

**Sentence of Scripture**

Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.

Luke 18.17

**Prayer of the day**

O God,  
who alone can probe the depths of the heart,  
you hear the prayer of the humble  
and justify the repentant sinner:  
grant us the gift of humility,  
that, seeing our own faults clearly,  
we may refrain from judging our neighbour  
but rely solely upon your saving grace.  
We make our prayer through your Son, our Saviour,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**Readings****Joel 2:23–32**

<sup>23</sup>O children of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the LORD your God; for he has given the early rain for your vindication, he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the later rain, as before. <sup>24</sup>The threshing floors shall be full of grain, the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

<sup>25</sup>I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent against you.

<sup>26</sup>You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. <sup>27</sup>You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I, the LORD, am your God and there is no other. And my people shall never again be put to shame.

<sup>28</sup>Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. <sup>29</sup>Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit.

<sup>30</sup>I will show portents in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. <sup>31</sup>The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes. <sup>32</sup>Then everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls.

(NRSV)

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 65

<sup>1</sup> You are to be praised, O God, in Zion:

**to you shall vows be paid, you that answer prayer.**

<sup>2</sup> To you shall all flesh come to confess their sins:

**when our misdeeds prevail against us, you will purge them away.**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed are those whom you choose and take to yourself  
to dwell within your courts:

**we shall be filled with the good things of your house,  
of your holy temple.**

<sup>4</sup> You will answer us in your righteousness with terrible deeds, O God our saviour:  
**you that are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the distant seas;**

<sup>5</sup> Who by your strength made fast the mountains:

**you that are girded with power;**

<sup>6</sup> Who stilled the raging of the seas, the roaring of the waves:

**and the tumult of the peoples.**

<sup>7</sup> Those who dwell at the ends of the earth are afraid at your wonders:

**the dawn and the evening sing your praises.**

<sup>8</sup> You tend the earth and water it:

**you make it rich and fertile.**

<sup>9</sup> The river of God is full of water:

**and so providing for the earth, you provide grain for us all.**

<sup>10</sup> You drench its furrows, you level the ridges between:

**you soften it with showers and bless its early growth.**

<sup>11</sup> You crown the year with your goodness:

**and the tracks where you have passed drip with fatness.**

<sup>12</sup> The pastures of the wilderness run over:

**and the hills are girded with joy.**

<sup>13</sup> The meadows are clothed with sheep:

**and the valleys stand so thick with corn, they shout for joy and sing.**

## 2 Timothy 4:6–8, 16–18

<sup>6</sup> As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

<sup>16</sup> At my first defense no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! <sup>17</sup> But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. <sup>18</sup> The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

(NRSV)

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God.**

## **Luke 18:15–30**

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to . . .

**Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

<sup>15</sup> People were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it.

<sup>16</sup> But Jesus called for them and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. <sup>17</sup> Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.”

<sup>18</sup> A certain ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>19</sup> Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. <sup>20</sup> You know the commandments: ‘You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; Honor your father and mother.’ ” <sup>21</sup> He replied, “I have kept all these since my youth.” <sup>22</sup> When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “There is still one thing lacking. Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” <sup>23</sup> But when he heard this, he became sad; for he was very rich. <sup>24</sup> Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

<sup>26</sup> Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?” <sup>27</sup> He replied, “What is impossible for mortals is possible for God.”

<sup>28</sup> Then Peter said, “Look, we have left our homes and followed you.”

<sup>29</sup> And he said to them, “Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, <sup>30</sup> who will not get back very much more in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.”

(NRSV)

This is the Gospel of our Lord, **praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**