

2 Maccabees 12:43-46

A reading from the book of Maccabees

Judas, the ruler of Israel,
then took up a collection among all his soldiers,
amounting to two thousand silver drachmas,
which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice.
In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way,
inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view;
for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again,
it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death.
But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward
that awaits those who had gone to rest in Godliness,
it was a holy and pious thought.
Thus he made atonement for the dead
that they might be freed from this sin.

The Word of the Lord.

Job 19:1, 23-27

A reading from the book of Job

Then Job answered and said:

Oh, would that my words were written down!

Would that they were inscribed in a record:

That with an iron chisel and with lead

they were cut in the rock forever!

But as for me, I know that my Vindicator lives,

and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust;

And from my flesh I shall see God;

my inmost being is consumed with longing.

Whom I myself shall see:

my own eyes, not another's, shall behold him,

The Word of the Lord.

Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31

A reading from the book of Proverbs

When one finds a worthy wife,
her value is far beyond pearls.
Her husband, entrusting his heart to her,
has an unfailing prize.
She brings him good, and not evil,
all the days of her life.
She obtains wool and flax
and makes cloth with skillful hands.

She puts her hands to the distaff,
and her fingers ply the spindle.
She reaches out her hands to the poor,
and extends her arms to the needy.

Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting;
the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
Give her a reward of her labors,
and let her works praise her at the city gates.

The Word of the Lord.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes

There is an appointed time for everything,
and a time for every affair under the heavens.
A time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to tear down, and a time to build.
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance.
A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them;
a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.
A time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away.
A time to rend, and a time to sew;
a time to be silent, and a time to speak.
A time to love, and a time to hate;
a time of war, and a time of peace.

What advantage has the worker from his toil?
I have considered the task
which God has appointed for men to be busied about.
He has made everything appropriate to its time,
and has put the timeless into their hearts,
without men's ever discovering, from beginning to end,
the work which God has done.

The Word of the Lord.

Song of Songs 2:8-14

A reading from the Song of Songs

Hark! my lover — here he comes
springing across the mountains,
leaping across the hills.
My lover is like a gazelle or a young stag.
Here he stands behind our wall,
gazing through the windows,
peering through the lattices.

My lover speaks; he says to me,
"Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!
For see, the winter is past,
the rains are over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth,
the time of pruning the vines has come,
and the song of the dove is heard in our land.
The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines, in bloom,
give forth fragrance.

"Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!
O my dove in the clefts of the rock,
in the secret recesses of the cliff,
let me see you,
let me hear your voice,
for your voice is sweet,
and you are lovely."

The Word of the Lord.

Song of Songs 8:6-7

A reading from the Song of Songs

The bride speaks of her beloved:
Set me as a seal on your heart,
as a seal on your arm;
For stern as death is love,
relentless as the nether world is devotion;
its flames are a blazing fire.
Deep waters cannot quench love,
nor floods sweep it away.
Were one to offer all he owns to purchase love,
he would be roundly mocked.

The Word of the Lord.

Wisdom 3:1-9

A reading from the book of Wisdom

But the souls of the just are in the hand of God,
and no torment shall touch them.

They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead;
and their passing away was thought an affliction
and their going forth from us, utter destruction.

But they are in peace.

For if before men, indeed, they be punished,
yet is their hope full of immortality;
Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed,
because God tried them
and found them worthy of himself.

As gold in the furnace, he proved them,
and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.

In the time of their visitation they shall shine,
and shall dart about as sparks through stubble;
They shall judge nations and rule over peoples,
and the Lord shall be their King forever.

Those who trust in him shall understand truth,
and the faithful shall abide with him in love:
Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones,
and his care is with the elect.

The Word of the Lord.

Wisdom 3:1-6, 9

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The Word of the Lord.

Wisdom 4:7-15

A reading from the book of Wisdom

But the just man, though he die early, shall be at rest.

For the age that is honorable comes not with the passing of time,
nor can it be measured in terms of years.
Rather, understanding passes for gray hair,
and an unsullied life is the attainment of old age.

He who pleased God was loved;
he who lived among sinners was transported--
Snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind
or deceit beguile his soul;
For the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right
and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent mind.

Having become perfect in a short while,
he reached the fullness of a long career;
for his soul was pleasing to the Lord,
therefore he sped him out of the midst of wickedness.
But the people saw and did not understand,
nor did they take that consideration into account.
Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones,
and his care is with the elect

The Word of the Lord.

Sirach 44:10-15

A reading from the book of Sirach

Yet these also were Godly men
whose virtues have not been forgotten;
Their wealth remains in their families,
their heritage with their descendants;

Through God's covenant with them their family endures,
their posterity, for their sake.
And for all time their progeny will endure,
their glory will never be blotted out;

Their bodies are peacefully laid away,
but their name lives on and on.
At gatherings their wisdom is retold,
and the assembly proclaims their praise.

The Word of the Lord.

Sirach 51:8-12

A reading from the book of Sirach

But then I remembered the mercies of the Lord,
his kindness through ages past;
For he saves those who take refuge in him,
and rescues them from every evil.
So I raised my voice from the very earth,
from the gates of the nether world, my cry.
I called out: O Lord, you are my father,
you are my champion and my savior;
Do not abandon me in time of trouble,
in the midst of storms and dangers.
I will ever praise your name
and be constant in my prayers to you.
Thereupon the Lord heard my voice,
he listened to my appeal;
He saved me from evil of every kind
and preserved me in time of trouble.
For this reason I thank him and I praise him;
I bless the name of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 25:6-9

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples
A feast of rich food and choice wines,
juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines.
On this mountain he will destroy
the veil that veils all peoples,
The web that is woven over all nations;
he will destroy death forever.
The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces;
The reproach of his people
he will remove from the whole earth;
for the Lord has spoken.
On that day it will be said:
"Behold our God,
to whom we looked to save us!
This is the Lord for whom we looked;
let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!"

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

The desert and the parched land will exult;
the steppe will rejoice and bloom.
They will bloom with abundant flowers,
and rejoice with joyful song.
The glory of Lebanon will be given to them,
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon;
They will see the glory of the Lord,
the splendor of our God.

Strengthen the hands that are feeble,
make firm the knees that are weak,
Say to those whose hearts are frightened:
Be strong, fear not!
Here is your God, he comes with vindication;
With divine recompense he comes to save you.

Then will the eyes of the blind be opened,
the ears of the deaf be cleared;
Then will the lame leap like a stag,
then the tongue of the dumb will sing

Those whom the Lord has ransomed
will return and enter Zion singing,
crowned with everlasting joy;
They will meet with joy and gladness,
sorrow and mourning will flee.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 41:8-10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

But you, Israel, my servant,
Jacob, whom I have chosen,
offspring of Abraham my friend--
You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth
and summoned from its far-off places,
You whom I have called my servant,
whom I have chosen and will not cast off--
Fear not, I am with you;
be not dismayed; I am your God.
I will strengthen you, and help you,
and uphold you with my right hand of justice.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 43:1-4

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob,
and formed you, O Israel:

Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name: you are mine.

When you pass through the water, I will be with you;
in the rivers you shall not drown.

When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned;
the flames shall not consume you.

For I am the Lord, your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your savior.

I give Egypt as your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in return for you.

Because you are precious in my eyes and glorious,
and because I love you,

I give men in return for you
and peoples in exchange for your life.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 57:15-19

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

For thus says he who is high and exalted,
living eternally, whose name is the Holy One:
On high I dwell, and in holiness,
and with the crushed and dejected in spirit,
To revive the spirits of the dejected,
to revive the hearts of the crushed.
I will not accuse forever, nor always be angry;
For their spirits would faint before me,
the souls that I have made.
Because of their wicked avarice I was angry,
and struck them, hiding myself in wrath,
as they went their own rebellious way.
I saw their ways,
but I will heal them and lead them;
I will give full comfort to them
and to those who mourn for them,
I, the Creator, who gave them life.
Peace, peace to the far and the near, says the Lord;
and I will heal them.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 61:1-3

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

The servant of the Lord said:

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,

because the Lord has anointed me;

He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly,

to heal the brokenhearted,

To proclaim liberty to the captives

and release to the prisoners,

To announce a year of favor from the Lord

and a day of vindication by our God,

to comfort all who mourn;

To place on those who mourn in Zion a diadem instead of ashes,

To give them oil of gladness in place of mourning,

a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit.

They will be called oaks of justice,

planted by the Lord to show his glory.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 65:17-21

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord:

Lo, I am about to create new heavens and a new earth;
The things of the past shall not be remembered
or come to mind.

Instead, there shall always be rejoicing
and happiness in what I create;
For I create Jerusalem to be a joy
and its people to be a delight;

I will rejoice in Jerusalem
and exult in my people.

No longer shall the sound of weeping be heard there,
or the sound of crying;

No longer shall there be in it
an infant who lives but a few days,
or an old man who does not round out his full lifetime;
He dies a mere youth who reaches but a hundred years,
and he who fails of a hundred shall be thought accursed.
They shall live in the houses they build,
and eat the fruit of the vineyards they plant.

The Word of the Lord.

Lamentations 3:17-26

A reading from the book of Lamentations

My soul is deprived of peace,
I have forgotten what happiness is;
I tell myself my future is lost,
all that I hoped for from the Lord.

The thought of my homeless poverty
is wormwood and gall;
Remembering it over and over
leaves my soul downcast within me.
But I will call this to mind,
as my reason to have hope:

The favors of the Lord are not exhausted,
his mercies are not spent;
They are renewed each morning,
so great is his faithfulness.
My portion is the Lord, says my soul;
therefore will I hope in him.

Good is the Lord to one who waits for him,
to the soul that seeks him;
It is good to hope in silence
for the saving help of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Ezekiel 34:11-16

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel

For thus says the Lord God:

“I myself will look after and tend my sheep.

As a shepherd tends his flock

when he finds himself among his scattered sheep,

so will I tend my sheep.

I will rescue them from every place

where they were scattered

when it was cloudy and dark.

“I will lead them out from among the peoples

and gather them from the foreign lands;

I will bring them back to their own country

and pasture them upon the mountains of Israel

in the land's ravines and all its inhabited places.

“In good pastures will I pasture them,

and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing ground.

There they shall lie down on good grazing ground,

and in rich pastures shall they be pastured on the mountains of Israel.

“I myself will pasture my sheep;

I myself will give them rest,”

says the Lord God.

“The lost I will seek out,

the strayed I will bring back,

the injured I will bind up,

the sick I will heal,

shepherding them rightly.”

The Word of the Lord.

Ezekiel 37:12-14

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel

Therefore, prophesy and say to them:

Thus says the Lord God:

O my people, I will open your graves
and have you rise from them,
and bring you back to the land of Israel.

Then you shall know that I am the Lord,
when I open your graves
and have you rise from them, O my people!

I will put my spirit in you that you may live,
and I will settle you upon your land;
thus you shall know that I am the Lord.
I have promised, and I will do it, says the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Daniel 12:1-3

A reading from the book of the prophet Daniel

"At that time there shall arise Michael, the great prince,
guardian of your people;
It shall be a time unsurpassed in distress
since nations began until that time.
At that time your people shall escape,
everyone who is found written in the book.
Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake;
some shall live forever,
others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace.
But the wise shall shine brightly
like the splendor of the firmament,
And those who lead the many to justice
shall be like the stars forever."

The Word of the Lord.

Micah 6:6-8

A reading from the book of the prophet Micah

With what shall I come before the Lord,
and bow before God most high?
Shall I come before him with holocausts,
with calves a year old?

Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with myriad streams of oil?
Shall I give my first-born for my crime,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

You have been told, O man, what is good,
and what the Lord requires of you:
Only to do the right
and to love goodness,
and to walk humbly with your God.

The Word of the Lord.

Zephaniah 3:16-20

A reading from the book of the prophet Zephaniah

On that day, it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Fear not, O Zion,
be not discouraged!

The Lord, your God, is in your midst,
a mighty savior;

He will rejoice over you with gladness,
and renew you in his love,

He will sing joyfully because of you,
as one sings at festivals.

I will remove disaster from among you,
so that none may recount your disgrace.

Yes, at that time I will deal with all who oppress you;

I will save the lame, and assemble the outcasts;

I will give them praise and renown in all the earth,
when I bring about their restoration.

At that time I will bring you home,
and at that time I will gather you;

For I will give you renown and praise,
among all the peoples of the earth,

When I bring about your restoration
before your very eyes, says the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.