

**EVENING PRAYER READINGS FOR
THE WEEK OF MAY 16, 2022**

Monday, May 16, 2022

Psalm 64

1 Hear my voice, O God, when I complain; *
protect my life from fear of the enemy.

2 Hide me from the conspiracy of the wicked, *
from the mob of evildoers.

3 They sharpen their tongue like a sword, *
and aim their bitter words like arrows,

4 That they may shoot down the blameless from ambush; *
they shoot without warning and are not afraid.

5 They hold fast to their evil course; *
they plan how they may hide their snares.

6 They say, "Who will see us?
who will find out our crimes? *
we have thought out a perfect plot."

7 The human mind and heart are a mystery; *
but God will loose an arrow at them,
and suddenly they will be wounded.

8 He will make them trip over their tongues, *
and all who see them will shake their heads.

9 Everyone will stand in awe and declare God's deeds; *
they will recognize his works.

10 The righteous will rejoice in the Lord and put their trust in him, *
and all who are true of heart will glory.

Psalm 65

1 You are to be praised, O God, in Zion; *
to you shall vows be performed in Jerusalem.

2 To you that hear prayer shall all flesh come, *
because of their transgressions.

3 Our sins are stronger than we are, *
but you will blot them out.

4 Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there! *
they will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness of your temple.

5 Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation, *
O Hope of all the ends of the earth and of the seas that are far away.

6 You make fast the mountains by your power; *
they are girded about with might.

7 You still the roaring of the seas, *
the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.

8 Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs; *
you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.

9 You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous; *
the river of God is full of water.

10 You prepare the grain, *
for so you provide for the earth.

11 You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges; *
with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.

12 You crown the year with your goodness, *
and your paths overflow with plenty.

13 May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing, *
and the hills be clothed with joy.

14 May the meadows cover themselves with flocks,
and the valleys cloak themselves with grain; *
let them shout for joy and sing.

Leviticus 16:1-19

The Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they drew near before the Lord and died. The Lord said to Moses:

Tell your brother Aaron not to come just at any time into the sanctuary inside the curtain before the mercy-seat that is upon the ark, or he will die; for I appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat. Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bull for a sin-offering and a ram for a burnt-offering. He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and shall have the linen undergarments next to his body, fasten the linen sash, and wear the linen turban; these are the holy vestments. He shall bathe his body in water, and then put them on. He shall take from the congregation of the people of Israel two male goats for a sin-offering, and one ram for a burnt-offering.

Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin-offering for himself, and shall make atonement for himself and for his house. He shall take the two goats and set them before the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting; and Aaron shall cast lots on the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel. Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the Lord, and offer it as a sin-offering; but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it, so that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel.

Aaron shall present the bull as a sin-offering for himself, and shall make atonement for himself and for his house; he shall slaughter the bull as a sin-offering for himself. He shall take a censer full of coals of fire from the altar before the Lord, and two handfuls of crushed sweet incense, and he shall bring it inside the curtain and put the incense on the fire before the Lord, so that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the covenant, or he will die. He shall take some of the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat he shall sprinkle the blood with his finger seven times.

He shall slaughter the goat of the sin-offering that is for the people and bring its blood inside the curtain, and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it upon the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat. Thus he shall make atonement for the sanctuary, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel, and because of their transgressions, all their sins; and so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which remains with them in the midst of their uncleannesses. No one shall be in the tent of meeting from the time he enters to make atonement in the sanctuary until he comes out and has made atonement for himself and for his house and for all the assembly of Israel. Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord and make atonement on its behalf, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the blood of the goat, and put it on each of the horns of the altar. He shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it and hallow it from the uncleannesses of the people of Israel.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

'Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

'So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

'And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But

whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

‘And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

Psalm 68

1 Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered; *
let those who hate him flee before him.

2 Let them vanish like smoke when the wind drives it away; *
as the wax melts at the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

3 But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God; *
let them also be merry and joyful.

4 Sing to God, sing praises to his Name;
exalt him who rides upon the heavens; *
Yahweh is his Name, rejoice before him!

5 Father of orphans, defender of widows, *
God in his holy habitation!

6 God gives the solitary a home and brings forth prisoners into freedom; *
but the rebels shall live in dry places.

7 O God, when you went forth before your people, *
when you marched through the wilderness,

8 The earth shook, and the skies poured down rain,
at the presence of God, the God of Sinai, *
at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

9 You sent a gracious rain, O God, upon your inheritance; *
you refreshed the land when it was weary.

10 Your people found their home in it; *
in your goodness, O God, you have made provision for the poor.

11 The Lord gave the word; *
great was the company of women who bore the tidings:

12 "Kings with their armies are fleeing away; *
the women at home are dividing the spoils."

13 Though you lingered among the sheepfolds, *
you shall be like a dove whose wings are covered with silver,
whose feathers are like green gold.

14 When the Almighty scattered kings, *
it was like snow falling in Zalmon.

15 O mighty mountain, O hill of Bashan! *
O rugged mountain, O hill of Bashan!

16 Why do you look with envy, O rugged mountain,
at the hill which God chose for his resting place? *
truly, the Lord will dwell there for ever.

17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand,
even thousands of thousands; *
the Lord comes in holiness from Sinai.

18 You have gone up on high and led captivity captive;
you have received gifts even from your enemies, *
that the Lord God might dwell among them.

19 Blessed be the Lord day by day, *
the God of our salvation, who bears our burdens.

20 He is our God, the God of our salvation; *
God is the Lord, by whom we escape death.

21 God shall crush the heads of his enemies, *
and the hairy scalp of those who go on still in their wickedness.

22 The Lord has said, "I will bring them back from Bashan; *
I will bring them back from the depths of the sea;

23 That your foot may be dipped in blood, *
the tongues of your dogs in the blood of your enemies."

24 They see your procession, O God, *
your procession into the sanctuary, my God and my King.

25 The singers go before, musicians follow after, *
in the midst of maidens playing upon the hand-drums.

26 Bless God in the congregation; *
bless the Lord, you that are of the fountain of Israel.

27 There is Benjamin, least of the tribes, at the head;
the princes of Judah in a company; *
and the princes of Zebulon and Naphtali.

28 Send forth your strength, O God; *
establish, O God, what you have wrought for us.

29 Kings shall bring gifts to you, *
for your temple's sake at Jerusalem.

30 Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds, *
and the peoples, a herd of wild bulls with its calves.

31 Trample down those who lust after silver; *
scatter the peoples that delight in war.

32 Let tribute be brought out of Egypt; *
let Ethiopia stretch out her hands to God.

33 Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth; *
sing praises to the Lord.

34 He rides in the heavens, the ancient heavens; *
he sends forth his voice, his mighty voice.

35 Ascribe power to God; *
his majesty is over Israel;
his strength is in the skies.

36 How wonderful is God in his holy places! *
the God of Israel giving strength and power to his people!
Blessed be God!

Leviticus 16:20-34

When he has finished atoning for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat. Then Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and sending it away into the wilderness by means of someone designated for the task. The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a barren region; and the goat shall be set free in the wilderness.

Then Aaron shall enter the tent of meeting, and shall take off the linen vestments that he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there. He shall bathe his body in water in a holy place, and put on his vestments; then he shall come out and offer his burnt-offering and the burnt-offering of the people, making atonement for himself and for the people. The fat of the sin-offering he shall turn into smoke on the altar. The one who sets the goat free for Azazel shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterwards may come into the camp. The bull of the sin-offering and the goat of the sin-offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp; their skin and their flesh and their dung shall be consumed in fire. The one who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterwards may come into the camp.

This shall be a statute to you for ever: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall deny yourselves, and shall do no work, neither the citizen nor the alien who resides among you. For on this day atonement shall be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins you shall be clean before the Lord. It is a sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall deny yourselves; it is a statute for ever. The priest who is anointed and consecrated as priest in his father's place shall make atonement, wearing the linen vestments, the holy vestments. He shall make atonement for the sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the people of Israel once in the year for all their sins. And Moses did as the Lord had commanded him.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, 'There is peace and security', then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

Matthew 6:7-15

'When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

'Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And do not bring us to the time of trial,
but rescue us from the evil one.

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Wednesday, May 18, 2022

Psalm 119:73-96

73 Your hands have made me and fashioned me; *
give me understanding, that I may learn your commandments.

74 Those who fear you will be glad when they see me, *
because I trust in your word.

75 I know, O Lord, that your judgments are right *
and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.

76 Let your loving-kindness be my comfort, *
as you have promised to your servant.

77 Let your compassion come to me, that I may live, *
for your law is my delight.

78 Let the arrogant be put to shame, for they wrong me with lies; *
but I will meditate on your commandments.

79 Let those who fear you turn to me, *
and also those who know your decrees.

80 Let my heart be sound in your statutes, *
that I may not be put to shame.

81 My soul has longed for your salvation; *
I have put my hope in your word.

82 My eyes have failed from watching for your promise, *
and I say, "When will you comfort me?"

83 I have become like a leather flask in the smoke, *
but I have not forgotten your statutes.

84 How much longer must I wait? *
when will you give judgment against those who persecute me?

85 The proud have dug pits for me; *
they do not keep your law.

86 All your commandments are true; *
help me, for they persecute me with lies.

87 They had almost made an end of me on earth, *
but I have not forsaken your commandments.

88 In your loving-kindness, revive me, *
that I may keep the decrees of your mouth.

89 O Lord, your word is everlasting; *
it stands firm in the heavens.

90 Your faithfulness remains from one generation to another; *
you established the earth, and it abides.

91 By your decree these continue to this day, *
for all things are your servants.

92 If my delight had not been in your law, *
I should have perished in my affliction.

93 I will never forget your commandments, *
because by them you give me life.

94 I am yours; oh, that you would save me! *
for I study your commandments.

95 Though the wicked lie in wait for me to destroy me, *
I will apply my mind to your decrees.

96 I see that all things come to an end, *
but your commandment has no bounds.

Leviticus 19:1-18

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. You shall each revere your mother and father, and you shall keep my sabbaths: I am the Lord your God. Do not turn to idols or make cast images for yourselves: I am the Lord your God.

When you offer a sacrifice of well-being to the Lord, offer it in such a way that it is acceptable in your behalf. It shall be eaten on the same day you offer it, or on the next day; and anything left over until the third day shall be consumed in fire. If it is eaten at all on the third day, it is an abomination; it will not be acceptable. All who eat it shall be subject to punishment, because they have profaned what is holy to the Lord; and any such person shall be cut off from the people.

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your God.

You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; and you shall not lie to one another. And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God: I am the Lord.

You shall not defraud your neighbour; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a labourer until morning. You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling-block before the blind; you shall fear your God: I am the Lord.

You shall not render an unjust judgement; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbour. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbour: I am the Lord.

You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbour, or you will incur guilt yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labour among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Beloved, pray for us.

Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Matthew 6:19-24

‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

‘The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

‘No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

Thursday, May 19, 2022

Psalm 74

1 O God, why have you utterly cast us off? *
why is your wrath so hot against the sheep of your pasture?

2 Remember your congregation that you purchased long ago, *
the tribe you redeemed to be your inheritance,
and Mount Zion where you dwell.

3 Turn your steps toward the endless ruins; *
the enemy has laid waste everything in your sanctuary.

4 Your adversaries roared in your holy place; *
they set up their banners as tokens of victory.

5 They were like men coming up with axes to a grove of trees; *
they broke down all your carved work with hatchets
and hammers.

6 They set fire to your holy place; *
they defiled the dwelling-place of your Name
and razed it to the ground.

7 They said to themselves, "Let us destroy them altogether." *
They burned down all the meeting-places of God in the land.

8 There are no signs for us to see;
there is no prophet left; *
there is not one among us who knows how long.

9 How long, O God, will the adversary scoff? *
will the enemy blaspheme your Name for ever?

10 Why do you draw back your hand? *
why is your right hand hidden in your bosom?

11 Yet God is my King from ancient times, *
victorious in the midst of the earth.

12 You divided the sea by your might *
and shattered the heads of the dragons upon the waters;

13 You crushed the heads of Leviathan *
and gave him to the people of the desert for food.

14 You split open spring and torrent; *
you dried up ever-flowing rivers.

15 Yours is the day, yours also the night; *
you established the moon and the sun.

16 You fixed all the boundaries of the earth; *
you made both summer and winter.

17 Remember, O Lord, how the enemy scoffed, *
how a foolish people despised your Name.

18 Do not hand over the life of your dove to wild beasts; *
never forget the lives of your poor.

19 Look upon your covenant; *
the dark places of the earth are haunts of violence.

20 Let not the oppressed turn away ashamed; *
let the poor and needy praise your Name.

21 Arise, O God, maintain your cause; *
remember how fools revile you all day long.

22 Forget not the clamor of your adversaries, *
the unending tumult of those who rise up against you.

Leviticus 19:26-37

You shall not eat anything with its blood. You shall not practise augury or witchcraft. You shall not round off the hair on your temples or mar the edges of your beard. You shall not make any gashes in your flesh for the dead or tattoo any marks upon you: I am the Lord.

Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, so that the land may not become prostituted and full of depravity. You shall keep my sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord.

Do not turn to mediums or wizards; do not seek them out, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God.

You shall rise before the aged, and defer to the old; and you shall fear your God: I am the Lord.

When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

You shall not cheat in measuring length, weight, or quantity. You shall have honest balances, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. You shall keep all my statutes and all my ordinances, and observe them: I am the Lord.

2 Thessalonians 1:1-12

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. Therefore we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith during all your persecutions and the afflictions that you are enduring.

This is evidence of the righteous judgement of God, and is intended to make you worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering. For it is indeed just of God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to the afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes to be glorified by his saints and to be marvelled at on that day among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed. To this end we always pray for you, asking that our God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfil by his power every good resolve and work of faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 6:25-34

‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?” For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

‘So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.