

Readings for October 2019

Sunday 6th October

Lamentations 1:1-6

The Prophet Speaks:

Jerusalem, once so crowded,
lies deserted and lonely.

This city that was known
all over the world
is now like a widow.

This queen of the nations
has been made a slave.

Each night, bitter tears
flood her cheeks.

None of her former lovers
are there to offer comfort;
her friends have betrayed her
and are now her enemies.

The people of Judah are slaves,
suffering in a foreign land,
with no rest from sorrow.

Their enemies captured them
and were terribly cruel.

The roads to Zion mourn
because no one travels there
to celebrate the festivals.

The city gates are deserted;
priests are weeping.

Young women are raped;
Zion is in sorrow!

Enemies now rule the city
and live as they please.
The LORD has punished Jerusalem
because of her awful sins;
he has let her people
be dragged away.

Zion's glory has disappeared.
Her leaders are like deer
that cannot find pasture;
they are hunted down
till their strength is gone.

2 Timothy 1:1-14

From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus.
God himself chose me to be an apostle, and he gave me the promised life
that Jesus Christ makes possible.

Timothy, you are like a dear child to me. I pray that God our Father and
our Lord Christ Jesus will be kind and merciful to you and will bless you
with peace!

Night and day I mention you in my prayers. I am always grateful for you,
as I pray to the God my ancestors and I have served with a clear
conscience. I remember how you cried, and I want to see you, because
that will make me truly happy. I also remember the genuine faith of your
mother Eunice. Your grandmother Lois had the same sort of faith, and I
am sure that you have it as well. So I ask you to make full use of the gift
that God gave you when I placed my hands on you. Use it well. God's
Spirit doesn't make cowards out of us. The Spirit gives us power, love,
and self-control.

Don't be ashamed to speak for our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, just because I am in jail for serving him. Use the power that comes from God and join with me in suffering for telling the good news.

God saved us and chose us
to be his holy people.
We did nothing
to deserve this,
but God planned it
because he is so kind.
Even before time began
God planned for Christ Jesus
to show kindness to us.

Now Christ Jesus has come
to show us the kindness
of God.
Christ our Savior defeated death
and brought us
the good news.
It shines like a light
and offers life
that never ends.

My work is to be a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher. That's why I am suffering now. But I am not ashamed! I know the one I have faith in, and I am sure that he can guard until the last day what he has trusted me with. Now follow the example of the correct teaching I gave you, and let the faith and love of Christ Jesus be your model. You have been trusted with a wonderful treasure. Guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit, who lives within you.

Luke 17:5-10

The apostles said to the Lord, "Make our faith stronger!"

Jesus replied:

If you had faith no bigger than a tiny mustard seed, you could tell this mulberry tree to pull itself up, roots and all, and to plant itself in the ocean. And it would!

If your servant comes in from plowing or from taking care of the sheep, would you say, "Welcome! Come on in and have something to eat"? No, you wouldn't say that. You would say, "Fix me something to eat. Get ready to serve me, so I can have my meal. Then later on you can eat and drink." Servants don't deserve special thanks for doing what they are supposed to do. And that's how it should be with you. When you've done all you should, then say, "We are merely servants, and we have simply done our duty."

Sunday 13th October

Jeremiah 29:1-2,4-7

I had been left in Jerusalem when King Nebuchadnezzar took many of the people of Jerusalem and Judah to Babylonia as prisoners, including King Jehoiachin, his mother, his officials, and the metal workers and others in Jerusalem who were skilled in making things. So I wrote a letter to the prophets, the priests, the leaders, and the rest of our people in Babylonia. that the LORD All-Powerful, the God of Israel, had said: I had you taken from

Jerusalem to Babylonia. Now I tell you to settle there and build houses. Plant gardens and eat what you grow in them. Get married and have children, then help your sons find wives and help your daughters find husbands, so they can have children as well. I want your numbers to grow, not to get smaller.

Pray for peace in Babylonia and work hard to make it prosperous. The more successful that nation is, the better off you will be.

2 Timothy 2:8-15

Keep your mind on Jesus Christ! He was from the family of David and was raised from death, just as my good news says. And because of this message, I am locked up in jail and treated like a criminal. But God's good news isn't locked in jail, and so I am willing to put up with anything. Then God's special people will be saved. They will be given eternal glory because they belong to Christ Jesus. Here is a true message:

"If we died with Christ,
we will live with him.

If we don't give up,
we will rule with him.

If we deny
that we know him,
he will deny

that he knows us.

If we are not faithful,
he will still be faithful.

Christ cannot deny
who he is."

Don't let anyone forget these things. And with God as your witness, you must warn them not to argue about words. These arguments don't help anyone. In fact, they ruin everyone who listens to them. Do your best to win God's approval as a worker who doesn't need to be ashamed and who teaches only the true message.

Luke 17:11-19

On his way to Jerusalem, Jesus went along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men with leprosy came toward him. They stood at a distance and shouted, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

Jesus looked at them and said, "Go show yourselves to the priests."

On their way they were healed. When one of them discovered that he was healed, he came back, shouting praises to God. He bowed down at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. The man was from the country of Samaria.

Jesus asked, "Weren't ten men healed? Where are the other nine? Why was this foreigner the only one who came back to thank God?" Then Jesus told the man, "You may get up and go. Your faith has made you well."

Sunday 20th October

Jeremiah 31:27-34

Someday, Israel and Judah will be my field where my people and their livestock will grow. In the past, I took care to uproot them, to tear them down, and to destroy them. But when that day comes, I will take care to plant them and help them grow. No longer will anyone go around saying,

"Sour grapes eaten by parents
leave a sour taste in the mouths
of their children."

When that day comes, only those who eat sour grapes will get the sour taste, and only those who sin will be put to death.

The LORD said:

The time will surely come when I will make a new agreement with the people of Israel and Judah. It will be different from the agreement I made with their ancestors when I led them out of Egypt. Although I was their God, they broke that agreement.

Here is the new agreement that I, the LORD, will make with the people of Israel:

“I will write my laws
on their hearts and minds.
I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

“No longer will they have to teach one another to obey me. I, the LORD, promise that all of them will obey me, ordinary people and rulers alike. I will forgive their sins and forget the evil things they have done.”

2 Timothy 3:14-17 -4:5

Keep on being faithful to what you were taught and to what you believed. After all, you know who taught you these things. Since childhood, you have known the Holy Scriptures that are able to make you wise enough to have faith in Christ Jesus and be saved. Everything in the Scriptures is God’s Word. All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live. The Scriptures train God’s servants to do all kinds of good deeds. When Christ Jesus comes as king, he will be the judge of everyone, whether they are living or dead. So with God and Christ as witnesses, I command you to preach God’s message. Do it willingly, even if it isn’t the popular thing to do. You must correct people and point out their sins. But also cheer them up, and when you instruct them, always be patient. The time is coming when people won’t listen to good teaching. Instead,

they will look for teachers who will please them by telling them only what they are itching to hear. They will turn from the truth and eagerly listen to senseless stories. But you must stay calm and be willing to suffer. You must work hard to tell the good news and to do your job well.

Luke 18:1-8

Jesus told his disciples a story about how they should keep on praying and never give up:

In a town there was once a judge who didn't fear God or care about people. In that same town there was a widow who kept going to the judge and saying, "Make sure that I get fair treatment in court."

For a while the judge refused to do anything. Finally, he said to himself, "Even though I don't fear God or care about people, I will help this widow because she keeps on bothering me. If I don't help her, she will wear me out."

The Lord said:

Think about what that crooked judge said. Won't God protect his chosen ones who pray to him day and night? Won't he be concerned for them? He will surely hurry and help them. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find on this earth anyone with faith?

Sunday 27th October

Joel 2:23-32

People of Zion,
celebrate in honour

of the LORD your God!
He is generous and has sent
the autumn and spring rains
in the proper seasons.
Grain will cover
your threshing places;
jars will overflow
with wine and olive oil.

I, the LORD your God,
will make up for the losses
caused by those swarms
and swarms of locusts
I sent to attack you.
My people, you will eat
until you are satisfied.
Then you will praise me
for the wonderful things
I have done.
Never again will you
be put to shame.

Israel, you will know
that I stand at your side.
I am the LORD your God—
there are no other gods.
Never again will you
be put to shame.

The LORD said:

Later, I will give my Spirit
to everyone.
Your sons and daughters
will prophesy.
Your old men
will have dreams,
and your young men
will see visions.
In those days I will even give

my Spirit to my servants,
both men and women.

I will work wonders
in the sky above
and on the earth below.

There will be blood and fire
and clouds of smoke.

The sun will turn dark,
and the moon
will be as red as blood
before that great
and terrible day
when I appear.

Then the LORD will save everyone who faithfully worships him. He has promised there will be survivors on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and among them will be his chosen ones.

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

Now the time has come for me to die. My life is like a drink offering being poured out on the altar. I have fought well. I have finished the race, and I have been faithful. So a crown will be given to me for pleasing the Lord. He judges fairly, and on the day of judgment he will give a crown to me and to everyone else who wants him to appear with power. When I was first put on trial, no one helped me. In fact, everyone deserted me. I hope it won't be held against them. But the Lord stood beside me. He gave me the strength to tell his full message, so that all Gentiles would hear it. And I was kept safe from hungry lions. The Lord will always keep me from being harmed by evil, and he will bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. Praise him forever and ever! Amen.

Luke 18:9-14

Jesus told a story to some people who thought they were better than others and who looked down on everyone else:

Two men went into the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood over by himself and prayed, "God, I thank you that I am not greedy, dishonest, and unfaithful in marriage like other people. And I am really glad that I am not like that tax collector over there. I go without eating for two days a week, and I give you one tenth of all I earn."

The tax collector stood off at a distance and did not think he was good enough even to look up toward heaven. He was so sorry for what he had done that he pounded his chest and prayed, "God, have pity on me! I am such a sinner."

Then Jesus said, "When the two men went home, it was the tax collector and not the Pharisee who was pleasing to God. If you put yourself above others, you will be put down. But if you humble yourself, you will be honoured."