



## Readings

### First reading

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

Listen to me, you coastlands: pay attention, you peoples from far away! The Lord called me before I was born, he named me while I was in my mother's womb. He made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid me away. And he said to me, 'You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.' But I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the Lord, and my reward with my God.'

And now the Lord says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honoured in the sight of the Lord, and my God has become my strength—he says, 'It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'

Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers, 'Kings shall see and stand up, princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.' *Isaiah 49:1–7*

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Sermon © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## Second reading

A reading from St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.' Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.' *1 Corinthians 1:18-31*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

**All Glory to you O Lord.**

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

Jesus answered them, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour. Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—“Father, save me from this hour”? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.’ Then a voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’ The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’

Jesus answered, ‘This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.’ He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

The crowd answered him, ‘We have heard from the Law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?’

Jesus said to them, ‘The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.’ After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them. *John 12:20–36*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All Praise to you O Christ.**

## **Sermon**

Today’s Gospel story starts with some Greek-speakers coming to see Jesus, much like people today trying to see a celebrity. In decades past they would have asked for an autograph and today maybe a selfie. They probably want to see a miracle.

Those outsiders clearly want to be part of an in-crowd. But how? Being Greek-speakers, they naturally gravitate toward Philip because he’s the only one with a Greek-sounding name. They display a kind of tribe mentality and think that a common Greek background means he will identify with them and wangle an audience with Jesus.

We start the story, then, with outsiders looking in. Interesting, when Jesus hears of these outsiders, his response seems to answer a very different question. His response

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to their request, 'Sirs, we want to see Jesus' is to talk about glory. What's going on?

In the Jewish tradition, the first thing that God creates in Genesis 1 is glory. That glory is often highly visible and looks like light. That's how we know Jesus is referring to himself when he says at the end of the passage, 'The light is with you ...' St John's Gospel mentions light fairly often. Only in John does Jesus say of himself, 'I am the light of the world' and in the Prologue, 'The light has come into the world'. Think too of the Transfiguration.

Jesus is saying here that he is the glory of God. God's glory has come into the world and he is its human incarnation.

Jesus wants to share this glory: why else would he invite his listeners to become 'children of light'? In this passage, Jesus then tells his listeners how to become those children. The process entails a radical change of life such that God becomes its centre. Indeed, so radical is this change that he compares it to a grain of wheat that must die in order that its spiritual DNA can produce proof of its content. If we think of a spiritual seed as being like a physical seed, then it can only bear its fruit after first dying then germinating. The fruit becomes visible in a Christian life as glory: in proportion that we die to self we display the glory of God.

Jesus ties these themes together when he says, 'Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.' We discern that glory means being part of God's eternity. The spiritual part of Jesus is eternal. For example, he was instrumental in the creation described in Genesis 1 (see Colossians 1).

And that's why Jesus answered the Greek-speaking seekers in the ways he did. He's inviting them to become members of his 'in crowd', to become disciples. Jesus says that a true disciple is the person who lives with the glory of God in their life and is willing to give up anything and everything for that glory to continue beyond physical death. The glory they want to share is eternal life with God.

## Compline (Night Prayer)

- The hymns can be accessed via a Youtube link. To hear it, please hover the mouse over the link, press Ctrl, and then return.
- All the verses in the psalm and nunc dimittis is split in two with a red diamond ♦. Traditionally the diamond indicates a short pause to allow the reader to reflect on the content. The pause is not necessary. But if you want to observe it

### Background

The name of this ancient service comes from a Latin word which means ‘completion’ (*completorium*). We pronounce it name as ‘com-plinn’ rather than ‘com-plyne’

Compline is a service of quietness and reflection before rest at the end of the day. It is most effective when the ending is indeed an ending, without additions, conversation or noise. If there is an address, or business to be done, it should come first. If said at home, participants go quietly to bed.

### Introduction

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.

**All Amen**

Our help is in the name of the Lord

**All who made heaven and earth.**

*Silence for reflection on the past day.*

**All Most merciful God,  
we confess to you,  
before the whole company of heaven and one another,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed  
and in what we have failed to do.  
Forgive us our sins,  
heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ.  
Amen**

O God, make speed to save us.

**All O Lord, make haste to help us.**

**All**    **Glory to the Father,  
and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

**Hymn** **The day thou gavest Lord is ended**  
(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

**The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended;  
The darkness falls at Thy behest;  
To Thee our morning hymns ascended,  
Thy praise shall sanctify our rest.**

**We thank Thee that Thy church unsleeping,  
While earth rolls onward into light,  
Through all the world her watch is keeping,  
And rests not now by day or night.**

**As o'er each continent and island  
The dawn leads on another day,  
The voice of prayer is never silent,  
Nor dies the strain of praise away.**

**The sun that bids us rest is waking  
Our brethren 'neath the western sky,  
And hour by hour fresh lips are making  
Thy wondrous doings heard on high.**

**So be it, Lord! Thy throne shall never,  
Like earth's proud empires, pass away;  
Thy kingdom stands, and grows for ever,  
Till all Thy creatures own Thy sway.**

## **The Word of God**

**Psalmody : Psalm 139**

1    O Lord, you have searched me out and known me; ♦  
      you know my sitting down and my rising up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

- 2 You mark out my journeys and my resting place ♦  
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.
- 4 You encompass me behind and before ♦  
and lay your hand upon me.
- 5 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, ♦  
Or where can I flee from your presence?
- 7 If I climb up to heaven, you are there; ♦  
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.
- 8 If I take the wings of the morning ♦  
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
- 9 Even there your hand shall lead me, ♦  
your right hand hold me fast.
- 10 If I say, 'Surely the darkness will cover me ♦  
and the light around me turn to night,'
- 11 Even darkness is no darkness with you;  
the night is as clear as the day; ♦  
darkness and light to you are both alike.
- 12 For you yourself created my inmost parts; ♦  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
- 13 I thank you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; ♦  
marvellous are your works, my soul knows well.
- 14 My frame was not hidden from you, ♦  
when I was made in secret  
and woven in the depths of the earth.
- 15 Your eyes beheld my form, as yet unfinished; ♦  
already in your book were all my members written,
- 16 As day by day they were fashioned ♦  
How great is the sum of them!
- 18 If I count them, they are more in number than the sand, ♦  
and at the end, I am still in your presence.

19 O that you would slay the wicked, O God, ♦  
that the bloodthirsty might depart from me!

20 They speak against you with wicked intent; ♦  
your enemies take up your name for evil.

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever.  
Amen**

### Sentences from Scripture

One or both of the following short lessons is read

God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him.

*1 Thessalonians 5:9,10*

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? *Isaiah 58:6,7*

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit;

**All Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**

For you have redeemed me, O Lord, O God of truth.

**All I commend my spirit.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

**All Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**

Keep me as the apple of your eye.

**All Hide me under the shadow of your wings.**

## The Nunc dimittis (the Song of Simeon)

**All Christ died for us  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.**

- 1 Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace: ♦  
your word has been fulfilled.
- 2 My own eyes have seen the salvation ♦  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;
- 3 A light to reveal you to the nations ♦  
and the glory of your chosen people. *Luke 2.29-32*

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen**

**All Christ died for us  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.**

**Taizé chant *Veni sanctus spiritus*** (the Latin means 'come Holy Spirit')  
(please click on [this link](#) to hear the chant)

## A shortened litany

God the Father,

**All have mercy upon us.**

God the Son,

**All have mercy upon us.**

God the Holy Spirit,

**All have mercy upon us.**

Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity,

**All have mercy upon us.**

From all evil and mischief; from pride, vanity and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred and malice; and from all evil intent,

**All Good Lord deliver us.**

From sins of body and mind; from the deceits of the world, the flesh and the devil,

**All Good Lord deliver us.**

From famine, pestilence and disaster; from violence, murder and dying unprepared,

**All Good Lord deliver us.**

By the mystery of your holy incarnation; by your birth, childhood and obedience,

**All Good Lord deliver us.**

By your ministry in word and work; by your mighty acts of power;  
and by your preaching of the kingdom,

**All Good Lord deliver us.**

By your agony and trial; by your cross and passion;  
and by your precious death and burial,

**All Good Lord deliver us.**

By your mighty resurrection; by your glorious ascension;  
and by your sending of the Holy Spirit,

**All Good Lord deliver us.**

Give us true repentance;  
forgive us our sins of negligence and ignorance and our deliberate sins;  
and grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit  
to amend our lives according to your holy word.

**All Amen.**

## **The Collect for Holy Tuesday**

Lord, you make a gift of death  
to bring us to new life:  
free us from our need  
to fix and own your name  
so we may look for the day  
when you are lifted high  
and all are drawn  
into the arms of love;  
through Jesus Christ, the passion of God.

**All Amen**

**All** Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen

Silence may be kept.

## **The Conclusion**

In peace we will lie down and sleep;

**All** for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.

Abide with us, Lord Jesus,

**All** for the night is at hand and the day is now past.

As the night watch looks for the morning,

**All** so do we look for you, O Christ.

[Come with the dawning of the day

**All** and make yourself known in the breaking of the bread.]

May the Lord bless us,  
that in us may be found love and humility,  
obedience and thanksgiving,  
discipline, gentleness and peace.

**All** Amen