

YEAR 1, PROPER 23, THURSDAY: EVENING PRAYER

For use with the First Lesson

Adapted from *The Vocabulary of the Church* (1960):

Nin'evah

NIN-uh-vuh

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Book of Jonah

Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, “Arise, go to Nin'evah, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.” So Jonah arose and went to Nin'evah, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nin'evah was an exceedingly great city, three days’ journey in breadth. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s journey. And he cried, “Yet forty days, and Nin'evah shall be overthrown!”

And the people of Nin'evah believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. Then tidings reached the king of Nin'evah, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he made proclamation and published through Nin'evah, “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd

nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed, or drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them cry mightily to God; yea, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence which is in his hands. Who knows, God may yet repent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we perish not?” When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God repented of the evil which he had said he would do to them; and he did not do it. But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. And he prayed to the LORD and said, “I pray thee, LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that thou art a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and repentest of evil. Therefore now, O LORD, take my life from me, I beseech thee, for it is better for me to die than to live.” And the LORD said, “Do you do well to be angry?” Then Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, till he should see what would become of the city. And the LORD God appointed a plant, and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort. So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant. But when dawn

came up the next day, God appointed a worm which attacked the plant, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God appointed a sultry east wind, and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah so that he was faint; and he asked that he might die, and said, “It is better for me to die than to live.” But God said to Jonah, “Do you do well to be angry for the plant?” And he said, “I do well to be angry, angry enough to die.” And the LORD said, “You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night, and perished in a night. And should not I pity Nin'evah, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?”

The Reader concludes

The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew

Jesus said to the twelve, “Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man’s foes will be those of his own

household. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it. He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me. He who receives a prophet because he is a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward, and he who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

The Reader concludes

The Word of the Lord.