**Year 2, Proper 23, Saturday: Evening Prayer**

*The First Lesson. The Reader begins*

## A Reading from the Second Book of the Kings

In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month – which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnez'zar, king of Babylon—Nebu'zarad'an, the captain of the bodyguard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. And he burned the house of the Lord, and the king’s house and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down. And all the army of the Chalde'ans, who were with the captain of the guard, broke down the walls around Jerusalem. And the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon, together with the rest of the multitude, Nebu'zarad'an the captain of the guard carried into exile. But the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and plowmen. And over the people who remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnez'zar king of Babylon had left, he appointed Gedali'ah the son of Ahi'kam, son of Shaphan, governor. Now when all the captains of the forces in the open country and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedali'ah governor, they came with their men to Gedali'ah at Mizpah, namely, Ish'mael the son of Nethani'ah, and Joha'nan the son of Kare'ah, and Serai'ah the son of Tanhu'meth the Netoph'athite, and Ja-azani'ah the son of the Ma-ac'athite. And Gedali'ah swore to them and their men, saying, “Do not be afraid because of the Chalde'an officials; dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.” But in the seventh month, Ish'mael the son of Nethani'ah, son of Eli'shama, of the royal family, came with ten men, and attacked and killed Gedali'ah and the Jews and the Chalde'ans who were with him at Mizpah. Then all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the forces arose, and went to Egypt; for they were afraid of the Chalde'ans.

*The Reader concludes* The Word of the Lord.

*The Second Lesson. The Reader begins*

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

After three days in Rome Paul called together the local leaders of the Jews; and when they had gathered, he said to them, “Brethren, though I had done nothing against the people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. When they had examined me, they wished to set me at liberty, because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case. But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar—though I had no charge to bring against my nation. For this reason therefore I have asked to see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain.” And they said to him, “We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of the brethren coming here has reported or spoken any evil about you. But we desire to hear from you what your views are; for with regard to this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against.” When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in great numbers. And he expounded the matter to them from morning till evening, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets. And some were convinced by what he said, while others disbelieved. So, as they disagreed among themselves, they departed, after Paul had made one statement: “The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet: ‘Go to this people, and say, You shall indeed hear but never understand, and you shall indeed see but never perceive. For this people’s heart has grown dull, and their ears are heavy of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn for me to heal them.’ Let it be known to you then that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen.” And he lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly and unhindered.

*The Reader concludes* The Word of the Lord.