

Psalm and Readings Thursday 18th December 2025

Psalm 76

In Judah God is known, his name is great in Israel.
His abode has been established in Salem,
his dwelling-place in Zion.

There he broke the flashing arrows,
the shield, the sword, and the weapons of war.

Glorious are you, more majestic
than the everlasting mountains.
The stout-hearted were stripped of their spoil;
they sank into sleep;
none of the troops was able to lift a hand.
At your rebuke, O God of Jacob,
both rider and horse lay stunned.

But you indeed are awesome!
Who can stand before you
when once your anger is roused?
From the heavens you uttered judgement;
the earth feared and was still
when God rose up to establish judgement,
to save all the oppressed of the earth.

Human wrath serves only to praise you,
when you bind the last bit of your wrath
around you.
Make vows to the Lord your God, and perform
them;
let all who are around him bring gifts to the one
who is awesome,
who cuts off the spirit of princes, who inspires
fear in the kings of the earth.

Zephaniah 1:1 – 2:3

The word of the Lord that came to Zephaniah son
of Cushi son of Gedaliah son of Amariah son of
Hezekiah, in the days of King Josiah son of Amon
of Judah.

I will utterly sweep away everything
from the face of the earth, says the Lord.
I will sweep away humans and animals;
I will sweep away the birds of the air
and the fish of the sea.
I will make the wicked stumble.
I will cut off humanity
from the face of the earth, says the Lord.
I will stretch out my hand against Judah,
and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

and I will cut off from this place every remnant of
Baal and the name of the idolatrous priests;
those who bow down on the roofs
to the host of the heavens;
those who bow down and swear to the Lord,
but also swear by Milcom;
those who have turned back from following the
Lord, who have not sought the Lord or inquired
of him.

Be silent before the Lord God!
For the day of the Lord is at hand;
the Lord has prepared a sacrifice,
he has consecrated his guests.
And on the day of the Lord's sacrifice
I will punish the officials and the king's sons
and all who dress themselves in foreign attire.
On that day I will punish
all who leap over the threshold,
who fill their master's house
with violence and fraud.

On that day, says the Lord,
a cry will be heard from the Fish Gate,
a wail from the Second Quarter,
a loud crash from the hills.
The inhabitants of the Mortar wail,
for all the traders have perished;
all who weigh out silver are cut off.
At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people
who rest complacently on their dregs,
those who say in their hearts,
'The Lord will not do good, nor will he do harm.'
Their wealth shall be plundered,
and their houses laid waste.
Though they build houses,
they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine from them.

The great day of the Lord is near,
near and hastening fast;
the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter,
the warrior cries aloud there.
That day will be a day of wrath,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
a day of trumpet blast and battle cry

against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.

I will bring such distress upon people
that they shall walk like the blind;
because they have sinned against the Lord,
their blood shall be poured out like dust,
and their flesh like dung.
Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the Lord's wrath;
in the fire of his passion
the whole earth shall be consumed;
for a full, a terrible end
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Gather together, gather, O shameless nation,
before you are driven away like the drifting chaff,
before there comes upon you
the fierce anger of the Lord,
before there comes upon you
the day of the Lord's wrath.
Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land,
who do his commands;
seek righteousness, seek humility;
perhaps you may be hidden
on the day of the Lord's wrath.

Matthew 17:22-end

As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, 'The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised.' And they were greatly distressed.

When they reached Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax came to Peter and said, 'Does your teacher not pay the temple tax?' He said, 'Yes, he does.' And when he came home, Jesus spoke of it first, asking, 'What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tribute? From their children or from others?' When Peter said, 'From others', Jesus said to him, 'Then the children are free. However, so that we do not give offence to them, go to the lake and cast a hook; take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a coin; take that and give it to them for you and me.'

The Collect of the Day

O Lord Jesus Christ,
who at your first coming sent your messenger
to prepare your way before you:
grant that the ministers and stewards of your
mysteries may likewise so prepare and make
ready your way
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the
wisdom of the just,
that at your second coming to judge the world
we may be found an acceptable people in your
sight;
for you are alive and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.