

YEAR 1, PROPER 5, THURSDAY: MORNING PRAYER

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from Ecclesiasticus

Abraham was the great father of a multitude of nations, and no one has been found like him in glory; he kept the law of the Most High, and was taken into covenant with him; he established the covenant in his flesh, and when he was tested he was found faithful. Therefore the LORD assured him by an oath that the nations would be blessed through his posterity; that he would multiply him like the dust of the earth, and exalt his posterity like the stars, and cause them to inherit from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. To Isaac also he gave the same assurance for the sake of Abraham his father. The blessing of all men and the covenant he made to rest upon the head of Jacob; he acknowledged him with his blessings, and gave him his inheritance; he determined his portions, and distributed them among twelve tribes. From his descendants the LORD brought forth a man of mercy, who found favor in the sight of all flesh and was beloved by God and man, Moses, whose memory is blessed. He made him equal in glory to the holy ones, and made him great in the fears of his enemies. By his

words he caused signs to cease; the LORD glorified him in the presence of kings. He gave him commands for his people, and showed him part of his glory. He sanctified him through faithfulness and meekness; he chose him out of all mankind. He made him hear his voice, and led him into the thick darkness, and gave him the commandments face to face, the law of life and knowledge, to teach Jacob the covenant, and Israel his judgments.

The Reader concludes

The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the

Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

I must boast; there is nothing to be gained by it, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. Though if I wish to boast, I shall

not be a fool, for I shall be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.