

Psalm and Readings Friday 8th December 2023

Psalm 25

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
O my God, in you I trust;
do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.
Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all day long.

Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.
Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness' sake, O Lord!

Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.
All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

For your name's sake, O Lord,
pardon my guilt, for it is great.
Who are they that fear the Lord?
He will teach them the way that they should choose.

They will abide in prosperity,
and their children shall possess the land.
The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him, and he makes his covenant known to them.
My eyes are ever towards the Lord,
for he will pluck my feet out of the net.

Turn to me and be gracious to me,
for I am lonely and afflicted.
Relieve the troubles of my heart,
and bring me out of my distress.

Consider my affliction and my trouble,
and forgive all my sins.

Consider how many are my foes,
and with what violent hatred they hate me.
O guard my life, and deliver me;
do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.
May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I wait for you.

Redeem Israel, O God,
out of all its troubles.

Isaiah 29:1-14

Ah, Ariel, Ariel, the city where David encamped!
Add year to year; let the festivals run their round.
Yet I will distress Ariel,
and there shall be moaning and lamentation,
and Jerusalem shall be to me like an Ariel.
And like David I will encamp against you;
I will besiege you with towers
and raise siege-works against you.
Then deep from the earth you shall speak,
from low in the dust your words shall come;
your voice shall come from the ground like the voice of a ghost,
and your speech shall whisper out of the dust.

But the multitude of your foes shall be like fine dust,
and the multitude of tyrants like flying chaff.
And in an instant, suddenly,
you will be visited by the Lord of hosts
with thunder and earthquake and great noise,
with whirlwind and tempest, and the flame of a devouring fire.
And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel,
all that fight against her and her stronghold,
and who distress her,
shall be like a dream, a vision of the night.
Just as when a hungry person dreams of eating
and wakes up still hungry,
or a thirsty person dreams of drinking
and wakes up faint, still thirsty,
so shall the multitude of all the nations be
that fight against Mount Zion.

Stupefy yourselves and be in a stupor,
blind yourselves and be blind!

Be drunk, but not from wine;
stagger, but not from strong drink!
For the Lord has poured out upon you
a spirit of deep sleep;
he has closed your eyes, you prophets,
and covered your heads, you seers.

The vision of all this has become for you like the words of a sealed document. If it is given to those who can read, with the command, 'Read this', they say, 'We cannot, for it is sealed.' And if it is given to those who cannot read, saying, 'Read this', they say, 'We cannot read.'

The Lord said:
Because these people draw near with their mouths and honour me with their lips,
while their hearts are far from me,
and their worship of me is a human commandment learned by rote;
so I will again do amazing things with this people,
shocking and amazing.
The wisdom of their wise shall perish,
and the discernment of the discerning shall be hidden.

Matthew 13:24-43

He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?" He answered, "An enemy has done this." The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that

someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'

Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. This was to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet:

'I will open my mouth to speak in parables;
I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world.'

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.' He answered, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

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