

YEAR 2, PROPER 4, SATURDAY: MORNING PRAYER

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from Ecclesiastes

If you see in a province the poor oppressed and justice and right violently taken away, do not be amazed at the matter; for the high official is watched by a higher, and there are yet higher ones over them. But in all, a king is an advantage to a land with cultivated fields. He who loves money will not be satisfied with money; nor he who loves wealth, with gain: this also is vanity. When goods increase, they increase who eat them; and what gain has their owner but to see them with his eyes? Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much; but the surfeit of the rich will not let him sleep. There is a grievous evil which I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, and those riches were lost in a bad venture; and he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil, which he may carry away in his hand. This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go; and what gain has he that he toiled for the wind, and spent all his days in darkness and grief,

in much vexation and sickness and resentment?
Behold, what I have seen to be good and to be fitting
is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil
with which one toils under the sun the few days of his
life which God has given him, for this is his lot. Every
man also to whom God has given wealth and
possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept
his lot and find enjoyment in his toil—this is the gift
of God. For he will not much remember the days of
his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in
his heart.

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from
Jerusalem and said, “Why do your disciples transgress
the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their
hands when they eat.” He answered them, “And why
do you transgress the commandment of God for the
sake of your tradition? For God commanded, ‘Honor
your father and your mother,’ and, ‘He who speaks evil
of father or mother, let him surely die.’ But you say, ‘If
any one tells his father or his mother, What you would
have gained from me is given to God, he need not

honor his father.’ So, for the sake of your tradition, you have made void the word of God. You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.’ ” And he called the people to him and said to them, “Hear and understand: not what goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.” Then the disciples came and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?” He answered, “Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit.” But Peter said to him, “Explain the parable to us.” And he said, “Are you also still without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and so passes on? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.