

Psalm and Readings Tuesday 5th December 2023

Psalm 80

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine
forth
before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.
Stir up your might, and come to save us!

Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry
with your people's prayers?
You have fed them with the bread of tears,
and given them tears to drink in full measure.
You make us the scorn of our neighbours;
our enemies laugh among themselves.

Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

You brought a vine out of Egypt;
you drove out the nations and planted it.
You cleared the ground for it;
it took deep root and filled the land.
The mountains were covered with its shade,
the mighty cedars with its branches;
it sent out its branches to the sea,
and its shoots to the River.
Why then have you broken down its walls,
so that all who pass along the way pluck its
fruit?
The boar from the forest ravages it,
and all that move in the field feed on it.

Turn again, O God of hosts;
look down from heaven, and see;
have regard for this vine,
the stock that your right hand planted.
They have burned it with fire, they have cut it
down;
may they perish at the rebuke of your
countenance.
But let your hand be upon the one at your right
hand,
the one whom you made strong for yourself.
Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name.

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Isaiah 26:1-13

The oracle concerning the valley of vision.

What do you mean that you have gone up,
On that day this song will be sung in the land of
Judah:

We have a strong city;
he sets up victory like walls and bulwarks.
Open the gates, so that the righteous nation that
keeps faith may enter in.
Those of steadfast mind you keep in peace—
in peace because they trust in you.
Trust in the Lord for ever,
for in the Lord God
you have an everlasting rock.
For he has brought low
the inhabitants of the height;
the lofty city he lays low.
He lays it low to the ground, casts it to the dust.
The foot tramples it,
the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy.

The way of the righteous is level;
O Just One, you make smooth the path of the
righteous.
In the path of your judgements,
O Lord, we wait for you;
your name and your renown are the soul's desire.
My soul yearns for you in the night,
my spirit within me earnestly seeks you.
For when your judgements are in the earth,
the inhabitants of the world learn
righteousness.
If favour is shown to the wicked,
they do not learn righteousness;
in the land of uprightness they deal perversely
and do not see the majesty of the Lord.
O Lord, your hand is lifted up,
but they do not see it.
Let them see your zeal for your people, and be
ashamed.

Let the fire for your adversaries consume them.
O Lord, you will ordain peace for us,
for indeed, all that we have done, you have
done for us.
O Lord our God,
other lords besides you have ruled over us,
but we acknowledge your name alone.

Matthew 12:22-37

Then they brought to him a demoniac who was blind and mute; and he cured him, so that the one who had been mute could speak and see. All the crowds were amazed and said, 'Can this be the Son of David?' But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, 'It is only by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons, that this fellow casts out the demons.' He knew what they were thinking and said to them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own exorcists cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his property, without first tying up the strong man? Then indeed the house can be plundered. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. Therefore I tell you, people will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

'Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person brings good things out of a good treasure, and the evil person brings evil things out of an evil treasure. I tell you, on the day of judgement you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter; for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.'

The Collect of the Day

Almighty God,
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness
and to put on the armour of light,
now in the time of this mortal life,
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great
humility;
that on the last day,
when he shall come again in his glorious majesty
to judge the living and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen