

Readings for Sunday, December 18, 2022

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah, according to *The Message* translation:
(Isaiah 11:1-10)

1. A green Shoot will sprout from Jesse's stump, from his roots a budding Branch.
- 2 The life-giving Spirit of God will hover over him, the Spirit that brings wisdom and understanding, The Spirit that gives direction and builds strength, the Spirit that instills knowledge and Fear-of-God.
- 3 Fear-of-God will be all his joy and delight. He won't judge by appearances, won't decide on the basis of hearsay.
- 4 He'll judge the needy by what is right, render decisions on earth's poor with justice. His words will bring everyone to awed attention. A mere breath from his lips will topple the wicked.
- 5 Each morning he'll pull on sturdy work clothes and boots, and build righteousness and faithfulness in the land. A Living Knowledge of God
- 6 The wolf will romp with the lamb, the leopard sleep with the kid. Calf and lion will eat from the same trough, and a little child will tend them.
- 7 Cow and bear will graze the same pasture, their calves and cubs grow up together, and the lion eat straw like the ox.
- 8 The nursing child will crawl over rattlesnake dens, the toddler stick his hand down the hole of a serpent.
- 9 Neither animal nor human will hurt or kill on my holy mountain. The whole earth will be brimming with knowing God-Alive, a living knowledge of God ocean-deep, ocean-wide.
- 10 On that day, Jesse's Root will be raised high, posted as a rallying banner for the peoples. The nations will all come to him. His headquarters will be glorious.

Word of God, Word of Life.
Thanks be to God.

A reading from Proverbs, according to *The Message* translation:
(Proverbs 3:13-19)

13 You're blessed when you meet Lady Wisdom, when you make friends with Madame Insight.

14 She's worth far more than money in the bank; her friendship is better than a big salary.

15 Her value exceeds all the trappings of wealth; nothing you could wish for holds a candle to her.

16 With one hand she gives long life, with the other she confers recognition.

17 Her manner is beautiful, her life wonderfully complete.

18 She's the very Tree of Life to those who embrace her. Hold her tight - and be blessed!

19 With Lady Wisdom, God formed Earth; with Madame Insight, he raised Heaven.

Word of God, Word of Life.
Thanks be to God.

A reading from Exodus according to *The Message* translation:
(Exodus 3:1-8)

1. Moses was shepherding the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. He led the flock to the west end of the wilderness and came to the mountain of God, Horeb.

2 The angel of God appeared to him in flames of fire blazing out of the middle of a bush. He looked. The bush was blazing away but it didn't burn up.

3 Moses said, "What's going on here? I can't believe this! Amazing! Why doesn't the bush burn up?"

4 God saw that he had stopped to look. God called to him from out of the bush, "Moses! Moses!" He said, "Yes? I'm right here!"

5 God said, "Don't come any closer. Remove your sandals from your feet. You're standing on holy ground."

6 Then he said, "I am the God of your father: The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob." Moses hid his face, afraid to look at God.

7 God said, "I've taken a good, long look at the affliction of my people in Egypt. I've heard their cries for deliverance from their slave masters; I know all about their pain.

8 And now I have come down to help them, pry them loose from the grip of Egypt, get them out of that country and bring them to a good land with wide-open spaces, a land lush with milk and honey ...

Word of God, Word of Life.
Thanks be to God.

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah, according to *The Message* translation:

(Isaiah 12:1-6)

1 And you will say in that day, "I thank you, God. You were angry but your anger wasn't forever. You withdrew your anger and moved in and comforted me.

2 "Yes, indeed - God is my salvation. [God is my Immanuel: God-with-us]. I trust, I won't be afraid. God - yes God! - is my strength and song, best of all, my salvation!"

3 Joyfully you'll pull up buckets of water from the wells of salvation.

4 And as you do it, you'll say, "Give thanks to God. Call out his name. Ask him anything! Shout to the nations, tell them what he's done, spread the news of his great reputation!

5 "Sing praise-songs to God. He's done it all! Let the whole earth know what he's done!

6 Raise the roof! Sing your hearts out, O Zion! The Greatest lives among you: The Holy of Israel."

Word of God, Word of Life

Thanks be to God