

## Psalm and Readings Thursday 7th December 2023

### Psalm 42

As a deer longs for flowing streams,  
so my soul longs for you, O God.  
My soul thirsts for God,  
for the living God.  
When shall I come and behold  
the face of God?  
My tears have been my food  
day and night,  
while people say to me continually,  
'Where is your God?'

These things I remember,  
as I pour out my soul:  
how I went with the throng,  
and led them in procession to the house of  
God,  
with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving,  
a multitude keeping festival.  
Why are you cast down, O my soul,  
and why are you disquieted within me?  
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,  
my help and my God.

My soul is cast down within me;  
therefore I remember you  
from the land of Jordan and of Hermon,  
from Mount Mizar.  
Deep calls to deep  
at the thunder of your cataracts;  
all your waves and your billows  
have gone over me.  
By day the Lord commands his steadfast love,  
and at night his song is with me,  
a prayer to the God of my life.

I say to God, my rock,  
'Why have you forgotten me?  
Why must I walk about mournfully  
because the enemy oppresses me?'  
As with a deadly wound in my body,  
my adversaries taunt me,  
while they say to me continually,  
'Where is your God?'

Why are you cast down, O my soul,  
and why are you disquieted within me?  
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,  
my help and my God.

### Isaiah 28:14-end

Therefore hear the word of the Lord, you scoffers  
who rule this people in Jerusalem.  
Because you have said, 'We have made a  
covenant with death,  
and with Sheol we have an agreement;  
when the overwhelming scourge passes through  
it will not come to us;  
for we have made lies our refuge,  
and in falsehood we have taken shelter';  
therefore thus says the Lord God,  
See, I am laying in Zion a foundation stone,  
a tested stone,  
a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation:  
'One who trusts will not panic.'  
And I will make justice the line,  
and righteousness the plummet;  
hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,  
and waters will overwhelm the shelter.  
Then your covenant with death will be annulled,  
and your agreement with Sheol will not stand;  
when the overwhelming scourge passes through  
you will be beaten down by it.  
As often as it passes through, it will take you;  
for morning by morning it will pass through,  
by day and by night;  
and it will be sheer terror to understand the  
message.  
For the bed is too short to stretch oneself on it,  
and the covering too narrow to wrap oneself in  
it.  
For the Lord will rise up as on Mount Perazim,  
he will rage as in the valley of Gibeon  
to do his deed—strange is his deed!—  
and to work his work—alien is his work!  
Now therefore do not scoff,  
or your bonds will be made stronger;  
for I have heard a decree of destruction  
from the Lord God of hosts upon the whole  
land.

Listen, and hear my voice;  
Pay attention, and hear my speech.  
Do those who plough for sowing plough  
continually?  
Do they continually open and harrow their  
ground?  
When they have levelled its surface,  
do they not scatter dill, sow cummin,  
and plant wheat in rows

and barley in its proper place,  
and spelt as the border?  
For they are well instructed;  
their God teaches them.

Dill is not threshed with a threshing-sledge,  
nor is a cartwheel rolled over cummin;  
but dill is beaten out with a stick,  
and cummin with a rod.

Grain is crushed for bread,  
but one does not thresh it for ever;  
one drives the cartwheel and horses over it,  
but does not pulverize it.  
This also comes from the Lord of hosts;  
he is wonderful in counsel,  
and excellent in wisdom.

#### **Matthew 13:1-23**

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!'

Then the disciples came and asked him, 'Why do you speak to them in parables?' He answered, 'To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. The reason I speak to them in parables is that "seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand." With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says:

"You will indeed listen, but never understand,  
and you will indeed look, but never perceive.  
For this people's heart has grown dull,  
and their ears are hard of hearing,  
and they have shut their eyes;  
so that they might not look with their eyes,  
and listen with their ears,  
and understand with their heart and turn—  
and I would heal them."

But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.

'Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

#### **The Collect of the Day**

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and for ever.  
Amen