

Sentence

Who shall stand in the Lord's holy place? Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their hands to what is false. *Ps. 24.3-4*

Collect

God of the prophets, whose word cuts through the webs of power and holds the tyrant to account:

be with all who raise their voice against oppression and misrule,
who are imprisoned and abused

for freedom's sake;

help us to stand and speak with them and witness to your kingdom now;

through Jesus Christ, the name above all others. **Amen.**

A Reading from the book of the prophet Amos.

Amos the southerner from Judah was a prophet sent to the northern kingdom Israel in the 8th century BC who preached during a prosperous time in which great inequality and injustice developed. In this passage Amos and Amaziah, who is a priest and court chaplain, clash as Amos (who is no 'professional seer' but a man called by God from his usual work) names the consequences of Israel's turning away from God. Eventually the northern kingdom is invaded in 721BC and destroyed.

This is what the Lord God showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in his hand. And the LORD said to me, 'Amos, what do you see?' And I said, 'A plumb-line.' Then the Lord said, 'See, I am setting a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass them by; the high places of Isaac

shall be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,
and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.' Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, 'Amos has conspired against you in the very centre of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos has said,

"Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from his land."'

And Amaziah said to Amos, 'O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.' Then Amos answered Amaziah, 'I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees.
Amos 7.7-14

Reader For the word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God

Psalm 85.8-13 APBA page 312

This portion of the psalm promises peace to Israel; the whole is a communal lament.

A Reading from the letter to the Ephesians.

Paul's authorship of this letter is disputed by scholars although its significance is no less. It was not uncommon to write a document and attribute it to a more important person to give greater credibility. We would call that fraudulent; in the ancient world it honoured the person so credited. This opening passage of the letter to Ephesus is thought to be an early hymn and is a canticle in Wednesday morning's prayer see page 401 of the Green Prayer Book and p 4 of this sheet.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has

Bible Readings next week 22 July 2018 Mary Magdalene

Song of Songs 3.1-4a Psalm 63 2 Cor. 5.14-21 John 20.1-18

Prayer for the Week. O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to receive the prayers of your people who call upon you, and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Pray for the Faithful Departed

We remember before God: Kenneth Cartledge, Charlotte Hallam, Stewart Lannan, Mavis Nicholas, Nancy McGrath, John Righetti, William Alfred, Harold Adcock, Ernestine Lobb, Florence Nelson, John Davis, Roma Simmons, Roma Florence Bruce & Jack Lusby Burns *whose anniversaries occur this week.*

Commemorations of the week. None this week.

A Song of God's Grace Wednesday Morning Prayer APBA, 401

Blessed are you,
the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:
for you have blessed us in Christ Jesus
with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

You chose us to be yours in Christ
before the foundation of the world:
that we should be holy and blameless before you.

In love you destined us to be your children,
through Jesus Christ:

according to the purpose of your will,

To the praise of your glorious grace:

which you freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Ephesians 1.3-6

Herod and Herodias remind readers of the hostile attitudes of Ahab and Jezebel towards Elijah. The rejection of Jesus, seen last week in the people of Nazareth, becomes more threatening now that the ruling house is opposed to him. The poignant detail about John's disciples coming to bury him with compassion and care, contrasts with how cheaply Herod holds John's life.

King Herod heard of the healings and other miracles, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, 'John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him.' But others said, 'It is Elijah.' And others said, 'It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.' But when Herod heard of it, he said, 'John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.' For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. For John had been telling Herod, 'It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.'

And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, 'Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it.' And he solemnly swore to her, 'Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.' She went out and said to her mother, 'What should I ask for?' She replied, 'The head of John the baptizer.' Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, 'I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.' The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb. *Mark 6.14-29*

Reader For the Gospel of the Lord

ALL Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory. *Eph. 7.7-14*

Reader May your word live in us.

ALL And bear much fruit to your glory.

Gospel Acclamation

ALL Alleluia! Alleluia!

Cantor When John's disciples heard about it,
they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

ALL Alleluia!

Reader The Lord be with you

ALL And also with you

Reader A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

ALL Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Herod Antipas ruled Galilee for the Romans (he was the son of Herod the Great) and was superstitious man. He began to fear Jesus when he heard of his appeal to ordinary people, because of his murderous beheading of John. This gospel passage links to the Amos reading in that Elijah was a northern kingdom prophet and