

YEAR 1, PROPER 5, WEDNESDAY: EVENING PRAYER

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from Ecclesiastes

Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child, and your princes feast in the morning! Happy are you, O land, when your king is the son of free men, and your princes feast at the proper time, for strength, and not for drunkenness! Through sloth the roof sinks in, and through indolence the house leaks. Bread is made for laughter, and wine gladdens life, and money answers everything. Even in your thought, do not curse the king, nor in your bedchamber curse the rich; for a bird of the air will carry your voice, or some winged creature tell the matter. Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, or even to eight, for you know not what evil may happen on earth. If the clouds are full of rain, they empty themselves on the earth; and if a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it will lie. He who observes the wind will not sow; and he who regards the clouds

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ECCLESIASTES 10:16–11:10*; LUKE 19:11–27

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will not reap. As you do not know how the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything. In the morning sow your seed, and at evening withhold not your hand; for you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or whether both alike will be good. Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun. For if a man lives many years, let him rejoice in them all; but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity. Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes. But know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment. Remove vexation from your mind, and put away pain from your body; for youth and the dawn of life are vanity.

The Reader concludes

The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Gospel according to Luke

As they heard these things, Jesus proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and

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because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. He said therefore, “A nobleman went into a far country to receive a kingdom and then return. Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten pounds, and said to them, ‘Trade with these till I come.’ But his citizens hated him and sent an embassy after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’ When he returned, having received the kingdom, he commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by trading. The first came before him, saying, ‘Lord, your pound has made ten pounds more.’ And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Lord, your pound has made five pounds.’ And he said to him, ‘And you are to be over five cities.’ Then another came, saying, ‘Lord, here is your pound, which I kept laid away in a napkin; for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.’ He said to him, ‘I will condemn you out of your own mouth, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking up

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what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow? Why then did you not put my money into the bank, and at my coming I should have collected it with interest?’ And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the pound from him, and give it to him who has the ten pounds.’ (And they said to him, ‘Lord, he has ten pounds!’) ‘I tell you, that to every one who has will more be given; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them before me.’ ”

The Reader concludes

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