

Psalm and Readings Tuesday 12th October 2021

Psalm 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and do not forget all his benefits—
who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the Pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
who satisfies you with good as long as you live
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord works vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.
He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.
The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger for ever.
He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love towards those who
fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from us.
As a father has compassion for his children,
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear
him.
For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.
As for mortals, their days are like grass;
they flourish like a flower of the field;
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
and its place knows it no more.
But the steadfast love of the Lord is from
everlasting to everlasting
on those who fear him,
and his righteousness to children's children,
to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his commandments.

The Lord has established his throne in the
heavens,
and his kingdom rules over all.
Bless the Lord, O you his angels,
you mighty ones who do his bidding,
obedient to his spoken word.
Bless the Lord, all his hosts,
his ministers that do his will.
Bless the Lord, all his works,
in all places of his dominion.
Bless the Lord, O my soul.

1 Maccabees 6:18–47

Meanwhile the garrison in the citadel kept hemming Israel in around the sanctuary. They were trying in every way to harm them and strengthen the Gentiles. Judas therefore resolved to destroy them, and assembled all the people to besiege them. They gathered together and besieged the citadel in the one hundred and fiftieth year; and he built siege-towers and other engines of war. But some of the garrison escaped from the siege and some of the ungodly Israelites joined them. They went to the king and said, 'How long will you fail to do justice and to avenge our kindred? We were happy to serve your father, to live by what he said, and to follow his commands. For this reason the sons of our people besieged the citadel and became hostile to us; moreover, they have put to death as many of us as they have caught, and they have seized our inheritances. It is not against us alone that they have stretched out their hands; they have also attacked all the lands on their borders. And see, today they have encamped against the citadel in Jerusalem to take it; they have fortified both the sanctuary and Beth-zur; unless you quickly prevent them, they will do still greater things, and you will not be able to stop them.'

The king was enraged when he heard this. He assembled all his Friends, the commanders of his forces and those in authority. Mercenary forces also came to him from other kingdoms and from

islands of the seas. The number of his forces was one hundred thousand foot-soldiers, twenty thousand horsemen, and thirty-two elephants accustomed to war. They came through Idumea and encamped against Beth-zur, and for many days they fought and built engines of war; but the Jews sallied out and burned these with fire, and fought courageously.

Then Judas marched away from the citadel and encamped at Beth-zechariah, opposite the camp of the king. Early in the morning the king set out and took his army by a forced march along the road to Beth-zechariah, and his troops made ready for battle and sounded their trumpets. They offered the elephants the juice of grapes and mulberries, to arouse them for battle. They distributed the animals among the phalanxes; with each elephant they stationed a thousand men armed with coats of mail, and with brass helmets on their heads; and five hundred picked horsemen were assigned to each beast. These took their position beforehand wherever the animal was; wherever it went, they went with it, and they never left it. On the elephants were wooden towers, strong and covered; they were fastened on each animal by special harness, and on each were four armed men who fought from there, and also its Indian driver. The rest of the cavalry were stationed on either side, on the two flanks of the army, to harass the enemy while being themselves protected by the phalanxes. When the sun shone on the shields of gold and brass, the hills were ablaze with them and gleamed like flaming torches.

Now a part of the king's army was spread out on the high hills, and some troops were on the plain, and they advanced steadily and in good order. All who heard the noise made by their multitude, by the marching of the multitude and the clanking of their arms, trembled, for the army was very large and strong. But Judas and his army advanced to the battle, and six hundred of the king's army fell. Now Eleazar, called Avaran, saw that one of the animals was equipped with royal armour. It was taller than all the others, and he supposed that the king was on it. So he gave his life to save his people and to win for himself an everlasting

name. He courageously ran into the midst of the phalanx to reach it; he killed men right and left, and they parted before him on both sides. He got under the elephant, stabbed it from beneath, and killed it; but it fell to the ground upon him and he died. When the Jews saw the royal might and the fierce attack of the forces, they turned away in flight.

John 13:12–20

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But it is to fulfil the scripture, "The one who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me." I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am he. Very truly, I tell you, whoever receives one whom I send receives me; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.'