
orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien,
and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.
For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O
children of Jacob, have not perished.

Luke 3: 1-17

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'" John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'

And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.'

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'