Hope

**Old Testament Readings**

**1) A Reading from the Book of Lamentations (3:17-26)**

My soul is shut out from peace;

I have forgotten happiness.

And now I say, ‘My strength is gone,

that hope which came from the Lord’.

Brooding on my anguish and affliction

is gall and wormwood.

My spirit ponders it continually

and sinks within me.

This is what I shall tell my heart,

and so recover hope:

the favours of the Lord are not all past,

his kindnesses are not exhausted;

every morning they are renewed;

great is his faithfulness.

‘My portion is the Lord’ says my soul

‘and so I will hope in him.’

The lord is good to those who trust him,

to the soul that searches for him.

It is good to wait in silence
for the Lord to save.

***The Word of the Lord***

**2) A Reading from the Book of Job (19:1.23-27)**

Job said:

‘Ah, would that these words of mine were written down,

inscribed on some monument

with iron chisel and engraving tool,

cut into the rock for ever.

This I know: that my Avenger lives,

and he, the last, will take his stand on earth.

After my awaking, he will set me close to him,

and from my flesh I shall look on God.

He whom I shall see will take my part:
these eyes will gaze on him and find him not aloof.

***The Word of the Lord***

**3) A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah (25:6-9)

On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will prepare for all peoples a banquet of rich food. On this mountain he will remove the mourning veil covering all peoples, and the shroud enwrapping all nations, he will destroy Death for ever. The Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek; he will take away his people's shame everywhere on earth, for the Lord has said so. That day, it will be said: See, this is our God in whom we hoped for salvation; the Lord is the one in whom we hoped. We exult and rejoice that he has saved us.
 *The Word of the Lord***

**New Testament Readings**

**4) A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans (8:14-23)**

Everyone moved by the Spirit is a Son of God. The spirit you received is

not the spirit of slaves bringing fear into your lives again; it is the spirit

of sons, and it makes us cry out, ‘Abba, Father!’ The Spirit himself and

our spirit bear united witness that we are children of God. And if we are

children we are heirs as well: heirs of God and coheirs with Christ, sharing

his sufferings so as to share his glory.

I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory,

as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. The whole creation is eagerly

waiting for God to reveal his sons. It was not for any fault on the part of

creation that it was made unable to attain its purpose, it was made so by

God; but creation still retains the hope of being freed, like us, from its

slavery to decadence, to enjoy the same freedom and glory as the children

of God. From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has

been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but

all of us who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit, we too groan inwardly
as we wait for our bodies to be set free.

 ***The Word of the Lord***

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**5) A Reading from the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (4:14-5:1)**

We know that he who raised the Lord Jesus to life will raise us with Jesus

in our turn, and put us by his side and you with us. You see, all this is for

your benefit, so that the more grace is multiplied among people, the more

thanksgiving there will be, to the glory of God.

That is why there is no weakening on our part, and instead, though this

outer man of ours may be falling into decay, the inner man is renewed

day by day. Yes the troubles which are soon over, though they weigh

little, train us for the carrying of a weight of eternal glory which is out of

all proportion to them. And so we have no eyes for things that are visible,

but only for things that are invisible; for visible things last only for a

time, and the invisible things are eternal.

For we know that when the tent that we live in on earth is folded up, there

is a house built by God for us, an everlasting home not made by human

hands, in the heavens.

*The Word of the Lord*

**6) A Reading from the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (4:14-5:1)**

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***The Word of the Lord***

**7) A Reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians (4,13-18)**

We want you to be quite certain, brothers, about those who have died, to

make sure that you do not grieve about them, like the other people who

have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that it will

be the same for those who have died in Jesus: God will bring them with

him. We can tell you this from the Lord’s own teaching, that any of us

who are left alive until the Lord’s coming will not have any advantage

over those who have died. At the trumpet of God, the voice of the archangel

will call out the command and the Lord himself will come down from

heaven; those who have died in Christ will be the first to rise, and then

those of us who are still alive will be taken up in the clouds, together with

them, to meet the Lord in the air. So we shall stay with the Lord for ever.
With such thoughts as these you should comfort one another. ***The Word of the Lord***

**8) A Reading from the First Letter of St. Peter (1,3-9)

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons and daughters, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we can have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of the time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold - only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing fire - and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did no see him, yet you love him: and still without seeing him, you are already filled with joy as glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.
 *The Word of the Lord***