

First Reading: Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22

In a time of drought, the people pray for mercy, repenting of their sins and the sins of their ancestors. They appeal to God to remember the covenant, to show forth God's power, and to heal their land by sending life-giving rain.

⁷Although our iniquities testify against us,
act, O LORD, for your name's sake;
our apostasies indeed are many,
and we have sinned against you.

⁸O hope of Israel,
its savior in time of trouble,
why should you be like a stranger in the land,
like a traveler turning aside for the night?

⁹Why should you be like someone confused,
like a mighty warrior who cannot give help?
Yet you, O LORD, are in the midst of us,
and we are called by your name;
do not forsake us!

¹⁰Thus says the LORD concerning this people:
Truly they have loved to wander,
they have not restrained their feet;
therefore the LORD does not accept them,
now he will remember their iniquity
and punish their sins.

¹⁹Have you completely rejected Judah?
Does your heart loathe Zion?
Why have you struck us down
so that there is no healing for us?
We look for peace, but find no good;
for a time of healing, but there is terror instead.

²⁰We acknowledge our wickedness, O LORD,
the iniquity of our ancestors,
for we have sinned against you.

²¹Do not spurn us, for your name's sake;
do not dishonor your glorious throne;
remember and do not break your covenant with us.

²²Can any idols of the nations bring rain?
Or can the heavens give showers?

Is it not you, O LORD our God?
We set our hope on you,
for it is you who do all this.

¹⁴Do not offer him a bribe, for he will not accept it;

¹⁵and do not rely on a dishonest sacrifice;
for the Lord is the judge,
and with him there is no partiality.

¹⁶He will not show partiality to the poor;
but he will listen to the prayer of one who is wronged.

¹⁷He will not ignore the supplication of the orphan,
or the widow when she pours out her complaint.

Psalm: Psalm 84:1-7

Happy are the people whose strength is in you. (Ps. 84:5)

¹How dear to me ¹ is your dwelling,
O ¹ LORD of hosts!

²**My soul has a desire and longing for the courts ¹ of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the ¹ living God.**

³Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest where she may ¹ lay her young,

by the side of your altars, O LORD of hosts, my king ¹ and my God.

⁴**Happy are they who dwell ¹ in your house!
They will always be ¹ praising you. R**

⁵Happy are the people whose strength ¹ is in you,
whose hearts are set on the ¹ pilgrims' way.

⁶**Those who go through the balsam valley will find it a ¹ place of springs,
for the early rains have covered it with ¹ pools of water.**

⁷They will climb from ¹ height to height,
and the God of gods will be ¹ seen in Zion. R

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

The conclusion of this letter to a young minister offers a final perspective on life from one who faced death. Though others let him down, Paul was sure of his faith in the Lord, who stood by him and lent him strength.

⁶As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

¹⁶At my first defense no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! ¹⁷But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel: Luke 18:9-14

The coming reign of God will involve unexpected reversals of fortune with judgment rooted in mercy. Jesus tells a parable in which the one who humbles himself is exalted and the one who exalts his own righteousness is humbled.

⁹[Jesus] also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: ¹⁰Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' ¹³But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."