

OLD TESTAMENT

#1

I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES
JOB 19:1,23-27

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF JOB

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

THEN JOB REPLIED:
IF ONLY ALL THIS WERE ON PAPER!
WHAT A BOOK IT WOULD MAKE!
IF ONLY MY WORDS WER ENGRAVED
FOREVER IN GRANITE!

FOR I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES-
MY VINDICATOR, WHO AT THE END WILL STAND ON
THE EARTH;
AND AFTER I AWAKE, THOUGH THIS BODY HAS BEEN
DESTROYED,
WITHOUT MY FLESH I WILL SEE GOD.

OLD TESTAMENT

#1A

MICAH 6:6;8

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET MICAH

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

“WHAT SHALL I BRING WHEN I COME BEFORE YAWEH,
AND BOW DOWN BEFORE GOD ON HIGH?” YOU ASK.

LISTEN HERE, MORTAL:

GOD HAS ALREADY MADE ABUNDANTLY CLEAR
WHAT “GOOD” IS, AND WHAT YAWEH NEEDS FROM
YOU:

SIMPLY DO JUSTICE,
LOVE KINDNESS,
AND HUMBLY WALK WITH YOUR GOD.

OLD TESTAMENT

#1B

PSALM 103: 8-17

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

YOU ARE TENDER AND COMPASSIONATE, YAHWEH,
SLOW TO ANGER, AND ALWAYS LOVING;
YOUR INDIGNATION DOESN'T ENDURE FOREVER,
AND YOUR ANGER LASTS ONLY FOR A SHORT TIME.
YOU NEVER TREAT US AS OUR SINS DESERVE;
YOU DON'T REPAY US IN KIND FOR THE INJUSTICES WE
DO.

FOR AS HIGH AS HEAVEN IS ABOVE THE EARTH,
SO GREAT IS THE LOVE FOR THOSE WHO REVERE YOU.
AS FAR AWAY AS THE EAST IS FROM THE WEST,
THAT'S HOW FAR YOU REMOVE OUR SINS FROM US.
AS TENDERLY AS PARENTS TREAT THEIR CHILDREN,
THAT'S HOW TENDERLY YOU TREAT YOUR
WORSHIPERS, YAWEH!

FOR YOU KNOW WHAT WE ARE MADE OF—
YOU REMEMBER THAT WE'RE NOTHING BUT DUST.
WE LAST NO LONGER THAN GRASS,
LIVE NO LONGER THAN A WILDFLOWER;
ONE GUST OF WIND, AND WE'RE GONE,
NEVER TO BE SEEN AGAIN.
YET YOUR LOVE LASTS FROM AGE TO AGE
FOR THOSE WHO REVERE YOU, YAWEH.

OLD TESTAMENT

#1C

A READING FROM THE SONG OF SONGS (2:8-14)

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

THE LORD SAYS TO ME, “ARISE, MY BELOVED, MY BEAUTIFUL ONE AND COME!

FOR SEE, THE WINTER IS PAST. THE RAINS ARE OVER AND GONE.

THE FLOWERS APPEAR ON THE EARTH, THE TIME OF PRUNING THE VINES HAS COME, AND THE SONG OF THE DOVE IS HEARD IN OUR LAND.

THE FIG TREE PUTS FORTH ITS FIGS, AND THE VINES, IN BLOOM, GIVE FORTH FRAGRANCE.

ARISE, MY BELOVED, MY BEAUTIFUL ONE, AND COME!

O MY DOVE IN THE CLEFTS OF THE ROCK, IN THE SECRET RECESSES OF THE CLIFF,

LET ME SEE YOU, LET ME HEAR YOUR VOICE,

FOR YOUR VOICE IS SWEET, AND YOU ARE LOVELY.”

OLD TESTAMENT

#1D

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS
3:21-26

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

MY SOUL IS DEPRIVED OF PEACE,
I HAVE FORGOTTEN WHAT HAPPINESS IS;
I TELL MYSELF MY FUTURE IS LOST,
ALL THAT I HOPED FOR FROM GOD.

YET IS IT BECAUSE I REMEMBER ALL THIS THAT I HAVE
HOPE.

YAHWEH’S FAVOR IS NOT EXHAUSTED,
NOR HAS GOD’S COMPASSION FAILED.
THEY RISE UP ANEW EACH MORNING,
SO GREAT IS GOD’S FAITHFULNESS.
“YAHWEH IS ALL I HAVE,” I CRY.
“SO I WILL WAIT IN PATIENCE.”

THE MOST HIGH IS GOOD TO THOSE WHO HOPE IN GOD,
TO ALL WHO SEEK GOD’S PRESENCE.
IT IS GOOD TO WAIT PATIENTLY
FOR YAHWEH TO SET US FREE.

OLD TESTAMENT

#2

WISDOM 3:1-9

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF WISDOM

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

BUT THE SOULS OF THE JUST ARE IN THE HAND OF GOD,
AND NO AFFLICTION WILL EVER TOUCH THEM.
TO THE EYES OF FOOLS, THEY SEEM TO BE DEAD;
THEIR DEPARTURE WILL BE INTERPRETED AS A DEFEAT
AND THEIR GOING AWAY WILL BE CONSIDERED A DISASTER--
BUT THEY HAVE FOUND PEACE!
FOR THOUGH, TO MORTALS,
THEY MAY HAVE SUFFERED PUNISHMENT,
THEIR HOPE IS IN LIFE EVERLASTING,
AND AFTER A TIME OF TRIAL
THEY WILL RECEIVE GREAT BLESSINGS,
BECAUSE GOD HAS TESTED THEM
AND FOUND THEM WORTHY.
GOD PURIFIED THEM LIKE GOLD IN A CRUCIBLE
AND FOUND THEM AS ACCEPTABLE
AS A WHOLE BURNT OFFERING ON THE ALTAR.
WHEN THEIR TIME OF JUDGMENT COMES, THEY WILL SHINE
AND WILL SWEEP OVER THE WORLD
LIKE SPARKS THROUGH THE CHAFF.
THEY WILL BE APPOINTED AS JUDGES AND LEADERS
OVER ALL NATIONS AND PEOPLES,
AND THE HOLY ONE WILL BE THEIR SOVEREIGN FOREVER.
THOSE WHO HAVE PUT THEIR TRUST IN GOD
WILL FIND OUT THAT THIS IS ALL TRUE,
AND THOSE WHO ARE FAITHFUL WILL DWELL IN GOD’S LOVE.
THESE ARE GOD’S CHOSEN ONES,
AND GRACE AND MERCY BELONG TO THEM.

OLD TESTAMENT

#2-A

WISDOM 3:1-6,9
(SHORT VERSION)

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF WISDOM

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

BUT THE SOULS OF THE JUST ARE IN THE HAND OF GOD,
AND NO AFFLICTION WILL EVER TOUCH THEM.
GOD PURIFIED THEM LIKE GOLD IN A CRUCIBLE
AND FOUND THEM AS ACCEPTABLE
AS A WHOLE BURNT OFFERING ON THE ALTAR.
WHEN THEIR TIME OF JUDGMENT COMES, THEY WILL
SHINE
AND WILL SWEEP OVER THE WORLD
LIKE SPARKS THROUGH THE CHAFF.
THEY WILL BE APPOINTED AS JUDGES AND LEADERS
OVER ALL NATIONS AND PEOPLES,
AND THE HOLY ONE WILL BE THEIR SOVEREIGN
FOREVER.
THOSE WHO HAVE PUT THEIR TRUST IN GOD
WILL FIND OUT THAT THIS IS ALL TRUE,
AND THOSE WHO ARE FAITHFUL WILL DWELL IN GOD’S
LOVE.
THESE ARE GOD’S CHOSEN ONES,
AND GRACE AND MERCY BELONG TO THEM.

OLD TESTAMENT

#3

A BLAMELESS LIFE IS A RIPE OLD AGE
WISDOM 4:7-15

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF WISDOM

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

BUT TO THOSE WHO ARE JUST,
EVEN WHEN THEY DIE PREMATURELY,
WILL BE AT PEACE.
IT IS NEITHER THE LENGTH OF LIFE NOR THE NUMBER OF
YEARS
WHICH BRINGS HONOR TO OLD AGE;
UNDERSTANDING—THIS IS GRAY HAIR;
A LIFE OF JUSTICE—THIS IS A RIPE OLD AGE.
THERE WERE THOSE WHO PLEASSED GOD,
AND OUT OF GREAT LOVE, GOD TOOK THEM AWAY
FROM THIS SINFUL WORLD,
AND CARRIED THEM OFF,
SO THAT CORRUPTION WOULD NEVER PERVERT THEIR
UNDERSTANDING
OR DECEPTION TEMPT THEIR SOUL.
FOR EVIL’S SEDUCTIVENESS CAN OVERSHADOW WHAT IS
GOOD,
AND THE CARNIVAL OF DESIRE CAN DEFILE THE INNOCENT
HEART.
SO, IN A VERY SHORT TIME. THEY ACHIEVED THE SAME
PERFECTION
AS THOSE WHO HAVE LIVED A LONG LIFE.
THE SOULS OF THE JUST WERE PURE,
SO GOD HURRIED THEM AWAY FROM THIS DEPRAVED
WORLD.
MANY PEOPLE SEE THIS, BUT DON’T UNDERSTAND IT;
THEY DON’T CONSIDER THE TRUE MEANING OF WHAT HAS
HAPPENED.

OLD TESTAMENT

#4

THE LORD GOD WILL DESTROY DEATH FOREVER
ISAIAH 25: 6A,7-9

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

ON THIS MOUNTAIN,
YAHWEH OMNIPOTENT WILL PREPARE FOR ALL
PEOPLES
A BANQUET OF RICH FOOD,
A BANQUET OF FINE WINES,
FOOD RICH AND SUCCULENT,
AND FINE, AGED WINES.
ON THIS MOUNTAIN GOD WILL REMOVE
THE MOURNING VEIL COVERING ALL PEOPLES,
THE SHROUD COVERING ALL NATIONS,
DESTROYING ALL DEATH FOREVER.
GOD WILL WIPE AWAY
THE TEARS FROM EVERY CHEEK,
AND WILL TAKE AWAY THE SHAME
OF GOD’S PEOPLE ON EARTH, WHEREVER THEY LIVE.
YAHWEH HAS SPOKEN.
ON THAT DAY IT WILL BE SAID,
“THIS IS OUR GOD,
THIS IS THE ONE FOR WHOSE LIBERATION WE WAITED,
YAHWEH IS THE ONE IN WHOM WE HAD HOPED!
WE REJOICE EXULTANTLY IN OUR DELIVERANCE,
FOR THE HAND OF YAHWEH RESTS ON THIS
MOUNTAIN!”

OLD TESTAMENT

#5

IT IS GOOD TO WAIT IN PATIENCE FOR GOD TO SAVE
LAMENTATIONS 3:17-26

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

THERE IS NO PEACE IN MY LIFE;
I HAVE FORGOTTEN WHAT PROSPERITY IS.
“MY LIGHT IS GONE!” I CRY;
THE MOST HIGH IS MY ONLY HOPE.
I REMEMBER MY WOES AND WANDERINGS—
THE WORMWOOD AND THE GALL.
THOSE MEMORIES ARE SO CLEAR TO ME,
AND THEY FILL ME WITH DESPAIR.
YET IT IS BECAUSE I REMEMBER ALL THIS
THAT I HAVE HOPE.
YAHWEH’S FAVOR IS NOT EXHAUSTED,
NOR HAS GOD’S COMPASSION FAILED.
THEY RISE UP ANEW EACH MORNING,
SO GREAT IS GOD’S FAITHFULNESS.
“YAHWEH IS ALL I HAVE,” I CRY.
“SO I WILL WAIT IN PATIENCE.”
THE MOST HIGH IS GOOD TO THOSE WHO HOPE IN GOD,
TO ALL WHO SEEK GOD’S PRESENCE.
IT IS GOOD TO WAIT PATIENTLY
FOR YAHWEH TO SET US FREE.

OLD TESTAMENT

#6

OF THOSE WHO LIE SLEEPING IN THE DUST OF THE
EARTH
MANY WILL AWAKE DANIEL 12:1-3

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET DANIEL

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

I, DANIEL, MOURNED AND I HEARD THIS WORD OF GOD:
“AT THAT TIME, MICHAEL, THE GREAT CHIEFTAIN WHO
STANDS
GUARD OVER YOUR PEOPLE, WILL STAND UP—
AND THERE WILL FOLLOW A TIME OF GREAT
SUFFERING
THE LIKES OF WHICH HAS NEVER BEEN KNOWN
FROM THE FOUNDING OF THE NATION UNTIL THAT
MOMENT.
WHEN THAT TIME COMES, YOUR PEOPLE WILL BE
RESCUED,
EVERY ONE WHOSE NAME IS WRITTEN IN THE SCROLL;
AND THOSE WHO LIKE SLEEPING IN THE DUST WILL
RISE UP,
SOME TO LIFE EVERLASTING
AND SOME TO THE REPROACH OF ETERNAL TORMENT.
THE WISE WILL SHINE LIKE THE BRIGHT HEAVENS,
AND LEADERS OF JUSTICE LIKE THE STARS FOREVER
MORE.

OLD TESTAMENT

#7

IT IS GOOD AND HOLY TO THINK OF THE DEAD RISING
AGAIN

MACCABEES 12:43-46

A READING FROM THE SECOND BOOK OF MACCABEES

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

JUDAS (THE RULER OF ISRAEL) THEN TOOK UP A
COLLECTION AMONG ALL HIS SOLDIERS, AMOUNTING
TO TWO THOUSAND SILVER DRACHMAS,
WHICH HE SENT TO JERUSALEM TO PROVIDE FOR AN
EXPIATORY SACRIFICE.

IN DOING THIS HE ACTED IN A VERY EXCELLENT AND
NOBLE WAY,
IN AS MUCH AS HE HAD THE RESURRECTION OF THE
DEAD IN VIEW;
FOR IF HE WERE NOT EXPECTING THE FALLEN TO RISE
AGAIN, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN USELESS AND FOOLISH
TO PRAY FOR THEM IN DEATH.
BUT IF HE DID THIS WITH A VIEW TO THE SPLENDID
REWARD THAT
AWAITS THOSE WHO HAD GONE TO REST IN
GODLINESS, IT WAS A
HOLY AND PIOUS THOUGHT.

THUS HE MADE ATONEMENT FOR THE DEAD THAT
THEY MIGHT
BE FREED FROM THIS SIN.

OLD TESTAMENT

#8

I KINGS 2:1,3-4

A READING FROM THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

AS DAVID GREW CLOSER TO DYING, HE GAVE A CHARGE TO SOLOMON:
FULFILL YOUR DUTIES TO YAHWEH YOUR GOD. CONFORM YOURSELF TO GOD’S WAYS, KEEP GOD’S STATUTES, COMMANDS, ORDINANCES, AND DECREES AS THEY ARE WRITTEN IN THE LAW OF MOSES. BY DOING THIS, YOU WILL SUCCEED IN WHATEVER YOU DO, WHEREVER YOU TURN. AND YAHWEH WILL KEEP THE DIVINE PROMISE MADE TO ME: “IF YOUR DESCENDANTS ARE CAREFUL TO WALK FAITHFULLY IN MY SIGHT WITH ALL THEIR HEART AND WITH ALL THEIR SOUL, YOU WILL NEVER LACK A SUCCESSOR ON THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF ISRAEL.”

OLD TESTAMENT

#9

2 MACCABEES 12:41, 43B-45

A READING FROM THE SECOND BOOK OF MACCABEES

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

THEY ALL THEREFORE PRAISED THE WAYS OF GOD,
THE JUST JUDGE WHO BRINGS TO LIGHT THE
THINGS

THAT ARE HIDDEN. IN DOING THIS HE ACTED IN A
VERY

EXCELLENT AND NOBLE WAY, INASMUCH AS HE
HAD

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD IN VIEW;

FOR IF HE WERE NOT EXPECTING THE FALLEN TO
RISE

AGAIN, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN USELESS AND FOOLISH
TO PRAY

FOR THEM IN DEATH. BUT IF HE DID THIS WITH A
VIEW

TO THE SPLENDID REWARD THAT AWAITS THOSE WHO
HAD

GONE TO REST IN HOLINESS, IT WAS A HOLY AND
PIOUS THOUGHT.

OLD TESTAMENT

#10

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES
ECCLESIASTES 3:1-8
(E-clee-cee-as-tees)

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

THERE IS AN APPOINTED TIME FOR EVERYTHING,
AND A TIME FOR EVERY AFFAIR UNDER THE
HEAVENS.
A TIME TO BE BORN, AND A TIME TO DIE;
A TIME TO PLANT, AND A TIME TO UPROOT THE
PLANT.
A TIME TO KILL, AND A TIME TO HEAL;
A TIME TO TEAR DOWN, AND A TIME TO BUILD.
A TIME TO WEEP, AND A TIME TO LAUGH;
A TIME TO MOURN, AND A TIME TO DANCE.
A TIME TO SCATTER STONES, AND A TIME TO GATHER
THEM;
A TIME TO EMBRACE, AND A TIME TO BE FAR
FROM EMBRACES.
A TIME TO SEEK, AND A TIME TO LOSE;
A TIME TO KEEP, AND A TIME TO CAST AWAY.
A TIME TO REND, AND A TIME TO SEW;
A TIME TO BE SILENT, AND A TIME TO SPEAK.
A TIME TO LOVE, AND A TIME TO HATE;
A TIME OF WAR, AND A TIME OF PEACE.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

OLD TESTAMENT

#10A

ECCLESIASTES 3:1-14

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

(E-clee-cee-as-tees)

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS IN THIS WORLD
HAPPENS AT THE TIME GOD CHOOSES.

A TIME FOR GIVING BIRTH, A TIME FOR DYING;
A TIME FOR PLANTING, A TIME FOR UPROOTING WHAT HAS
BEEN PLANTED;

A TIME FOR KILLING, A TIME FOR HEALING;
A TIME FOR KNOCKING DOWN, A TIME FOR BUILDING;

A TIME FOR TEARS, A TIME FOR LAUGHTER;
A TIME FOR MOURNING, A TIME FOR DANCING;

A TIME FOR THROWING STONES AWAY, A TIME FOR
GATHERING THEM UP;

A TIME FOR EMBRACING, A TIME TO REFRAIN FROM
EMBRACING;

A TIME FOR SEARCHING, A TIME FOR LOSING;
A TIME FOR KEEPING, A TIME FOR THROWING AWAY;

A TIME FOR TEARING, A TIME FOR SEWING;
A TIME FOR KEEPING SILENT, A TIME FOR SPEAKING;

A TIME FOR LOVING, A TIME FOR HATING;
A TIME FOR WAR, A TIME FOR PEACE.

WHAT DO WE GAIN FROM ALL OUR WORK? I KNOW THE HEAVY
BURDENS THAT GOD HAS LAID ON US. GOD HAS SET THE RIGHT
TIME FOR EVERYTHING. GOD HAS GIVEN US A DESIRE TO
KNOW THE FUTURE, BUT NEVER GIVES US THE SATISFACTION
OF FULLY UNDERSTANDING WHAT GOD DOES.

SO I REALIZE THAT ALL WE CAN DO IS BE HAPPY AND DO
THE BEST WE CAN WHILE WE ARE STILL ALIVE. ALL OF US
SHOULD EAT AND DRINK AND ENJOY WHAT WE HAVE WORKED
FOR. IT IS GOD’S GIFT. I KNOW THAT EVERYTHING GOD DOES
WILL LAST FOREVER.

OLD TESTAMENT

#11

EZEKIEL 34:11-12,14-15

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

FOR THUS SAYS OUR GOD: I MYSELF WILL LOOK AFTER
AND
TEND MY SHEEP. AS A SHEPHERD TENDS HIS FLOCK
WHEN HE
FINDS HIMSELF AMONG THE SCATTERED SHEEP, SO
WILL I TEND MY
SHEEP. I WILL RESCUE THEM FROM EVERY PLACE
WHERE THEY
WERE SCATTERED WHEN IT WAS CLOUDY AND DARK.
IN GOOD
PASTURES I WILL PASTURE THEM, AND ON THE
MOUNTAINS OF
ISRAEL SHALL BE THEIR GRAZING GROUND, AND IN
RICH PASTURES SHALL THEY BE PASTURED ON THE
MOUNTAINS OF ISRAEL. I MYSELF WILL PASTURE MY
SHEEP: I MYSELF WILL GIVE THEM REST, SAYS OUR
GOD.

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF SIRACH

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

SO LET US NOW GIVE PRAISE FOR AN ILLUSTRIOUS WOMAN.
SOME PEOPLE GOD HONORED WITH GREAT GLORY,
AND WERE RENOWNED FOR THEIR STRENGTH;
OTHERS DIRECTED THE PEOPLE BY THEIR ADVICE,
BY THEIR UNDERSTANDING
AND BY THE WISE WORDS OF THEIR TEACHING;
OTHERS COMPOSED MUSICAL MELODIES
AND OTHERS SET DOWN BALLADS;
OTHERS WERE RICH AND POWERFUL
LIVING PEACEFULLY IN THEIR HOMES.
ALL THESE WERE HONORED BY THEIR CONTEMPORARIES,
AND WERE THE GLORY OF THEIR DAY.
SOME OF THEM LEFT A NAME BEHIND THEM,
SO THAT THEIR PRAISES ARE STILL SUNG;
WHILE OTHERS HAVE LEFT NO MEMORY,
AND DISAPPEARED AS THOUGH THEY HAD NOT EXISTED,
THEY ARE NOW AS THOUGH THEY HAD NEVER BEEN,
AND SO TOO, THEIR FAMILY AFTER THEM.
BUT HERE IS AN ILLUSTRIOUS WOMAN
WHOSE GOOD LIFE WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN.
HER REPUTATION WILL BE PASSED ON TO HER DESCENDANTS
AND THIS WILL BE THEIR INHERITANCE.
HER FAMILY CONTINUES TO KEEP THE COVENANT
AND WILL, BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY HAVE DONE.
HER FAMILY LINE WILL CONTINUE,
AND HER GLORY WILL NOT FADE.
HER BODY WILL BE LAID TO REST,
BUT HER REPUTATION WILL LIVE FOREVER.
THE PEOPLE WILL PROCLAIM HER WISDOM,
AND THE ASSEMBLY WILL CELEBRATE HER PRAISES.

OLD TESTAMENT

#12-A

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTICUS
(E-clee-cee-as-ti-cus)

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

HERE IS A MAN OF INTEGRITY
WHOSE GOOD LIFE WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN.
HIS REPUTATION WILL BE PASSED ON TO HIS
DESCENDANTS,
AND THIS WILL BE THEIR INHERITANCE.
HIS FAMILY CONTINUES TO KEEP THE COVENANT
AND WILL, BECAUSE OF WHAT THEIR FATHER DID.
HIS FAMILY LINE WILL CONTINUE,
AND HIS GLORY WILL NOT FADE.
HE WILL BE LAID TO REST,
BUT HIS REPUTATION WILL LIVE FOREVER.
THE PEOPLE WILL PROCLAIM HIS WISDOM,
AND THE ASSEMBLY WILL CELEBRATE HIS
PRAISES.

OLD TESTAMENT

SIRACH 44: 10-15

#12-B

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF SIRACH

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

SO LET US NOW GIVE PRAISE FOR AN ILLUSTRIOUS MAN.
SOME PEOPLE GOD HONORED WITH GREAT GLORY,
AND WERE RENOWNED FOR THEIR STRENGTH;
OTHERS DIRECTED THE PEOPLE BY THEIR ADVICE,
BY THEIR UNDERSTANDING
-AND BY THE WISE WORDS OF THEIR TEACHING;
OTHERS COMPOSED MUSICAL MELODIES
AND OTHERS SET DOWN BALLADS;
OTHERS WERE RICH AND POWERFUL
LIVING PEACEFULLY IN THEIR HOMES.
ALL THESE WERE HONORED BY THEIR CONTEMPORARIES,
AND WERE THE GLORY OF THEIR DAY.
SOME OF THEM LEFT A NAME BEHIND THEM,
SO THAT THEIR PRAISES ARE STILL SUNG;
WHILE OTHERS HAVE LEFT NO MEMORY,
AND DISAPPEARED AS THOUGH THEY HAD NOT EXISTED,
THEY ARE NOW AS THOUGH THEY HAD NEVER BEEN,
AND SO TOO, THEIR CHILDREN AFTER THEM.
BUT HERE IS AN ILLUSTRIOUS MAN
WHOSE GOOD LIFE WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN.
HIS REPUTATION WILL BE PASSED ON TO HIS DESCENDANTS
AND THIS WILL BE THEIR INHERITANCE.
HIS FAMILY CONTINUES TO KEEP THE COVENANT
AND WILL, BECAUSE OF WHAT THEIR FATHER DID.
HIS FAMILY LINE WILL CONTINUE,
AND HIS GLORY WILL NOT FADE.
HIS BODY WILL BE LAID TO REST,
BUT HIS REPUTATION WILL LIVE FOREVER.
THE PEOPLE WILL PROCLAIM HER WISDOM,
AND THE ASSEMBLY WILL CELEBRATE HIS PRAISES.

OLD TESTAMENT

#13

PROVERBS 31: 10,12-13, 19-20, 25-26, 28-29

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

WHEN ONE HAS A WORTHY MOTHER
HER VALUE IS FAR BEYOND PEARLS.

HER FAMILY, ENTRUSTING THEIR HEART TO HER
HAS AN UNFAILING PRIZE.

SHE BRINGS THEM GOOD AND NOT EVIL
ALL THE DAYS OF HER LIFE.

SHE REACHES OUT HER HANDS TO THE POOR,
AND EXTENDS HER ARMS TO THE NEEDY.

STRENGTH AND DIGNITY ARE HER GARMENTS,
SHE SMILES AT THE TIME TO COME.

SHE OPENS HER LIPS WITH WISDOM
AND THE TEACHING OF KINDNESS IS ON HER
TONGUE.

HER CHILDREN RISE UP AND CALL HER BLESSED.
"MANY WOMEN HAVE DONE EXCELLENTLY
BUT YOU SURPASS THEM ALL."

OLD TESTAMENT

#14

SIRACH 26:1-4, 14-17

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF SIRACH

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

WHEN A COUPLE DEVELOPS A HAPPY MARRIAGE
THEY DOUBLE THEIR DAYS TOGETHER.
A WORTHY SPOUSE BRINGS JOY TO THE RELATIONSHIP,
AND TOGETHER THEIR LIFE IS PEACEFUL AND FULL.
A GOOD SPOUSE IS A GREAT BLESSING
ACCORDED ON THOSE WHO FEAR YAHWEH;
RICH OR POOR, THEY CARRY A GLAD HEART,
AND THEY ALWAYS WEAR A SMILE.
A LOVING PARTNER IS A CONTINUAL DELIGHT;
MUTUAL THOUGHTFULNESS ENHANCES THE UNION.
A JUDICIOUS MOUTH IS A HOLY GIFT IN A SPOUSE,
AND STRONG CHARACTER IS PRICELESS.
MODESTY IS A SPECIAL BLESSING,
AND A WELCOMING HOME BRINGS GRACE TO THE
WHOLE
FAMILY.
VIEW THE SUN COMING UP OVER GOD’S MOUNTAINS
AND YOU WITNESS GOOD MATES IN A HAPPY
HOUSEHOLD.
RADIANT AS THE LIGHT FROM THE SACRED
LAMPSTAND
IS THE BEAUTY AND GRACE OF A COUPLE IN LOVE.

OLD TESTAMENT

#15

SIRACH 3:1-4, 6, 12, 14

DUTIES TO PARENTS (Father)

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF SIRACH

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

CHILDREN, LISTEN TO ME; I AM YOUR FATHER. DO WHAT

I TELL YOU AND YOU WILL BE SAFE, FOR GOD HAS GIVEN FATHERS AUTHORITY OVER THEIR CHILDREN AND GIVEN CHILDREN THE OBLIGATION TO OBEY THEIR FATHERS.

IF YOU RESPECT YOUR FATHER, YOU CAN MAKE UP FOR YOUR SINS, AND IF YOU HONOR YOUR FATHER, YOU ARE EARNING GREAT WEALTH. IF YOU OBEY GOD BY HONORING YOUR FATHER AND MAKING YOUR FATHER HAPPY, YOU WILL LIVE A LONG LIFE.

CHILDREN, TAKE CARE OF YOUR FATHER WHEN HE GROWS OLD; GIVE HIM NO CAUSE FOR WORRY AS LONG AS HE LIVES. GOD WILL NOT FORGET THE KINDNESS YOU SHOW TO YOUR FATHER; IT WILL HELP MAKE UP FOR YOUR SINS.

OLD TESTAMENT

#16

SIRACH 3:1-4, 6, 12, 14

DUTIES TO PARENTS (Mother)

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF SIRACH

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

CHILDREN, LISTEN TO ME; I AM YOUR MOTHER. DO
WHAT

I TELL YOU AND YOU WILL BE SAFE, FOR GOD HAS
GIVEN MOTHERS AUTHORITY OVER THEIR CHILDREN
AND GIVEN CHILDREN THE OBLIGATION TO OBEY
THEIR MOTHERS.

IF YOU RESPECT YOUR MOTHER, YOU CAN MAKE UP
FOR YOUR SINS, AND IF YOU HONOR YOUR MOTHER,
YOU ARE EARNING GREAT WEALTH. IF YOU OBEY GOD
BY HONORING YOUR MOTHER AND MAKING YOUR
MOTHER HAPPY, YOU WILL LIVE A LONG LIFE.

CHILDREN, TAKE CARE OF YOUR MOTHER WHEN SHE
GROWS OLD; GIVE HER NO CAUSE FOR WORRY AS
LONG AS SHE LIVES. GOD WILL NOT FORGET THE
KINDNESS YOU SHOW TO YOUR MOTHER; IT WILL HELP
MAKE UP FOR YOUR SINS.

OLD TESTAMENT

#17

A READING FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

YOU ARE THE ONLY GOD,

AND YOU LOVE ALL PEOPLE.

**YOU ARE STRONG AND YOU TREAT EVERYONE WITH
JUSTICE.**

YOU ARE THE ONE WHO CREATED US,

AND SO YOU ARE GENTLE AND FORGIVING WITH US.

**BY YOUR EXAMPLE, YOU SHOWED US THAT TO DO
YOUR WILL,**

WE MUST BE KIND TO EVERYONE.

WE ARE YOUR CHILDREN AND YOU GIVE US HOPE,

BECAUSE YOU FORGIVE OUR SINS.

OLD TESTAMENT

#18

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF WISDOM

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

**YOU ARE THE ONLY GOD,
AND YOU LOVE ALL PEOPLE.
YOU ARE STRONG
AND YOU TREAT EVERYONE WITH JUSTICE.
YOU ARE THE ONE WHO CREATED US,
AND SO YOU ARE GENTLE AND
FORGIVING WITH US.
BY YOUR EXAMPLE,
YOU SHOWED US
THAT TO DO YOUR WILL,
WE MUST BE KIND TO EVERYONE.
WE ARE YOUR CHILDREN
AND YOU GIVE US HOPE,
BECAUSE YOU FORGIVE OUR SINS.**

OLD TESTAMENT

#19

MICAH 6:6;8

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET MICAH

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

“WHAT SHALL I BRING WHEN I COME BEFORE YAWEH,
AND BOW DOWN BEFORE GOD ON HIGH?” YOU ASK.

LISTEN HERE, MORTAL:

GOD HAS ALREADY MADE ABUNDANTLY CLEAR
WHAT “GOOD” IS, AND WHAT YAWEH NEEDS FROM
YOU:

SIMPLY DO JUSTICE,
LOVE KINDNESS,
AND HUMBLY WALK WITH YOUR GOD.

OLD TESTAMENT

#20

ISAIAH 35: 3-6;10

A READING FROM THE PROPHET ISAIAH

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

STRENGTHEN ALL WEARY HANDS,
STEADY ALL TREMBLING KNEES.
SAY TO ALL THOSE OF FAINT HEART:
“TAKE COURAGE! DO NOT BE AFRAID!
LOOK, YAWEH IS COMING, VINDICATION IS COMING,
THE RECOMPENSE OF GOD—
GOD IS COMING TO SAVE YOU!”
THEN THE EYES OF THE BLIND WILL BE OPENED,
THE EARS OF THE DEAF WILL BE UNSEALED.
THEN THOSE WHO CANNOT WALK WILL LEAP LIKE
DEER
AND THE TONGUES OF THOSE WHO CANNOT SPEAK
WILL SING FOR JOY.
FOR THOSE WHOM YAWEH HAS RANSOMED WILL
RETURN.
THEY WILL ENTER ZION SHOUTING FOR JOY,
WITH EVERLASTING JOY ON THEIR FACES;
JOY AND GLADNESS WILL GO WITH THEM,
AND SORROW AND LAMENT WILL FLEE AWAY.

NEW TESTAMENT

#1

GOD HAS APPOINTED JESUS TO JUDGE EVERYONE,
ALIVE AND DEAD (LONG VERSION) ACTS 10:34-43

A READING FROM THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

PETER PROCEEDED TO ADDRESS THE PEOPLE IN THESE WORDS: “I BEGIN TO SEE HOW TRUE IT IS THAT GOD SHOWS NO PARTIALITY—RATHER, THAT ANY PERSON OF ANY NATIONALITY WHO FEARS GOD AND DOES WHAT IS RIGHT IS ACCEPTABLE TO GOD. THIS IS THE MESSAGE GOD HAS SENT TO THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, THE GOOD NEWS OF PEACE PROCLAIMED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, WHO IS SAVIOR OF ALL. YOU YOURSELVES KNOW WHAT TOOK PLACE THROUGHOUT JUDEA, BEGINNING IN GALILEE WITH THE BAPTISM JOHN PROCLAIMED. YOU KNOW HOW GOD ANOINTED JESUS OF NAZARETH WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND WITH POWER, AND HOW JESUS WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD WORKS AND HEALING ALL WHO WERE IN THE GRIP OF THE DEVIL. BECAUSE GOD WAS WITH HIM. WE ARE EYEWITNESSES TO ALL THAT JESUS DID IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND IN JERUSALEM. FINALLY, JESUS WAS KILLED AND HUNG ON A TREE, ONLY TO BE RAISED BY GOD ON THE THIRD DAY. GOD ALLOWED HIM TO BE SEEN, NOT BY EVERYONE, BUT ONLY BY THE WITNESSES WHO HAD BEEN CHOSEN BEFOREHAND BY GOD—THAT IS, BY US, WHO ATE AND DRANK WITH CHRIST AFTER THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD. AND CHRIST COMMISSIONED US TO PREACH TO THE PEOPLE AND TO BEAR WITNESS THAT THIS IS THE ONE SET APART BY GOD AS JUDGE OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD. TO CHRIST JESUS ALL THE PROPHETS TESTIFY, THAT EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES HAS FORGIVENESS OF SINS THROUGH THIS NAME.”

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#1-A

GOD HAS APPOINTED JESUS TO JUDGE EVERYONE,
ALIVE AND DEAD
ACTS 10:34-36, 42-43

A READING FROM THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

PETER PROCEEDED TO ADDRESS THE PEOPLE IN THESE WORDS:

“I BEGIN TO SEE HOW TRUE IT IS THAT GOD SHOWS NO PARTIALITY—RATHER, THAT ANY PERSON OF ANY NATIONALITY WHO FEARS GOD AND DOES WHAT IS RIGHT IS ACCEPTABLE TO GOD. THIS IS THE MESSAGE GOD HAS SENT TO THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, THE GOOD NEWS OF PEACE PROCLAIMED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, WHO IS SAVIOR OF ALL.

AND CHRIST COMMISSIONED US TO PREACH TO THE PEOPLE AND TO BEAR WITNESS THAT THIS IS THE ONE SET APART BY GOD AS JUDGE OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD. TO CHRIST JESUS ALL THE PROPHETS TESTIFY, THAT EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES HAS FORGIVENESS OF SINS THROUGH THIS NAME.”

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#2

ROMANS 5:5-11

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

HOPE DOES NOT DISAPPOINT, BECAUSE THE LOVE OF GOD HAS BEEN
POURED OUT IN OUR HEARTS THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO HAS
BEEN GIVEN TO US.

AT THE APPOINTED TIME, WHEN WE WERE STILL POWERLESS, CHRIST DIED FOR US GODLESS PEOPLE. IT IS NOT EASY TO DIE EVEN FOR A GOOD PERSON—THOUGH OF COURSE FOR SOMEONE REALLY WORTHY, THERE MIGHT BE SOMEONE PREPARED TO DIE—BUT THE PROOF OF GOD’S LOVE IS THAT CHRIST DIED FOR US EVEN WHILE WE WERE SINNERS.

NOW THAT WE HAVE BEEN JUSTIFIED BY CHRIST’S BLOOD, IT IS ALL THE MORE CERTAIN THAT WE WILL BE SAVED BY CHRIST FROM GOD’S WRATH. FOR IF WE WERE RECONCILED TO GOD BY CHRIST’S DEATH WHILE WE WERE GOD’S ENEMIES, HOW MUCH MORE CERTAIN THAT WE WHO HAVE BEEN RECONCILED WILL BE SAVED BY CHRIST’S LIFE! NOT ONLY THAT, WE GO SO FAR AS TO MAKE GOD OUR BOAST THROUGH OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST, THROUGH WHOM WE HAVE NOW RECEIVED RECONCILIATION.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#3

WHERE SIN INCREASED, THERE GRACE ABOUNDED ALL
THE MORE
ROMANS 5:17-21

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE
ROMANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

IF DEATH BEGAN ITS REIGN THROUGH ONE PERSON
BECAUSE OF AN OFFENSE, SO MUCH MORE WILL THOSE
WHO RECEIVE THE OVERFLOWING GRACE AND THE
GIFT OF JUSTICE LIVE AND REIGN THROUGH THE ONE
JESUS CHRIST.

TO SUM UP, THEN; JUST AS A SINGLE OFFENSE
BROUGHT CONDEMNATION TO ALL, A SINGLE
RIGHTEOUS ACT BROUGHT ALL ACQUITTAL AND LIFE.
JUST AS THROUGH ONE PERSON’S DISOBEDIENCE, ALL
BECAME SINNERS, SO THROUGH ONE PERSON’S
OBEDIENCE, ALL WILL BECOME JUST.

WHEN THE LAW CAME, THE INABILITY TO OBEY THE
LAW CAME ALL THE MORE. BU WHERE SIN INCREASED,
GRACE ABOUNDED ALL THE MORE, SO THAT WHERE
SIN HAD REIGNED IN DEATH, GRACE MIGHT REIGN
THROUGH THE JUSTICE THAT LEADS TO ETERNAL LIFE,
THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOR.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#4

LET US WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE
ROMANS 6:3-9

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE
ROMANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

FOR IF WE HAVE BEEN UNITED WITH CHRIST IN THE LIKENESS OF CHRIST’S DEATH, WE WILL ALSO BE UNITED WITH CHRIST IN THE LIKENESS OF CHRIST’S RESURRECTION. WE MUST REALIZE THAT OUR FORMER SELVES HAVE BEEN CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST TO MAKE THE BODY OF SIN AND FAILURE COMPLETELY POWERLESS, TO FREE US FROM SLAVERY TO SIN; FOR WHEN PEOPLE DIE, THEY HAVE FINISHED WITH SIN. BUT WE BELIEVE THAT, HAVING DIED WITH CHRIST, WE WILL ALSO LIVE WITH CHRIST—KNOWING THAT CHRIST, HAVING BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD, WILL NEVER DIE AGAIN; DEATH IS NOW POWERLESS OVER OUR SAVIOR.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#5

WE GROAN WHILE WE WAIT FOR THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODIES

ROMANS 8:14-23

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

THOSE WHO ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD. FOR THE SPIRIT THAT GOD HAS GIVEN YOU DOES NOT ENSLAVE YOU AND TRAP YOU IN FEAR; INSTEAD, THROUGH THE SPIRIT GOD HAS ADOPTED YOU AS CHILDREN, AND BY THAT SPIRIT WE CRY OUT, “ABBA!” GOD’S SPIRIT JOINS WITH OUR SPIRIT TO DECLARE THAT WE ARE GOD’S CHILDREN. AND IF WE ARE CHILDREN, WE ARE HEIRS AS WELL; HEIRS OF GOD AND COHEIRS WITH CHRIST, SHARING IN CHRIST’S SUFFERING AND SHARING IN CHRIST’S GLORY.

INDEED, I CONSIDER THE SUFFERINGS OF THE PRESENT TO BE NOTHING COMPARED WITH THE GLORY THAT WILL BE REVEALED IN US. ALL CREATION EAGERLY AWAITS THE REVELATION OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD. CREATION WAS SUBJECTED TO TRANSIENCE AND FUTILITY, NOT OF ITS OWN ACCORD, BUT BECAUSE OF THE ONE WHO SUBJECTED IT—IN THE HOPE THAT CREATION ITSELF WOULD BE FREED FROM ITS SLAVERY TO CORRUPTION AND WOULD COME TO SHARE IN THE GLORIOUS FREEDOM OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD. WE KNOW THAT FROM THE BEGINNING UNTIL NOW, ALL OF CREATION HAS BEEN GROANING IN ONE GREAT ACT OF GIVING BIRTH. AND NOT ONLY CREATION, BUT ALL OF US WHO POSSESS THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THE SPIRIT—WE TOO GROAN INWARDLY AS WE WAIT FOR OUR BODIES TO BE SET FREE.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

New Testament

#6

WHO CAN EVER COME BETWEEN US AND THE LOVE OF CHRIST

ROMANS 8:31B-35, 37-39

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

“IF GOD IS FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?” SINCE GOD DID NOT SPARE THE ONLY BEGOTTEN, BUT GAVE CHRIST UP FOR THE SAKE OF US ALL, WE MAY BE CERTAIN, AFTER SUCH A GIFT, THAT GOD WILL FREELY GIVE US EVERYTHING. WHO WILL BRING A CHARGE AGAINST GOD’S CHOSEN ONES? SINCE GOD IS THE ONE WHO JUSTIFIES, WHO HAS THE POWER TO CONDEMN? ONLY CHRIST JESUS, WHO DIED—OR RATHER, WAS RAISED—AND SITS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, AND WHO NOW INTERCEDES FOR US!

WHAT WILL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST? TROUBLE? CALAMITY? PERSECUTION? HUNGER? NAKEDNESS? DANGER? VIOLENCE? AS SCRIPTURE SAYS, “FOR YOUR SAKE, WE’RE BEING KILLED ALL DAY LONG; WE’RE LOOKED UPON AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED. YET IN ALL THIS WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS BECAUSE OF GOD WHO HAS LOVED US. FOR I AM CERTAIN THAT NEITHER DEATH NOT LIFE, NEITHER ANGELS NOR DEMONS, NEITHER THE PRESENT NOR THE FUTURE, NEITHER HEIGHTS NOR DEPTHS—NOR ANYTHING ELSE IN ALL CREATION—WILL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD THAT COMES TO US IN CHRIST JESUS, OUR SAVIOR.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#7

WHETHER ALIVE OR DEAD, WE BELONG TO CHRIST
JESUS
ROMANS 14:7-9, 10B-12

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE
ROMANS

WE DON'T LIVE FOR OURSELVES, NOR DO WE DIE FOR
OURSELVES. WHILE WE LIVE, WE LIVE FOR CHRIST
JESUS, AND WHEN WE DIE, WE DIE FOR CHRIST JESUS.
BOTH IN LIFE AND IN DEATH, WE BELONG TO CHRIST.
THAT'S WHY CHRIST DIED AND CAME TO LIFE AGAIN—
IN ORDER TO REIGN SUPREME OVER BOTH THE LIVING
AND THE DEAD.

BUT YOU , HOW CAN YOU SIT IN JUDGMENT OF YOUR
SISTERS OR BROTHERS? OR YOU, HOW CAN YOU LOOK
DOWN ON YOUR SISTERS OR BROTHERS? WE WILL ALL
HAVE TO APPEAR BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF
GOD. SCRIPTURE SAYS, "AS SURELY AS I LIVE—IT IS
OUR GOD WHO SPEAKS—'EVERY KNEE WILL BEND
BEFORE ME AND EVERY TONGUE WILL GIVE PRAISE TO
GOD.'" WE WILL ALL HAVE TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF
OURSELVES BEFORE GOD.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#7A

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO
THE CORINTHIANS (1 Cor.2: 6-9)

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

WE DO SPEAK OF WISDOM TO THOSE WHO ARE
MATURE, BUT NOT A WISDOM OF THIS AGE, NOR
OF THE RULERS OF THIS AGE WHO ARE PASSING
AWAY.

RATHER, WE SPEAK GOD’S WISDOM,
MYSTERIOUS, HIDDEN, WHICH GOD HAS KNOWN
FOR ALL AGES FOR OUR GLORY.

FOR IT IS WRITTEN:

“EYE HAS NOT SEEN, EAR HAS NOT HEARD, NOR
HAS IT ENTERED THE HUMAN HEART, WHAT GOD
HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE GOD.”

YET GOD HAS REVEALED THIS WISDOM TO US
THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#8

ALL PEOPLE WILL BE BROUGHT TO LIFE IN CHRIST
1 CORINTHIANS 15:20-23, 24B-28

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE
CORINTHIANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

CHRIST HAS BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD, THE FIRST FRUITS OF THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP. FOR SINCE DEATH CAME THROUGH ONE HUMAN BEING, IN THE SAME WAY THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD HAS COME THROUGH ONE HUMAN BEING.

JUST AS IN ADAM ALL DIE, SO IN CHRIST ALL WILL COME TO LIFE AGAIN, BUT ALL OF THEM IN THEIR PROPER ORDER: CHRIST AS THE FIRSTFRUITS, AND THEN THE FAITHFUL WHEN CHRIST COMES AGAIN. AFTER THAT WILL COME THE END, WHEN CHRIST HANDS OVER THE KINGDOM TO GOD THE CREATOR, HAVING DONE AWAY WITH EVERY SOVEREIGNTY, AUTHORITY AND POWER. CHRIST MUST REIGN UNTIL GOD HAS PUT ALL ENEMIES UNDER CHRIST’S FOOT, AND THE LAST ENEMY TO BE DESTROYED IS DEATH, FOR EVERYTHING IS “PUT UNDER” CHRIST’S FOOT. BUT WHEN IT SAYS THAT EVERYTHING HAS BEEN SUBJECTED, IT IS CLEAR THAT THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE GOD, WHO SUBJECTED EVERYTHING TO CHRIST. CHRIST WILL IN TURN BE SUBJECTED TO THE GOD WHO HAD SUBJECTED EVERYTHING TO CHIRST—AND SO GOD WILL BE ALL IN ALL.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#8-A

ALL PEOPLE WILL BE BROUGHT TO LIFE IN CHRIST
1 CORINTHIANS 15:20-23 (SHORT VERSION)

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE
CORINTHIANS

CHRIST HAS BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD, THE FIRST
FRUITS OF THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP. FOR
SINCE DEATH CAME THROUGH A HUMAN BEING, THE
RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD CAME ALSO THROUGH A
HUMAN BEING.

JUST AS IN ADAM ALL DIE, SO IN CHRIST ALL WILL
COME TO LIFE AGAIN, BUT ALL OF THEM IN THEIR
PROPER ORDER: CHRIST AS THE FIRSTFRUITS, AND
THEN THE FAITHFUL WHEN CHRIST COMES AGAIN.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#9

DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY
1 CORINTHIANS 15:51-57

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE
CORINTHIANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

BEHOLD, I TELL YOU A MYSTERY, WE SHALL NOT ALL FALL
ASLEEP,
BUT WE WILL ALL BE CHANGED, IN AN INSTANT, IN THE BLINK
OF AN
EYE, AT THE LAST TRUMPET. FOR THE TRUMPET WILL SOUND,
THE DEAD
WILL BE RAISED INCORRUPTIBLE, AND WE SHALL BE
CHANGED.

FOR THAT WHICH IS CORRUPTIBLE MUST CLOTHE ITSELF WITH
INCORRUPTIBILITY,
AND THAT WHICH IS MORTAL MUST CLOTHE ITSELF WITH
IMMORTALITY.
AND WHEN THAT WHICH IS CORRUPTIBLE CLOTHES ITSELF
WITH
INCORRUPTIBILITY AND THAT WHICH IS MORTAL CLOTHES
ITSELF WITH IMMORTALITY, THEN THE WORD THAT IS
WRITTEN SHALL COME ABOUT:

"DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY.
WHERE, O DEATH, IS YOUR VICTORY?
WHERE, O DEATH IS YOUR STING?"

THE STING OF DEATH IS SIN, AND THE POWER OF SIN IS THE
LAW.

BUT THANKS BE TO GOD WHO GIVES US THE VICTORY
THROUGH OUR
SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#10

WHAT IS SEEN IS TRANSITORY; WHAT IS UNSEEN IS
ETERNAL

2 CORINTHIANS 4:14-5:1

A READING FROM THE SECOND LETTER OF PAUL TO
THE CORINTHIANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

WE KNOW THAT THE ONE WHO RAISED JESUS WILL
RAISE US ALSO WITH JESUS AND PLACE US WITH YOU
IN GOD’S PRESENCE.

EVERYTHING INDEED IS FOR YOU, SO THAT THE GRACE
BESTOWED IN

ABUNDANCE ON MORE AND MORE PEOPLE MAY CAUSE
THE THANKSGIVING TO OVERFLOW FOR THE GLORY OF
GOD.

THEREFORE, WE ARE NOT DISCOURAGED; RATHER,
ALTHOUGH OUR OUTER SELF IS WASTING AWAY, OUR
INNER SELF IS BEING RENEWED DAY BY DAY. FOR THIS
MOMENTARY LIGHT AFFLICTION IS PRODUCING FOR US
AN ETERNAL WEIGHT OF GLORY BEYOND ALL
COMPARISON, AS WE LOOK NOT TO WHAT IS SEEN BUT
TO WHAT IS UNSEEN; FOR WHAT IS SEEN IS
TRANSITORY, BUT WHAT IS UNSEEN IS ETERNAL. FOR
WE KNOW THAT IF OUR EARTHLY DWELLING, A TENT,
SHOULD BE DESTROYED, WE HAVE A BUILDING FROM
GOD, A DWELLING NOT MADE WITH HANDS, ETERNAL
IN HEAVEN.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#11

WE HAVE AN EVERLASTING HOME IN HEAVEN
2 CORINTHIANS 5:1, 6-10

A READING FROM THE SECOND LETTER OF PAUL TO
THE CORINTHIANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

WE KNOW THAT IF OUR EARTHLY DWELLING, A TENT,
SHOULD BE
DESTROYED, WE HAVE A BUILDING FROM GOD, A
DWELLING NOT MADE WITH HANDS, ETERNAL IN
HEAVEN.

SO WE ARE ALWAYS FULL OF CONFIDENCE, ALTHOUGH
WE KNOW THAT WHILE WE ARE AT HOME IN THE BODY
WE ARE AWAY FROM JESUS CHRIST. WE WALK BY
FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT. YET WE ARE COURAGEOUS, AND
WE WOULD RATHER LEAVE THE BODY AND GO HOME
TO CHRIST.

THEREFORE, WE ASPIRE TO PLEASE CHRIST, WHETHER
WE ARE AT HOME OR AWAY. FOR WE MUST ALL
APPEAR BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST, SO
THAT EACH ONE MAY RECEIVE RECOMPENSE,
ACCORDING TO WHAT WE DID IN THE BODY, WHETHER
GOOD OR EVIL.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#12

PHILIPPIANS 3:20-21

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE
PHILIPPIANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

WE HAVE OUR CITIZENSHIP IN HEAVEN; IT’S FROM
THERE THAT WE EAGERLY AWAIT THE COMING OF OUR
SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST, WHO WILL GIVE A NEW FORM
TO THIS LOWLY BODY OF OURS AND REMAKE IT
ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN OF THE GLORIFIED
BODY, BY CHRIST’S POWER TO BRING EVERYTHING
UNDER SUBJECTION.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#13

WE SHALL STAY WITH CHRIST FOREVER
THESSALONIANS 4:13-18

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE
THESSALONIANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

WE WOULD HAVE YOU BE CLEAR ABOUT THOSE WHO SLEEP IN DEATH, BROTHERS AND SISTERS; OTHERWISE YOU MIGHT YIELD TO GRIEF, LIKE THOSE WHO HAVE NO HOPE. FOR IF WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED AND ROSE, IN THE SAME WAY GOD WILL BRING WITH JESUS ALL WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP BELIEVING IN JESUS. WE ARE SPEAKING TO YOU NOW JUST AS IF JESUS WERE SPEAKING TO YOU; WE WHO LIVE, WHO SURVIVE UNTIL JESUS RETURNS, WILL HAVE NO ADVANTAGE OVER THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP. NO, JESUS WILL PERSONALLY COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN WITH A SHOUT, AT THE SOUND OF THE ARCHANGEL’S VOICE AND THE TRUMPET OF GOD, AND THOSE WHO HAVE DIED IN CHRIST WILL RISE FIRST. THEN WE THE LIVING, THE SURVIVORS, WILL BE CAUGHT UP WITH THEM IN THE CLOUDS TO MEET JESUS IN THE AIR—AND THENCEFORTH WE WILL BE WITH JESUS UNCEASINGLY. THEREFORE CONSOLE ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#14

IF WE HAVE DIED WITH CHRIST, WE SHALL LIVE WITH CHRIST

II TIMOTHY 2:8-13

A READING FROM THE SECOND LETTER OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

REMEMBER JESUS CHRIST, RAISED FROM THE DEAD, A DESCENDANT OF DAVID: SUCH IS MY GOSPEL, FOR WHICH I AM SUFFERING, EVEN TO THE POINT OF CHAINS, LIKE A CRIMINAL. BUT THE WORD OF GOD IS NOT CHAINED. THEREFORE, I BEAR WITH EVERYTHING FOR THE SAKE OF THOSE WHO ARE CHOSEN, SO THAT THEY TOO MAY OBTAIN THE SALVATION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS, TOGETHER WITH ETERNAL GLORY. THIS SAYING IS TRUSTWORTHY:

IF WE HAVE DIED WITH CHRIST

WE SHALL ALSO LIVE WITH CHRIST;

IF WE PERSEVERE

WE SHALL ALSO REIGN WITH CHRIST.

BUT IF WE DENY CHRIST,

CHRIST WILL DENY US.

IF WE ARE UNFAITHFUL

CHRIST REMAINS FAITHFUL,

FOR CHRIST CANNOT BE UNFAITHFUL.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#15

WE SHALL SEE GOD AS GOD REALLY IS
1 JOHN 3:1-2

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

SEE WHAT LOVE OUR GOD HAS BESTOWED ON US THAT WE MAY BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD. YET SO WE ARE. THE REASON THE WORLD DOES NOT KNOW US IS THAT IT DID NOT KNOW GOD. BELOVED, WE ARE GOD'S CHILDREN NOW; WHAT WE SHALL BE HAS NOT YET BEEN REVEALED. WE DO KNOW THAT WHEN IT IS REVEALED WE SHALL BE LIKE GOD, FOR WE SHALL SEE GOD AS GOD IS.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#16

WE HAVE PASSED FROM DEATH TO LIFE,
BECAUSE WE LOVE OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS
1 JOHN 3:14-16

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE PASSED FROM DEATH TO
LIFE BECAUSE WE LOVE OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS.
WHOEVER DOES NOT LOVE REMAINS IN DEATH. THOSE
WHO HATE THEIR SISTERS OR BROTHERS ARE
MURDERERS. AND MURDERERS, YOU KNOW, DO NOT
HAVE ETERNAL LIFE IN THEM.
THIS IS HOW WE KNOW WHAT LOVE IS; JESUS CHRIST
DIED FOR US. AND WE ,TOO, OUGHT TO LAY DOWN OUR
LIVES FOR OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#17

THERE WILL BE NO MORE DEATH
REVELATION 21:1-5A,6B-7

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

I SAW A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH. THE FORMER HEAVEN AND THE FORMER EARTH HAD PASSED AWAY, AND THE SEA WAS NO MORE. I ALSO SAW THE HOLY CITY, A NEW JERUSALEM, COMING DOWN OUT OF HEAVEN FROM GOD, PREPARED AS A BRIDE ADORNED FOR HER HUSBAND. I HEARD A LOUD VOICE FROM THE THRONE SAYING, "BEHOLD, GOD'S DWELLING IS WITH THE HUMAN RACE. GOD WILL DWELL WITH THEM AND THEY WILL BE GOD'S PEOPLE AND GOD WILL ALWAYS BE WITH THEM AS THEIR GOD. THE MOST HIGH WILL WIPE AWAY EVERY TEAR FROM THEIR EYES, AND THERE SHALL BE NO MORE DEATH OR MOURNING, WAILING OR PAIN, FOR THE OLD ORDER HAS PASSED AWAY."

THE ONE WHO SAT ON THE THRONE SAID, "BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW. I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA, THE BEGINNING AND THE END. TO THE THIRSTY I WILL GIVE A GIFT FROM THE SPRING OF LIFE-GIVING WATER. THE VICTOR WILL INHERIT THESE GIFTS, AND I SHALL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY WILL BE MY CHILDREN."

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#18

1 JOHN 4:15-18A

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

WHEN ANYONE ACKNOWLEDGES THAT JESUS IS THE ONLY BEGOTTEN, GOD DWELLS IN THEM AND THEY IN GOD.

WE HAVE COME TO KNOW AND BELIEVE IN THE LOVE GOD HAS FOR US. GOD IS LOVE AND THOSE WHO ABIDE IN LOVE ABIDE IN GOD, AND GOD IN THEM. OUR LOVE IS BROUGHT TO PERFECTION IN THIS, THAT WE SHOULD HAVE CONFIDENCE ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT; FOR OUR RELATION TO THIS WORLD IS JUST LIKE CHRIST’S. LOVE HAS NO ROOM FOR FEAR; RATHER PERFECT LOVE CASTS OUT ALL FEAR.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#19

II TIMOTHY 4:6-8

A READING FROM THE SECOND LETTER OF PAUL TO
TIMOTHY

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

I AM READY FOR MY LIFE TO BE POURED OUT;
THE TIME OF MY DEPARTURE HAS COME.
I HAVE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT,
I HAVE FINISHED THE RACE.
I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH.
ALL THERE IS TO COME FOR ME NOW
IS THE CROWN OF UPRIGHTNESS
WHICH OUR GOD, THE JUST JUDGE,
WILL AWARD TO ME,
AND NOT ONLY TO ME
BUT TO ALL WHO HAVE LONGED FOR CHRIST’S
APPEARING.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#19-A

A Reading from Paul's Second Letter to Timothy

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

As for you, be steady and self-possessed.
Be brave under trials.

As for me, the hour has come for me to be sacrificed;
the time is here for me to leave this life.

I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race;
I have kept the faith.

And now there is waiting for me the crown of righteousness,
reserved for me, which our God,
the Just Judge,
will give to me.
And not only me,
but to all those who wait with eager longing.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#20

REVELATION 14:13

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

I HEARD A VOICE FROM HEAVEN SAY,

“WRITE THIS: BLESSED ARE THE DEAD

WHO DIE IN OUR GOD FROM NOW ON.”

“YES,” SAID THE SPIRIT,

“LET THEM FIND REST FROM THEIR LABORS,

FOR THEIR GOOD WORKS ACCOMPANY THEM.”

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#21

A READING FROM THE SECOND LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

WE SHOULD NEVER GIVE UP. THOUGH OUR BODIES ARE DYING, OUR INNER STRENGTH IN CHRIST IS GROWING EVERY DAY. THESE TROUBLES AND SUFFERINGS OF OURS ARE, AFTER ALL, QUITE SMALL, AND WON'T LAST VERY LONG. YET, THIS SHORT TIME OF DISTRESS WILL RESULT IN GOD'S RICHEST BLESSINGS UPON US FOREVER.

SO, DO NOT LOOK AT WHAT WE CAN SEE RIGHT NOW, BUT WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE JOYS IN HEAVEN WHICH WE HAVE NOT YET SEEN. THE TROUBLES WILL SOON BE OVER, BUT THE JOYS TO COME WILL LAST FOREVER.

FOR WE KNOW THAT WHEN THIS TENT WE LIVE IN IS TAKEN DOWN, WHEN WE DIE AND LEAVE THESE BODIES, WE WILL HAVE WONDERFUL NEW BODIES IN HEAVEN; HOMES THAT WILL BE OURS FOREVERMORE MADE FOR US BY GOD, AND NOT BY HUMAN HANDS.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#22

1CORINTHIANS 1:4-9

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER TO THE
CORINTHIANS:

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

I CONTINUALLY THANK MY GOD FOR YOU BECAUSE OF THE GIFT BESTOWED ON YOU IN CHRIST JESUS, IN WHOM YOU HAVE BEEN RICHLY ENDOWED WITH EVERY GIFT OF SPEECH AND KNOWLEDGE. IN THE SAME WAY, THE TESTIMONY ABOUT CHRIST HAS BEEN SO CONFIRMED AMONG YOU THAT YOU LACK NO SPIRITUAL GIFT, AS YOU WAIT FOR THE REVELATION OF OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. GOD WILL STRENGTHEN YOU TO THE END, SO THAT YOU WILL BE BLAMELESS ON THE DAY OF OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. GOD, THROUGH WHOM YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED INTO INTIMACY WITH JESUS OUR SAVIOUR, IS FAITHFUL.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#23

A READING FROM ST. PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

Show a gentle attitude toward everyone,
Christ is coming soon.
Don't worry about anything,
but in all your prayers
ask God for what you need,
always asking God with a thankful heart.
And God's peace,
which is far beyond human understanding,
will keep your hearts and minds safe
in union with Christ Jesus.

Fill your minds with those things that
are good and that deserve praise:
things that are true,
noble, right, pure, lovely and honorable.
Put into practice
what you learned and received from me,
both from my words
And from my actions.
And the God who gives us peace
will be with you.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#24

1Corinthians 2:6-9

A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the
Corinthians

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

We do not speak of wisdom to those who are mature,
but not a wisdom of this age,
nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away.

Rather, we speak God’s wisdom, mysterious,
hidden, which God has known for all ages for our glory.

For it is written:
“Eye has not seen, ear has not heard,
nor has it entered the human heart,
what God has prepared for those who love God.”

Yet God has revealed this wisdom to us through the Holy
Spirit.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#25

1 Corinthians 13: 4-13

A Reading from First Corinthians

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

Love is patient; love is kind.

Love is not jealous; it does not put on airs.

It is not snobbish.

Love is never rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not
prone to anger. Neither does it brood
over injuries.

Love does not rejoice in what is wrong, but
rejoices with the truth.

There is no limit to love’s forbearance, to its
trust, its hope, its power to endure.

Love never fails.

There are in the end three things that last: faith,
hope and love.

And the greatest of these is love.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#25A

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN
3:1-2

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

See what love Abba God has lavished on us
in letting us be called God’s children!

Yet that in fact is what we are.

The reason the world does not recognize us
is that it never recognized God.

My dear friends,

now we are God’s children,

but it has not been revealed

what we are to become in the future.

We know that when it comes to light

we will be like God,

for we will see God

as God really is.

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

NEW TESTAMENT

#26

JOHN 6: 35-40

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF JOHN

Turn to Father and say: “Your Blessing, Father”

JESUS EXPLAINED TO THEM, “I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE.
NO ONE WHO COMES TO ME WILL EVER BE HUNGRY;
NO ONE WHO BELIEVES IN ME WILL BE THIRSTY.
BUT AS I TOLD YOU,
YOU SEE ME AND STILL DON’T BELIEVE.
EVERYONE ABBA GOD GIVES ME WILL COME TO ME,
AND WHOEVER COMES TO ME I WON’T TURN AWAY.
FOR I HAVE COME FROM HEAVEN, NOT TO DO MY OWN
WILL, BUT THE WILL OF THE ONE WHO SENT ME
THAT I LOSE NONE OF THOSE GIVEN TO ME,
BUT RATHER RAISE THEM UP ON THE LAST DAY.
INDEED, THIS IS THE WILL OF MY ABBA:
THAT EVERYONE WHO SEES AND BELIEVES IN
THE ONLY BEGOTTEN WILL HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.
THESE ARE THE ONES I WILL RAISE UP ON THE LAST
DAY.”

PRAISE BE TO GOD ALWAYS

JOURNEY OF LIFE

**For each of us life is like a journey.
Birth is the beginning of this journey,
and death is not the end but the destination.**

**It is a journey that takes us
from youth to age,
from innocence to awareness,
from ignorance to knowledge,
from foolishness to wisdom,
from weakness to strength and often back again,
from offense to forgiveness, from loneliness to friendship,
from pain to compassion, from fear to faith,
from defeat to victory and from victory to defeat,
until, looking backward or ahead,
we see that victory does not lie
at some high point along the way,
but in having made the journey,
stage by stage.**

Adapted from an old Hebrew prayer.

#2

WE WILL NEVER FORGET YOU

**THOUGH YOU HAVE LEFT OUR SIDE
FOR IN OUR HEARTS AND MEMORIES
YOUR SPIRIT WILL ABIDE.**

**WHENEVER WE SEE SUNSHINE
WE'LL SMILE IN THE THOUGHTS OF YOU
WE'LL LOOK UP TOWARD THE HEAVENS
BEYOND THE SKY OF BLUE.**

**AND EVEN WHEN THE GRAYISH CLOUDS
SEND DOWN THEIR WEEPING TEARS
WE KNOW THAT YOU ARE WATCHING US
TO HELP US FACE OUR FEARS.**

**WHENEVER WE SEE DARKNESS
YOU'LL BE OUR GUIDING LIGHT
WE'LL LOOK UP TOWARD THE TWINKLING
STARS**

AND MOONBEAM SHINING BRIGHT.

**WHENEVER WE FEEL LONELY
AND LONG FOR YOUR EMBRACE
WE'LL CLOSE OUR EYES AND SEE A VISION
OF YOUR GENTLE, SMILING FACE.**

**WHENEVER IT IS SILENT
WE'LL STILL REMEMBER YOU
FOR YOU HAD SAID A THOUSAND WORDS
IN JUST THE THINGS YOU'D DO.**

**AND WHEN WE START TO WEAKEN
WE'LL RECALL YOUR LASTING STRENGTH
AND WE WILL FEEL YOU LIFT US UP
TO HELP US GO THE LENGTH.**

**AND THEN SOMEDAY WE'LL JOIN YOU
IN THE HEAVENS UP ABOVE
WHEN OUR FATHER CALLS US HOME TO
SHARE**

HIS EVERLASTING LOVE.

THE TWO ROADS

Christ spoke about two roads.

**The first is broad and easy to travel.
All you have to do is follow the crowd.
It is the way of comfort and ease,
popularity and fame,
and is lit by glittering neon lights.
Many are fooled and travel down this road,
but in the end it leads nowhere;
they die in the desert.**

**The second road is narrow and difficult.
You will often have to go it alone.
It is the way of sacrifice and struggle.
At times you will have no light to guide you
save that of the stars.
Few take this road.
But they are the lucky ones,
for this road leads to the Promised Land.**

DYING TO SELF

**Each of us is like a grain of wheat
planted by the heavenly Father.
Just as a grain of wheat must die
if it is to produce a harvest,
so the false self in us must die
in order that the true self, made in God's image,
may be born.**

**This dying to self is a gradual process
and happens in very ordinary ways.
Every act of love involves a dying to selfishness.
Every act of humility involves a dying pride.
Every act of courage involves a dying to cowardice.**

**It is the true self alone
that will inherit eternal life.
There is no place for what is false
in the presence of God.
It would melt like snow before the sun.**

FOOTPRINTS

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand: One belonging to him, and the other to the Lord.

When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints: He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life.

This really bothered him and he questioned the Lord about it.

"Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me."

The Lord replied, "My son, my precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when there were only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

A SIMPLE LIFE BUT CLOSE TO GOD

**It is a simple life we lived here,
but nobody could say that it was comfortable.
Often during life I have known God's holy help,
because I was often in the grip of sorrow
from which I could not escape.**

**When the need was greatest,
God would lay his merciful eye on me,
and the clouds of sorrow would be gone without a trace.
In their place would be a spiritual joy
whose sweetness I cannot describe here.**

**There are people who think this island is a lonely place,
but the peace of the Lord is here.
We helped each other,
and lived in the shelter of each other.**

SUCCESS

**TO LAUGH OFTEN AND MUCH;
TO WIN THE RESPECT OF INTELLIGENT PEOPLE
AND AFFECTION OF CHILDREN; TO EARN THE
APPRECIATION OF HONEST CRITICS AND
ENDURE THE BETRAYAL OF FALSE FRIENDS;
TO APPRECIATE BEAUTY, TO FIND THE BEST
IN OTHERS; TO LEAVE THE WORLD A BIT
BETTER, WHETHER BY A HEALTHY CHILD,
A GARDEN PATCH OR A REDEEMED
SOCIAL CONDITION; TO KNOW EVEN
ONE LIFE HAS BREATHED EASIER BECAUSE
YOU HAVE LIVED. THIS IS TO HAVE SUCCEEDED.**

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

WITH EXPECTANT HEART

**At this time of my parting,
wish me good luck, my friends.
The sky is flushed with the dawn
and my path lies beautiful.**

**Ask not what I have with me to take there.
I start on my journey with empty hands
and expectant heart.**

**I shall put on my wedding garland.
Mine is not the red-brown dress of the traveler,
and though there are many dangers on the way
I have no fear in my mind.**

**The evening star will come out when my voyage is done
and the plaintive notes of the twilight melodies
be struck up from the King's gateway.**

Tagore,

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and Basingstoke

PEOPLE IMPORTANT TO YOU, PEOPLE UNIMPORTANT TO YOU CROSS YOUR LIFE, TOUCH IT WITH LOVE AND CARELESSNESS AND MOVE ON.

THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO LEAVE YOU AND YOU BREATHE A SIGH OF RELIEF AND WONDER WHY YOU EVER CAME INTO CONTACT WITH THEM. THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO LEAVE YOU AND YOU BREATHE A SIGH OF REMORSE AND WONDER WHY THEY HAD TO GO AWAY AND LEAVE SUCH A GAPING HOLE. CHILDREN LEAVE PARENTS; FRIENDS LEAVE FRIENDS. ACQUAINTANCES MOVE ON. PEOPLE CHANGE HOMES. PEOPLE GROW APART. ENEMIES HATE AND MOVE ON. FRIENDS LOVE AND MOVE ON. YOU THINK OF THE MANY WHO HAVE MOVED INTO YOUR HAZY MEMORY. YOU LOOK ON THOSE PRESENT AND WONDER.

I BELIEVE IN GOD'S MASTER PLAN IN LIVES. HE MOVES PEOPLE IN AND OUT OF EACH OTHER'S LIVES, AND EACH LEAVES HIS MARK ON THE OTHER. YOU FIND YOU ARE MADE UP OF BITS AND PIECES OF ALL WHO EVER TOUCHED YOUR LIFE, AND YOU ARE MORE BECAUSE OF IT, AND YOU WOULD BE LESS IF THEY HAD NOT TOUCHED YOU.

PRAY GOD THAT YOU ACCEPT THE BITS AND PIECES IN HUMILITY AND WONDER, AND NEVER QUESTION,...AND NEVER REGRET.

GO PEACEFULLY

**Go peacefully amid the noise and the haste,
and remember what peace there may be in silence.**

**As far as possible,
Without surrendering what you believe in,
be on good terms with all persons.**

**Keep interested in your own career,
however humble;
it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.**

**And be careful not to be taken in,
for the world is full of trickery;
but let this not blind you to what good there is:
many persons strive for high ideals,
and everywhere life is full of heroism.**

**Above all, be at peace with God.
And whatever your labours and aspirations
in the noisy confusion of life,
keep peace with your soul.
For in spite of all its sham, drudgery and broken
dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.**

Desiderata.

WHEN DEATH WILL KNOCK AT YOUR DOOR?

**On the day when death will knock at your door
what will you offer to him?**

**Oh, I will set before my guest
the full vessel of my life.
I will never let him go with empty hands.**

**All the sweet vintage
of all my autumn days and summer nights,
all the earnings and gleanings of my busy life
will I place before him
at the close of my days
when death will knock at my door.**

Tagore.

From *Gitanjali*, reproduced by permission of Macmillan, London
and Basingstoke

OUR GRANDPA

OUR GRANDPA WAS A GENTLE AND GENEROUS MAN WHO DEVOTED HIS ENTIRE LIFE TO HIS WIFE, CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN AND FAMILY.

EACH ONE OF US WILL REMEMBER HIM FOR THE SPECIAL THINGS THAT HE DID. WHEN YOU CALLED HIM, HE CAME, WHEN YOU ASKED HIM, HE GAVE FREELY OF HIMSELF. HE WAS ALWAYS THERE FOR US IN LOVE AND WITH STRENGTH.

DEVOTED HUSBAND, PATIENT FATHER, LOVING GRANDFATHER, CARING BROTHER, WE ARE BETTER PEOPLE BECAUSE YOU ALLOWED US TO SHARE YOUR LIFE. YOUR SUFFERING IS NOW OVER GRANDPA AND YOU ARE AT PEACE. WE WILL MISS YOU...

WE LOVE YOU...YOU WILL BE REMEMBERED...YOU LIVE ON IN OUR HEARTS AND IN OUR MINDS.

#12-a

MY GRANDMA WAS A GENTLE AND GENEROUS WOMAN WHO DEVOTED HER ENTIRE LIFE TO HER HUSBAND, CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN AND FAMILY. EACH ONE OF US WILL REMEMBER HER FOR THE SPECIAL THINGS THAT SHE DID. WHEN YOU CALLED HER, SHE CAME, WHEN YOU ASKED HER, SHE GAVE FREELY OF HERSELF. SHE WAS ALWAYS THERE FOR US IN LOVE AND WITH STRENGTH.

DEVOTED WIFE, PATIENT MOTHER, LOVING GRANDMOTHER, CARING SISTER AND GENEROUS AUNT, WE ARE BETTER PEOPLE BECAUSE YOU ALLOWED US TO SHARE YOUR LIFE. YOUR SUFFERING IS NOW OVER GRANDMA AND YOU ARE AT PEACE. WE WILL MISS YOU...WE LOVE YOU...YOU WILL BE REMEMBERED...YOU LIVE ON IN OUR HEARTS AND IN OUR MINDS.

#12B

GRANDFATHER

WHEN I WAS BORN GOD KNEW I WOULD NEED LOTS OF LOVE; SO HE FOUND A “SPECIAL MAN” NAMED GRANDPA TO LOVE AND WATCH OVER ME.

YOU HAVE ALWAYS HAD SMILES TO GREET ME, THE BEST HUGS, AND EVEN FIXED A TOY OR TWO. YOU GAVE ME A SPECIAL FAMILY FULL OF LOVE WITHOUT MEASURE. YOU GAVE THAT LOVE TO ME UNCONDITIONALLY. YOU MADE ME FEEL SPECIAL.

**YOU LET ME KNOW THAT YOU WOULD LOVE ME ALWAYS. I WILL NEVER FEEL ALONE BECAUSE I HAVE HAD THAT SPECIAL LOVE!
EVERYDAY I SAY A SPECIAL PRAYER, GOD WILL GIVE YOU HAPPINESS AND KEEP YOU IN HIS CARE. I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU WITH MY MOST SPECIAL LOVE AND THANK YOU FOR LOVING ME!**

WHAT CANCER CAN'T DO

**CANCER IS SO LIMITED...
IT CANNOT CRIPPLE LOVE,
IT CANNOT SHATTER HOPE,
IT CANNOT CORRODE FAITH,
IT CANNOT EAT AWAY PEACE,
IT CANNOT DESTROY CONFIDENCE,
IT CANNOT KILL FRIENDSHIP,
IT CANNOT SHUT OUR MEMORIES,
IT CANNOT SILENCE COURAGE,
IT CANNOT INVADE THE SOUL,
IT CANNOT REDUCE ETERNAL LIFE,
IT CANNOT QUENCH THE SPIRIT,
IT CANNOT LESSEN THE POWER OF THE
RESURRECTION.**

REMEMBERING

**Everybody loves to be remembered.
But if we want to be remembered
we have duty also to remember.**

**Memory is a powerful thing.
Wrongly used it can bring death rather than life.
Rightly used it is a form of immortality.
It keeps the past alive.
Those we remember never die.
They continue to walk and talk with us.
Their influence is still felt among us.
There is nothing stronger or more helpful
than a good remembrance.**

**N. our brother (sister), we want you to know
 that we haven't forgotten you.
 We remember you.
 And your memory most definitely
 brings life to us today.
 May it also assure us of life for you,
 that eternal life Christ came on earth to give us.**

DYING IN ORDER TO LIVE MORE FULLY

**I believe in death.
I believe that is part of life.
I believe that we are born to die,
to die that we may live more fully;
born to die a little each day
to selfishness,
to pretense, and to sin.**

**I believe that every time we pass
from one state of life to another,
something in us dies
and something new is born.**

**I believe we taste death
in moments of loneliness and rejection, in moments of sorrow
and disappointment,
when we are afraid, lose courage and give up,
when we see our dreams broken,
and every time we say good-bye.**

**I believe, too, that we are dying before our time
when we live in bitterness,
in hatred,
and in isolation.**

**I believe that each day we are creating our own death
by the way we live.
To those who believe in Christ,
death is a gateway,
a gateway to eternal life.**

BEYOND THE RAINBOW'S END

**Beyond the rainbow's farthest end,
there lies a land that's always filled with love and light.
Where shadows never fall and dim the skies;
for in this lovely land there is no night.
In the celestial place of joy and peace,
there is no time or space, no doubt or fear;
For those who come to it all troubles cease.
All worldly difficulties disappear.
And though the loss of a loved one
brings sorrow and is hard for us to hear,
if we could see beyond the rainbow's end
we know that we would find them waiting there.
Our loved one is
in that celestial dwelling place above...
The land of peace and joy, of light and love.**

**I AM STANDING UPON THE SEASHORE; A SHIP AT MY
SIDE SPREADS HER WHITE SAILS TO THE MORNING
BREEZE AND STARTS FOR THE BLUE OCEAN.**

**SHE IS AN OBJECT OF BEAUTY AND STRENGTH,
AND I WILL STAND AND WATCH HER UNTIL -- AT
LENGTH -- SHE HANGS LIKE A SPECK OF WHITE
CLOUD JUST WHERE THE SEA AND SKY COME DOWN
TO MINGLE WITH EACH OTHER.**

**THEN SOMEONE AT MY SIDE SAYS, "THERE!
SHE'S GONE." GONE WHERE? GONE FROM MY SIGHT
--- THAT IS ALL.**

**SHE IS JUST AS LARGE IN MAST AND HULL AND
SPAR AS WHEN SHE LEFT MY SIDE AND JUST AS ABLE
TO BEAR HER LOAD OF LIVING FREIGHT TO THE
PLACE OF DESTINATION.**

**HER DIMINISHED SIZE IS IN ME, NOT IN HER.
AND, JUST AT THE MOMENT WHEN SOMEONE AT MY
SIDE SAYS, THERE! SHE'S GONE." THERE ARE OTHER
EYES WATCHING HER COMING AND OTHER VOICES
READY TO TAKE UP THE GLAD SHOUT, "THERE SHE
COMES!"**

AND THAT IS DYING.

MY FATHER

WHEN I WAS:

4 YEARS OLD: MY DADDY CAN DO ANYTHING.

5 YEARS OLD: MY DADDY KNOWS A WHOLE LOT.

6 YEARS OLD: MY DAD IS SMARTER THAN YOUR DAD.

8 YEARS OLD: MY DAD DOESN'T KNOW EXACTLY EVERYTHING.

10 YEARS OLD: IN THE OLDEN DAYS WHEN MY DAD GREW UP, THINGS WERE SURE DIFFERENT.

12 YEARS OLD: OH, WELL, NATURALLY, DAD DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT. HE IS TOO OLD TO REMEMBER HIS CHILDHOOD.

14 YEARS OLD: DON'T PAY ANY ATTENTION TO MY DAD. HE IS SO OLD-FASHIONED!

21 YEARS OLD: HIM? MY LORD, HE'S HOPELESSLY OUT-OF-DATE.

25 YEARS OLD: DAD KNOWS A LITTLE BIT ABOUT IT, BUT THEN HE SHOULD BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN AROUND SO LONG.

30 YEARS OLD: MAYBE WE SHOULD ASK DAD WHAT HE THINKS. AFTER ALL, HE'S HAD A LOT OF EXPERIENCE.

35 YEARS OLD: I'M NOT DOING A SINGLE THING UNTIL I TALK TO DAD.

40 YEARS OLD: I WONDER HOW DAD WOULD HAVE HANDLED IT. HE WAS SO WISE AND HAD A WORLD OF EXPERIENCE.

50 YEARS OLD: I'D GIVE ANYTHING IF DAD WERE HERE NOW SO I COULD TALK THIS OVER WITH HIM. TOO BAD I DIDN'T APPRECIATE HOW SMART HE WAS. I COULD HAVE LEARNED A LOT FROM HIM.

MY MOTHER

**WHEN I WAS SMALL
THE WORLD SEEMED NO BIGGER
THAN THE REACH OF YOUR ARMS
ENCIRCLING ME.
THEY SHIELDED ME FROM EVERYTHING -
WIND, COLD, RAIN -
AND A WORLD THAT WAS NOT ALWAYS FRIENDLY.
AS I GREW OLDER,
I REALIZED HOW LITTLE HAD CHANGED.
WHENEVER I WENT, I FELT YOU THERE,
ARMS OUTSTRETCHED,
SOMEHOW SENSING, WHEN I WAS HAPPY...
WHEN I WAS DOWN.
YOU TAUGHT ME MANY THINGS.
BUT MOST OF ALL, YOU TAUGHT ME
NEVER TO UNDERESTIMATE
THE REACH OF A MOTHER'S LOVE.**

**GOD SAW HER GETTING TIRED
WHEN A CURE WAS NOT TO BE,
HE CLOSED HIS ARMS
AROUND HER AND WHISPERED,
“COME TO ME.”**

**IN TEARS WE SAW HER SINKING
WE WATCHED HER FADE AWAY.
OUR HEARTS WERE ALMOST BROKEN,
SHE FOUGHT SO HARD TO STAY.
BUT WHEN WE SAW HER SLEEPING
SO PEACEFULLY, FREE FROM PAIN,
WE WOULD NOT WISH HER BACK,
TO SUFFER THAT AGAIN.
SO TREASURE HER, LORD.
IN YOUR GARDEN OF REST,
FOR HERE ON EARTH
SHE WAS ONE OF THE BEST.**

#20A

**GOD SAW HIM GETTING TIRED
WHEN A CURE WAS NOT TO BE,
HE CLOSED HIS ARMS
AROUND HIM AND WHISPERED,
“COME TO ME.”
IN TEARS WE SAW HIM SINKING
WE WATCHED HIM FADE AWAY.
OUR HEARTS WERE ALMOST BROKEN,
HE FOUGHT SO HARD TO STAY.
BUT WHEN WE SAW HIM SLEEPING
SO PEACEFULLY, FREE FROM PAIN,
WE WOULD NOT WISH HIM BACK,
TO SUFFER THAT AGAIN.
SO TREASURE HIM, LORD.
IN YOUR GARDEN OF REST,
FOR HERE ON EARTH
HE WAS ONE OF THE BEST.**

DO NOT STAND AT MY GRAVE

**DO NOT STAND AT MY GRAVE AND WEEP,
I AM NOT HERE, I DO NOT SLEEP.
I AM A THOUSAND WINDS THAT BLOW,
I AM THE DIAMOND'S GLINT ON SNOW.
I AM THE SUNLIGHT ON RIPENING GRAIN,
I AM THE GENTLE AUTUMN'S RAIN.
WHEN YOU AWAKEN IN THE MORNING'S
HUSH, I AM THE SWIFT UPLIFTING
RUSH, OF QUIET BIRDS IN CIRCLED
FLIGHT, I AM THE SOFT STARS THAT
SHINE AT NIGHT. DO NOT STAND AT
MY GRAVE AND CRY, I AM NOT THERE,
I DID NOT DIE.**

GOD CALLED YOU HOME.

**GOD SAW THAT YOU WERE SUFFERING;
A CURE WAS NOT TO BE.
SO HE CAME AND TOOK YOUR HAND AND SAID,
“MY SON, COME WITH ME.”
“YOU DID AS I COMMANDED YOU,
YOU FOLLOWED ALL MY WAYS.”
“YOU WERE ALWAYS THERE TO LEND A HAND,
TO HELP OTHERS THROUGH THEIR DAYS.”
“AN INSPIRATION YOU WERE FOR MANY,
AN EXAMPLE MEANT FOR ALL TO SEE.”
“YOUR JOB ON EARTH IS OVER,
YOUR REWARD IS NOW WITH ME.”
WHEN YOU LEFT US ALL, ON THAT DAY,
YOU DID NOT GO ALONE.
FOR PART OF US WENT WITH YOU,
THE DAY GOD CALLED YOU HOME!**

GOD CALLED YOU HOME

GOD SAW THAT YOU WERE SUFFERING;
A CURE WAS NOT TO BE
SO HE CAME AND TOOK YOUR HAND AND
SAID,
“MY DAUGHTER, COME WITH ME.
YOU DID AS I COMMANDED YOU,
YOU FOLLOWED ALL MY WAYS.
YOU WERE ALWAYS THERE TO LEND A
HAND,
TO HELP OTHERS THROUGH THEIR DAYS.
AN INSPIRATION YOU WERE FOR MANY,
AN EXAMPLE MEANT FOR ALL TO SEE.
YOUR JOB ON EARTH IS OVER,
YOUR REWARD IS NOW WITH ME.”
WHEN YOU LEFT US ALL, ON THAT DAY,
YOU DID NOT GO ALONE.
FOR PART OF US WENT WITH YOU
THE DAY GOD CALLED YOU HOME.

LOVE ME - BUT LET ME GO
**WHEN I COME TO THE END OF THE ROAD,
AND THE SUN HAS SET ON ME,
I WANT NO RITES IN A GLOOM-FILLED ROOM.
WHY CRY FOR A SOUL SET FREE?**

**MISS ME A LITTLE, BUT NOT TOO LONG -
AND NOT WITH YOUR HEAD BOWED LOW.
REMEMBER THE LOVE THAT WE ONCE SHARED.
MISS ME - BUT LET ME GO.**

**FOR THIS IS A JOURNEY WE ALL MUST TAKE,
AND EACH MUST GO ALONE.
IT'S ALL PART OF THE MASTER'S PLAN,
A STEP ON THE ROAD TO HOME.**

**WHEN YOU ARE LONELY AND SICK OF HEART,
GO TO THE FRIENDS WE KNEW -
AND BURY YOUR SORROWS IN DOING GOOD DEEDS.
MISS ME - BUT LET ME GO.**

**WORDS POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD OF
ABBEYSIDE CHURCH,
DUNGARVAN, IRELAND
(COUNTY WATERFORD)**

When God Created Mothers

When the good Lord was creating mothers He was into His sixth day of “overtime” when the angel appeared and said, “You’re doing a lot of fiddling around on this one.”

And the Lord said, “Have you read the specs on this order?”

She has to be completely washable, but not plastic;
Have 180 movable parts...all replaceable;
Run on black coffee and leftovers;
Have a lap that disappears when she stands up;
A kiss that can cure anything from a broken leg to a disappointed love affair; and six pairs of hands;
The angel shook her head slowly and said, “Six pairs of hands...no way.”

“It’s not the hands that are causing me problems,” said the Lord. “It’s the three pairs of eyes that mothers need to have.”

“That’s on the standard model?” asked the angel.

The Lord nodded. “One pair sees through closed doors when she asks, “What are you kids doing in there?” when she already knows. Another here in the back of her head that sees what she shouldn’t but what she has to know, and of course the ones here in front that can look at a child when he goofs up and say, “I understand and I love You” without so much as uttering a word.”

“Lord,” said the angel, touching his sleeve gently, “Come to bed. Tomorrow...”

“I can’t,” said the Lord, “I’m so close to creating something so close to myself. Already I have one who heals herself when she is sick...can feed a family of six on one pound of hamburger...and get a nine-year-old to stand under a shower.”

The angel circled the model of a mother very slowly. “It’s too soft,” she sighed.

“But tough!” said the Lord excitedly. “You cannot imagine what this mother can do or endure.”

“Can it think?”

“Not only think, but it can reason and compromise” said the Creator.

Finally, the angel bent over and ran her finger across her cheek. “There’s a leak,” she pronounced. “I told You You were trying to put too much into this model.”

“It’s not a leak,” said the Lord, “it’s a tear.”

“What’s it for?”

“It’s for joy, sadness, disappointment, pain, loneliness and pride.”

“You are a genius,” said the angel.

“The Lord looked somber. “I didn’t put it there.”

Erma Bombeck

AN IRISH BLESSING

**MAY THE ROAD RISE
TO MEET YOU;
MAY THE WIND
BE ALWAYS AT YOUR BACK.
MAY THE SUN
SHINE WARM UPON YOUR FACE;
MAY THE RAINS FALL
SOFT UPON YOUR FIELDS.
AND UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN,
MAY GOD HOLD YOU
IN THE PALM
OF HIS HAND.**

“When I Must Leave You”

*When I must leave you for
A little while, Please do not
Grieve and shed wild tears
And hug your sorrow to you
Through the years, but start out
Bravely with a gallant smile; and
For my sake and in my name live
On and do all things the same,
feed not your loneliness on empty days,
but fill each waking hour in useful ways,
Reach out your hand in comfort and in cheer,
And I in turn will comfort you and hold you near;
and never, never be afraid
To die, for I am waiting for you
In the sky!*

SAFELY HOME

**I AM HOME IN HEAVEN, DEAR ONES;
OH, SO HAPPY AND SO BRIGHT!
THERE IS PERFECT JOY AND BEAUTY
IN THIS EVERLASTING LIGHT.**

**ALL THE PAIN AND GRIEF IS OVER,
EVERY RESTLESS TOSSING PASSED;
I AM NOW AT PEACE FOREVER
SAFELY HOME IN HEAVEN AT LAST.**

**DID YOU WONDER I SO CALMLY
TROD THE VALLEY OF THE SHADE?
OH! BUT JESUS' LOVE ILLUMINED
EVERY DARK AND FEARFUL GLADE.**

**AND HE CAME HIMSELF TO MEET ME
IN THAT WAY SO HARD TO TREAD;
AND WITH JESUS' ARM TO LEAN ON,
COULD I HAVE ONE DOUBT OR DREAD/**

**THEN YOU MUST NOT GRIEVE SO SORELY,
FOR I LOVE YOU DEARLY STILL:
TRY TO LOOK BEYOND EARTH'S SHADOWS,
PRAY TO TRUST OUR FATHER'S WILL.**

**THERE IS WORK STILL WAITING FOR YOU,
SO YOU MUST NOT IDLY STAND;
DO IT NOW WHILE LIFE REMAINETH--
YOU SHALL REST IN JESUS' LAND.**

**WHEN THAT WORK IS ALL COMPLETED,
HE WILL GENTLY CALL YOU HOME:
OH, THE RAPTURE OF THAT MEETING,
OH, THE JOY TO SEE YOU COME!**

**A LOVELY FLOWER GREW IN GOD'S EARTHLY
GARDEN**

**AS BEAUTIFUL AS ANY EVER GROWN
A GIFT SO PURE, SO INNOCENT, SO GENTLE
IT WAS THOUGHT ALWAYS TO BE OUR OWN.**

**IT WAS NURTURED AND TENDED WITH PERFECT
LOVE**

**ENJOYED BY ALL WHO GAZED ON ITS FACE
ITS PRESENCE MADE OUR GARDEN COMPLETE
A JOYOUS GIFT WE COULD NEVER REPLACE.**

**WE LOVED ITS WONDERFUL COLOR AND
FRAGRANCE**

**AS IT GREW MORE PRECIOUS TO ALL
WE PRAYED TO ALWAYS POSSESS IT
AND THAT ITS PETALS WOULD NEVER FALL.**

**BUT GOD LOOKED DOWN ON OUR EARTHLY GARDEN
AND SAW THE CREATION OF HIS HAND
HE NEEDED THIS PERFECT FLOWER
FOR HIS HEAVENLY GARDEN'S PLAN.**

**NOW OUR FLOWER GROWS SAFELY IN HEAVEN
MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN EVER BEFORE,
WHERE IT AWAITS ITS LOVING PLANTERS
TOGETHER IN GOD'S GARDEN, EVERMORE**

Written by Coralyn Lawrence in memory of her great-neice, Rebecca, September, 1997.

**AS A DIAMOND IS PRECIOUS
AND KNOWN BY ALL,
SO PRECIOUS IS OUR MOTHER
WHO ALL CAN RECALL.**

**SHE SPENT ALL OF HER YEARS
CARING, LOVING AND GIVING
HER FAMILY, HER FRIENDS
WERE HER THANKSGIVING.**

**SO WE JOIN NOW TOGETHER
IN JOY AND IN LOVE
TO CELEBRATE HER RETURN
TO HER FATHER ABOVE.**

Happiness

There are moments in life when you miss someone so much that you just want to pick them from your dreams and hug them. Dream what you want to dream; go where you want to go; be what you want to be because you only have one life and one chance to do all the things you want to do.

May you have enough happiness to make you sweet, enough trials to make you strong, enough sorrow to keep you human and enough hope to make you happy. Always put yourself in other's shoes. If you feel that it hurts you, it probably hurts the other person, too. The happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything, they just make the most of everything that comes along their way.

Happiness lives for those who cry; those who hurt, those who have searched, and those who tried, for only they can appreciate the importance of people who have touched their lives. Love begins with a smile, grows with a kiss, and ends with a tear. The brightest future will always be based on a forgotten past. You can not go on well in life until you let go of your past failures and heartaches.

When you were born, you were crying, and everyone around you was smiling. Live your life so that when you die, you're the one who is smiling and everyone around you is crying.

Please send this message to those who have touched you in one way or another. To those who make you smile when you really need it, to those who make you see the brighter side of things when you are really down and to those you want to tell how much their friendship and love is appreciated.

IF TOMORROW STARTS WITHOUT ME

*If tomorrow starts without me, and I'm not here to see,
If the sun should rise to find that your eyes are filled with tears for me;
I hope you will not cry the way you might that day,
thinking of the many things we didn't get to say.
I know how much you love me and you know that I love you, too,
and each time that you'd think of me, please know I'd miss you too;
If tomorrow starts without me, please try to understand,
that an angel came and called my name, and took me by the hand.
The angel said my place was ready, in heaven far above,
and that I'd have to leave behind all of those I dearly love.
But as I turned to walk away, a tear fell from my eye
for all my life, I'd always thought, that I would never die.
I have so much to live for, so much left to do,
it seems almost impossible, that I'd be leaving you.
I thought of all the yesterdays, the good ones and the bad,
the thought of all the love we have shared, and all the fun we had.
But then I walked through heaven's gates, and felt so much at home.
When God looked down and smiled at me, from His great golden throne,
He said, "This is eternity, and all I've promised you,
today your life on earth is past, but here life starts anew.
I promise no tomorrow, but today will always last,
and since each day's the same way there's no longing for the past.
You have been so faithful, so trusting and so true.
though there were times you did some things you knew you shouldn't do.
But you have been forgiven and now at last you're free.
So won't you come and take my hand and live in peace with me?"
So if tomorrow starts without me, don't think we're far apart,
for every time you think of me, I'll be there in your heart.*

#32

A HUG FROM HEAVEN

Don't be sad, I'm here with Jesus. Don't be sad, and please don't cry.

I'm right here - I've never left you. Don't you know that love can't die?

*I am safe and warm and happy as I've never been before.
Seeing Jesus face to face is more than I have bargained for.*

*As I speak, I'm right beside you. As you walk, I'm by your side.
Close your eyes and you'll see clearly that my Spirit has not died.*

*Everyone's on earth for reasons man can't fully comprehend.
But in heaven, I've seen clearly - justice triumphs in the end.*

*Understand my love surrounds you in a way you cannot see.
Feel it, sense it, trust its presence. Have some patience. Let me be.*

*Do not waste another moment. Give to God complete control
of the worries that concern you, and you heart and mind and soul.*

*Wake each day in joyful gladness knowing we're not far apart.
Look to Jesus for the answers. He will heal your broken heart.*

*But, above all, please remember, there's no need for you to cry...
I'm right here! I've never left you! Don't you know that love can't die?*

**“TO THOSE I LOVE AND THOSE WHO LOVE
ME”**

When I am gone, release me, let me go.
I have so many things to see and do-
You mustn't tie yourself to me with tears.
Be happy that we had some years.
I gave you my love, you can only guess
how much you gave to me in happiness.
I thank you for the love you each have shown,
but now it's time I traveled on alone.
So grieve a while for me if grieve you must.
Then let your grief be comforted by trust.
It's only for a while that we must part.
So bless the memories within your heart.
I won't be far away, for life goes on.
So if you need me, call and I will come.
Though you can't see or touch me, I'll be near.
And if you listen with your heart, you'll hear all of
my love around you soft and clear.
And then, when you must come this way alone,
I'll greet you with a smile and “Welcome Home.”

THE BROKEN CHAIN

**We little knew that morning,
that God was going to call your name.
In life we loved you dearly.
In death we do the same.
It broke our hearts to lose you.
You did not go alone.
For part of us went with you,
The day God called you home.
You left us peaceful memories
Your love is still our guide.
And though we cannot see you,
You are always at our side.
Our family chain is broken
And nothing seems the same.
But as God calls us one by one,
The chain will link again.**

Dear Aunt

My memories of you are warm
Your love was always there.
There was never a doubt,
I always knew you cared.
Hope I can express it,
For I want you to see
How thankful I am for you
You mean so much to me.
I give thanks to God
For putting our lives together.
You're the Greatest Aunt in the world
And I'll love you forever.

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack.

2

In green pastures you let me graze; to safe waters you lead me;

3

³ you restore my strength. You guide me along the right path for the sake of your name.

4

⁴ Even when I walk through a dark valley, I fear no harm for you are at my side; your rod and staff give me courage.

5

⁵ You set a table before me as my enemies watch; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

6

⁶ Only goodness and love will pursue me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the LORD for years to come.