**Year 2, Proper 20, Friday: Evening Prayer**

*The First Lesson. The Reader begins*

## A Reading from the Second Book of the Kings

The watchman was standing on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, “I see a company.” And Joram said, “Take a horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say, ‘Is it peace?’” So a man on horseback went to meet him, and said, “Thus says the king, ‘Is it peace?’” And Jehu said, “What have you to do with peace? Turn round and ride behind me.” And the watchman reported, saying, “The messenger reached them, but he is not coming back.” Then he sent out a second horseman, who came to them, and said, “Thus the king has said, ‘Is it peace?’” And Jehu answered, “What have you to do with peace? Turn round and ride behind me.” Again the watchman reported, “He reached them, but he is not coming back. And the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he drives furiously.” Joram said, “Make ready.” And they made ready his chariot. Then Joram king of Israel and Ahazi'ah king of Judah set out, each in his chariot, and went to meet Jehu, and met him at the property of Naboth the Jez′reelite. And when Joram saw Jehu, he said, “Is it peace, Jehu?” He answered, “What peace can there be, so long as the harlotries and the sorceries of your mother Jez'ebel are so many?” Then Joram reined about and fled, saying to Ahazi'ah, “Treachery, O Ahazi'ah!” And Jehu drew his bow with his full strength, and shot Joram between the shoulders, so that the arrow pierced his heart, and he sank in his chariot. Jehu said to Bidkar his aide, “Take him up, and cast him on the plot of ground belonging to Naboth the Jez′reelite; for remember, when you and I rode side by side behind Ahab his father, how the Lord uttered this oracle against him: ‘As surely as I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons—says the Lord—I will requite you on this plot of ground.’ Now therefore take him up and cast him on the plot of ground, in accordance with the word of the Lord.” When Ahazi'ah the king of Judah saw this, he fled in the direction of Beth-haggan. And Jehu pursued him, and said, “Shoot him also”; and they shot him in the chariot at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megid'do, and died there. His servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his tomb with his fathers in the city of David. In the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab, Ahazi'ah began to reign over Judah. When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jez'ebel heard of it; and she painted her eyes, and adorned her head, and looked out of the window. And as Jehu entered the gate, she said, “Is it peace, you Zimri, murderer of your master?” And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, “Who is on my side? Who?” Two or three eunuchs looked out at him. He said, “Throw her down.” So they threw her down; and some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses, and they trampled on her. Then he went in and ate and drank; and he said, “See now to this cursed woman, and bury her; for she is a king’s daughter.” But when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. When they came back and told him, he said, “This is the word of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Eli'jah the Tishbite, ‘In the territory of Jezreel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jez'ebel; and the corpse of Jez'ebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the territory of Jezreel, so that no one can say, This is Jez'ebel.’”

*The Reader concludes* The Word of the Lord.

*The Second Lesson. The Reader begins*

**A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles**

Now after these events Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedo'nia and Acha'ia and go to Jerusalem, saying, “After I have been there, I must also see Rome.” And having sent into Macedo'nia two of his helpers, Timothy and Eras'tus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while. About that time there arose no little stir concerning the Way. For a man named Deme'trius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Ar'temis, brought no little business to the craftsmen. These he gathered together, with the workmen of like occupation, and said, “Men, you know that from this business we have our wealth. And you see and hear that not only at Ephesus but almost throughout all Asia this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable company of people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods. And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Ar'temis may count for nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship.” When they heard this they were enraged, and cried out, “Great is Ar'temis of the Ephesians!” So the city was filled with the confusion; and they rushed together into the theater, dragging with them Ga'ius and Aristar'chus, Macedo'nians who were Paul’s companions in travel. Paul wished to go in among the crowd, but the disciples would not let him; some of the A'si-archs also, who were friends of his, sent to him and begged him not to venture into the theater. Now some cried one thing, some another; for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together. Some of the crowd prompted Alexander, whom the Jews had put forward. And Alexander motioned with his hand, wishing to make a defense to the people. But when they recognized that he was a Jew, for about two hours they all with one voice cried out, “Great is Ar'temis of the Ephesians!” And when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, “Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Ar'temis, and of the sacred stone that fell from the sky? Seeing then that these things cannot be contradicted, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash. For you have brought these men here who are neither sacrilegious nor blasphemers of our goddess. If therefore Deme'trius and the craftsmen with him have a complaint against any one, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls; let them bring charges against one another. But if you seek anything further, it shall be settled in the regular assembly. For we are in danger of being charged with rioting today, there being no cause that we can give to justify this commotion.” And when he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

*The Reader concludes* The Word of the Lord.