

FIRST READING

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, ‘Ask what I should give you.’ And Solomon said, ‘You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart towards you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?’

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, ‘Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.

1 Kings 3.5-12

Psalm

Lord, how I love your law.

129 Your decrees are wonderful;

therefore I obey them with all my heart.

130 When your word goes forth it gives light;

it gives understanding to the simple.

Lord, how I love your law.

131 I open my mouth and pant;

I long for your commandments.

132 Turn to me in mercy,

as you always do to those who love your name.

Lord, how I love your law.

133 Steady my footsteps in your word;

let no iniquity have dominion over me.

134 Rescue me from those who oppress me,

and I will keep your commandments.

Lord, how I love your law.

135 Let your countenance shine upon your servant

and teach me your statutes.

136 My eyes shed streams of tears,

because people do not keep your law.

Lord, how I love your law. *Psalm 119.129-136*

THE SECOND READING

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

‘For your sake we are being killed all day long;

we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.’

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8.26-39

THE GOSPEL

Jesus put before them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, “Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?” He answered, “An enemy has done this.” The slaves said to him, “Then do you want us to go and gather them?” But he replied, “No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.” ’

‘The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field,

which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes

and sells all that he has and buys that field.

‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search

of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went

and sold all that he had and bought it.

‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown

into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was

full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into

baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of

the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil

from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of

fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

‘Have you understood all this?’ They answered, ‘Yes.’ And

he said to them, ‘Therefore every scribe who has been

trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of

a household who brings out of his treasure what is new

and what is old.’

Matthew 13.24-30, 44-52