

Addresses for Morning and Evening Prayer

**according to the 1943 Lectionary of the USA 1928
Book of Common Prayer**

**Intended for use by Layreaders
in the absence of a priest**

by Ed Pacht Rochester NH

3rd Sunday after Easter

Morning Prayer A

First Lesson: 2 Sam 12:15b-23

Here beginneth the 15th verse of the twenty-third chapter of the Second Book of Samuel.

15b ...And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.

16 David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth.

17 And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.

18 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?

19 But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead.

20 Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

21 Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep

*But the righteous live for evermore;
their reward also is with the Lord,
and the care of them is with the most High.
Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom,
and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand:
for with his right hand shall he cover them,
and with his arm shall he protect them.*

Let us pray.

O God, who makest us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of thy Son our Lord; vouchsafe us this day such blessing through our worship of thee, that the days to come may be spent in thy service; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*"This was he," they said,
"whom we had sometimes in derision,
and a proverb of reproach: "*

*We fools accounted his life madness,
and his end to be without honour."*

St. Paul wrote that some
saw the cross as foolishness,
and others as a scandal and stumblingblock.
But, as the Psalmist said,

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

We'll never really understand
what went on on the cross.
We'll never unravel the mysteries
of the nature of God.
We won't figure out the events of the future,
but, as we look at His cross and His resurrection,
we see and know and receive
that strange salvation,
and regardless of the questions we may still have,
we can find ourselves
in the second part of that reading:

*For the hope of the ungodly
is like dust that is blown away with the wind;
like a thin froth that is driven away with the storm;
like as the smoke
is dispersed here and there with a tempest,
and passeth away as the remembrance of a guest
that tarrieth but a day.*

for the child, while it was alive; but when the child
was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread.

22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, I
fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether
GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may
live?

23 But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast?
can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but
he shall not return to me.

Here endeth the First Lesson.

Second Lesson: John 14:1-14

*Here beginneth the fourteenth chapter of the Gos-
pel according to St. John*

1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in
God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it
were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare
a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will
come again, and receive you unto myself; that
where I am, there ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye
know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not
whither thou goest; and how can we know the
way?

6. Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth,
and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but
by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

he Son.

.13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in me

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it

Here endeth the Second Lesson.

Homily

In our first lesson we come into the middle of a story. King David had sinned grievously.

We won't go into that, but now, as a result ... his baby son is terribly sick.

*"he is not a God of the dead,
but of the living: for all live unto him. "*

The Word of God did not come to us to answer our idle questions, or to satisfy our curiosity, but to bring us life, to lead us out of the death in which we exist, and restore us to the fullness for which we were created.

*"I am come," He said,
"That ye may have life,
and that ye may have it more abundantly."*

From the Wisdom of Solomon,
we heard an interesting two-pronged reading

*"Then shall the righteous man
stand in great boldness
before the face of such as have afflicted him,
and made no account of his labours."*

Could there be a clearer foreshadowing of the trials of Our Lord before the Sanhedrin, before Pilate, and before Herod?

And what of that wonderful comment that they were "*... amazed at the strangeness of his salvation*" ?

What could be a stranger salvation than the sight of a suffering man dying on a Cross?

Homily

Foolish questions.

It seems that such an enormous amount of energy goes into trying to figure out the answers to questions that never needed to be asked, and simply can't be answered anyway.

One can turn to religious television and hear wild speculations about end times. When is the Lord coming back?

Which nations will be doing what?

What kind of accidents will driverless cars, or pilotless planes cause, when the faithful are "raptured away"?

Every last one of these wild-eyed preachers claims that he has the only right answer: "See, it's right here in my Bible."

Unbelievers do exactly the same thing, though for a different reason, seeking to "disprove" faith by attacking some literalistic interpretation of the Scriptures, often rightfully, as foolish.

That is what Jesus ran across in the passage from St. Luke.

They wanted to make Him look foolish by enmeshing him in this kind of vain speculation, spinning an improbably tale about a woman and seven brothers and marriage in heaven.

"That's not what it's about," was the substance of His answer,

David, believing it to be his fault, is passionate in his prayer, fasting, and sleeping on the ground. Finally, after a week, the child died. Everyone expected David to be shocked and upset, and to go into deep mourning at the news, but, instead, he got up, dressed and bathed, broke his fast, and resumed his normal activity. "He's gone now. I can't change that," he said, "He's not coming back to me, but I will go to him."

How many of us have lost dearly beloved ones? Was it an easy thing?

Some of us watched a long and sad decline, doing everything we could to keep the end from coming, laboring, worrying, praying, but unsuccessfully.

Others were overtaken suddenly by the loss.

How many of us had a faith like David's, a faith that accepts what is and trusts God.

"I'll go to him," he said, and went about his business until that day.

"In my Father's house are many mansions:" said Jesus in the second lesson, *"if it were not so, I would have told you."*

There's no news here.

David knew that already.

How?

He knew the character of God.

He trusted in His goodness.

Jesus didn't say, "You know it because I told you."

He said instead, "You already know it.
If what you know were not true, I'd tell you."

But here comes the news.

I go to prepare a place for you."

He came into the world,
A prophet like other prophets.
He declared the Word of the Lord.
He announced the judgment of God
on a disobedient people.
He proclaimed the invitation to repentance.
He pointed us to the kingdom of God.
But He did more, because He was more,
no mere prophet, but God the Son of God,
not merely a messenger, but the Way

As He said to Thomas,

*"I am the way, the truth, and the life:
no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

For all the pointing of all the prophets,
it remains true that we are weak, flawed, and sinful,
and totally unable to do what must be done
if we are to reach that final goal,
but He, the Lord, became a man,
and, as a man, trod the paths of death,
and suffered them for us,
after which He broke those bonds,
rose again, and goes before us,
to make us welcome forever.

He is the way.
By the path He opened,

33 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of
them is she? for seven had her to wife.

34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The
children of this world marry, and are given in
marriage:

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to
obtain that world, and the resurrection from the
dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

36 Neither can they die any more: for they are
equal unto the angels; and are the children of God,
being the children of the resurrection.

37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses
shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the
God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the
God of Jacob.

38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living:
for all live unto him.

39 Then certain of the scribes answering said,
Master, thou hast well said.

Here endeth the Second Lesson.

15: But the righteous live for evermore; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the most High.

16: Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand: for with his right hand shall he cover them, and with his arm shall he protect them.

Here endeth the First Lesson.

Second Lesson: Luke 20:27-39

*Here beginneth the twenty-seventh verse
of the twentieth chapter
of the Gospel according to St. Luke*

27 Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him,

28 Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.

30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

31 And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died.

32 Last of all the woman died also.

by the pains He suffered for us,
by the Blood He poured out for us,
by the cross on which he died,
by the tomb in which his lifeless body lay,
by His glorious triumph over death,
He has become the Way,
and that Way leads on to glories unimagined.

*"Verily, verily, I say unto you," He says,
"He that believeth on me,
the works that I do shall he do also;"*

And we may respond,

*"Yea, though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for thou art with me."*

And we follow Him on the path He prepared,
In His Truth, in His life,
to the place where David knew He would go,
where his son awaited,
where, perhaps some of our loved ones wait,
and where, above all, He awaits,
the one who loved us enough to die and rise again.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who art the way and the truth and the life, look upon us poor sinners and stir up in us, by thy cross and resurrection, the lively hope of everlasting redemption, thou who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Morning Prayer B

First Lesson: 1 Sam 2:1-10

*Here beginneth the second chapter
of the First Book of Samuel*

1 And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.

2 There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

4 The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength.

5 They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

6 The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

7 The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.

8 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them.

Evening Prayer B

First Lesson: Wisdom 5:1-6, 14-16

*Here beginneth the fifth chapter of the Book of
Wisdom.*

1: Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours.

2: When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all that they looked for.

3: And they repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit shall say within themselves, This was he, whom we had sometimes in derision, and a proverb of reproach:

4: We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour:

5: How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints!

6: Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us

14: For the hope of the ungodly is like dust that is blown away with the wind; like a thin froth that is driven away with the storm; like as the smoke which is dispersed here and there with a tempest, and passeth away as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but a day

*We are confident, I say,
and willing rather to be absent from the body,
and to be present with the Lord.
Wherefore we labour, that,
whether present or absent,
we may be accepted of him.*

What is important is not what we have,
nor is it what we accomplish.
These are dead lords.
All that matters
is that we follow our living Lord, Jesus Christ,

and, as St. Paul said:
*Therefore if any man be in Christ,
he is a new creature:
old things are passed away;
behold, all things are become new.*

Let us pray.

Raise us up, blessed Lord, from our entanglements
with mere things, and turn our eyes upon the face
of thy dear Son, upon His Cross, upon His Resur-
rection, and give us grace so to follow Him that we
live as new creatures unto everlasting life; through
the same Christ our Lord. Amen

9 He will keep the feet of his saints, and the
wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength
shall no man prevail.

10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to
pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them:
the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he
shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn
of his anointed.

Here endeth the First Lesson.

Second Lesson: Acts 2:22-36

*Here beginneth the twenty-second verse of the sec-
ond chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.*

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of
Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by
miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by
him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also
know:

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate coun-
sel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and
by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the
pains of death: because it was not possible that he
should be holden of it.

25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw
the Lord always before my face, for he is on my
right hand, that I should not be moved:

26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue
was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in
hope:

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,
neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see cor-
ruption.

28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life;
thou shalt make me full of joy with thy counte-
nance.

29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you
of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and
buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that
God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the
fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would
raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection
of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither
his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all
are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God ex-
alted, and having received of the Father the prom-
ise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this,
which ye now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but
he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit
thou on my right hand,

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assur-
edly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye
have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Here endeth the Second Lesson.

He broke the bonds of death.
He opened the gates of everlasting life.
He calls us from the service of these dead lords,
and sets us free to follow Him,
to know the freedom of the children of God.

as St. Paul wrote:

*we have a building of God,
an house not made with hands,
eternal in the heavens.*

Our security, then,
doesn't come from what we have,
or from what people think of us,
or, for that matter,
from what we think of ourselves.
Our security is in what God has done,
in the Cross and resurrection,
in his invitation and promise.
If we see that,
we can leave behind all the things
on which we depend,
things that chain us to the world and its worries,
and, looking at all these things, say with Paul:

*...we that are in this tabernacle do groan,
being burdened: ...
[desiring] that mortality might be swallowed up of
life. ...
[realizing that] whilst we are at home in the body,
we are absent from the Lord: ...*

our good name, reputation, place in society.
There are more of these 'lords'
than we can possibly name,
and they jostle within us for our attention,
yes, for our worship,
and we bow before them, don't we?
They take a place in our hearts
that belongs only to God.
But hear what Isaiah said about them:

*They are dead, they shall not live;
they are deceased, they shall not rise:
therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them,
and made all their memory to perish.*

False gods are dead gods.
There is no life in them,
and they cannot bestow life on us.
They may see attractive in the short haul,
but ultimately all they can bring is death.
Their domination drains the life from us
and we die,
but Isaiah has a word for us
at the end of that First Lesson

*Thy dead men shall live,
together with my dead body shall they arise.
Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust:
for thy dew is as the dew of herbs,
and the earth shall cast out the dead*

This is the season of Eastertide.
Christ is risen from the dead
and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

Homily

Did the Old Testament sound familiar this morning?
It should have.

These words are very much like other words
that are at the heart of Prayer Book worship:
The Magnificat, Mary's song,
the words with which she celebrated
the soon-coming birth of God's Son and hers,
the words provided to be used every day
at Evening Prayer.

The Mother of our Lord apparently knew Scripture,
and based her words upon those of Hannah,
sung by another woman at another time,
in celebration of another surprising birth.

Have you paid close attention to the Magnificat,
to what it actually says?

Or to this morning's reading?.

This is not an innocuous praise song.

It certainly is more than just pretty words.

This is radical stuff.

It's about a world to be turned upside down,
or, rather, about an upside-down world,
that God will soon set right.

It's a song sung by a barren woman
about to have a baby,
and by a teen-age Mom,.

whose unborn child is not her husband's.

It's a song about raising up the poor,
setting the beggar among princes,
putting down the mighty,

overturning the power structure of a sinful world,
manifesting God's nature, God's mercy,

God's righteousness
among those who serve their own interests,
their own overweening pride.

It was strong medicine
in the mouths of those two women.
And Holy Church
has administered strong medicine
in putting these words in our mouths.
We really don't want to think
about what we're saying.
We don't want to let go of whatever status we have.
We don't want the work of God
to take anything from us.
But that is what we need.

This is a world dead in sin,
a world that allows God to be eclipsed,
hidden behind all our petty desires,
pushed out of the way and ignored.
But ignoring God leads to destruction.
We destroy the goodness He has provided here.
We reject the goodness he will provide hereafter.
We serve not eternal life,
but everlasting death.

But Jesus,
the surprising resident in Mary's womb,
came into the daylight of this world.
God submitted Himself to man,
the Master lived as a servant.
For the needs of men and women
He overturned His own creation,
working miracles

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who
knew no sin; that we might be made the righteous-
ness of God in him.

Here endeth the Second Lesson.

Homily

*O LORD our God, other lords beside thee have
had dominion over us:*

Other Lords? Oh, yes!
Perhaps you're thinking of gods
with names like Baal or Dagon,
or Zeus. perhaps Odin or Isis or Kali.,
maybe even Papa Legba, or Coyote.
All the ancient nations,
and those groups we think of today
as backward or primitive,
had imaginary gods, didn't they?
But they weren't real,
and nobody civilized believes in them anyway.
So what's the big deal?
Maybe that is so,
but there are lords, many of them,
that have controlled parts of our lives,
and perhaps still do, if we allow it.
Their names are less exotic, simpler,
starkly plain, for that matter,
names like money, sex, prestige;
all the various possessions
with which our lives are filled,
all the people whose opinion
we value over God's;

11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

12 For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart.

13 For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

against the laws He himself had set in motion. And finally, the Lord of Creation allowed Himself to be killed by mere men.

Finally?

Well, not really.

Even the power of death was overturned.

Defeat was turned into victory.

The gates of Hell became, for Him and for us, instead the gates to everlasting life.

As St. Peter preached:

"God hath raised [Him] up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. "

"Therefore let all ... know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

He has risen!

He has defeated death!

Nothing is as it was!

Let us rejoice.

Though it's appointed for Evening Prayer, let us say together Mary's song, the Magnificat on page 26 of the Prayer Book.

Evening Prayer A

First Lesson: Isa 26:12-16, 19

*Here beginneth the twelfth verse
of the twenty-sixth chapter of the Prophet Isaiah*

12 LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.

13 O LORD our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.

14 They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.

15 Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.

16 LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.

19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

Here endeth the First Lesson.

Second Lesson: 2 Cor 5

Here beginneth the fifth chapter of the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.