***Introit (Psalm 55)***

P: Give your burden to the Lord and He will support you.

**C: He will not let righteous people fall.**

P: O God, attend my prayer!

**C: I beg You for mercy. Don’t hide Yourself from me!**

P: If an enemy mocks me, I can accept that.

**C: If an enemy attacks me, then I can hide from him.**

P: But you, a man, my equal, you hurt me.

**C: You were with me, my friend, and now you attack me.**

P: Before, we met together to talk and plan.

**C: We went into God’s house with all the people.**

P: But now I call to God.

**C: And the Lord will save me.**

**All: Glory give to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, the same as it was in the beginning, is now, and will continue forever. Amen.**

***Prayer for God’s Word***

P: Merciful Lord, Jesus’ death on the cross makes Your church clean and defends us. Baptism makes us joined with Jesus. Through baptism, give us the gifts from His work. Let us always thank You and follow Jesus. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Jesus lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: (copy) Amen.

The Old Testament lesson is from Jeremiah chapter 23.

 The Lord of Armies says this; “Don’t listen to the prophets. They only tell you false hopes. They announce their made-up visions. They don’t speak God’s word.”

 People hate the Lord’s word, and the prophets tell them, “Your life will be all good.” People are stubborn and follow their own desires. The prophets tell them, “Destruction will not touch you.”

 Have they met the Lord? Did they see or hear God’s word? Do they attend to God’s word?

 The Lord is angry the same-as a storm. The same-as a tornado, His anger will come-down on wicked people. The Lord’s anger will not stop until He finished all His plans. In the last days, you will understand clearly.

 The Lord says, “I didn’t send these prophets. But they ran and announced. I didn’t speak to them, but they prophesied. If they met with Me, then they will announce My word for My people. They would stop the people from their evil way and evil doings.”

 The Lord says, “Am I God near, but not a God far-away? Can anyone hide himself in a secret place, where I can’t see him?” The Lord says, “No, you can’t hide. I fill heaven and earth. I heard what the prophets say. They speak lies in My name and say, ‘I had a dream, I had a dream!’ How long will the lying prophets keep lies in their hearts?”

 “They make-up lies and announce their lies. They tell their dreams to each-other because they want My people to forget My name. The same, their fathers forgot My name and they worshiped the idol BAAL.”

 “Let them tell their dreams. But let the person that has My word speak My word exactly. STRAW and WHEAT are not the same, correct?” The Lord announces this. “My word is same-as fire. My word is same-as a hammer that breaks rocks.”

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

*There are two choices for the New Testament lesson, a shorter reading from Hebrews 11&12 or a longer reading from Hebrews 11&12. Choose one.*

*The shorter reading.*

The New Testament lesson from Hebrews chapters 11 and 12.

 When God tested ABRAHAM, ABRAHAM believed and he brought ISAAC to sacrifice him. God gave promises about that only son, and ABRAHAM was sacrificing him. God said, “Your descendants will be from ISAAC.” ABRAHAM believed God can raise dead people. ABRAHAM got ISAAC back from death.

 Through faith, ISAAC spoke future blessings on JACOB and ESAU.

 JACOB was dying. Through faith, JACOB blessed JOSEPH’s two sons and he worshiped over his walking-staff.

 JOSEPH was near death. Through faith, he reminded the people of ISRAEL that they will leave EGYPT. He told them what to do with his bones when they left.

 After MOSES was-born, through faith his parents hid MOSES for three months because they noticed he was a beautiful child. They were not afraid of the king’s command.

 MOSES grew-up. Through faith, he refused people naming him, “Son of the EGYPTIAN king’s daughter.” He decided to suffer with God’s people and not enjoy sinful pleasure. He believed that suffering for Christ is better riches than the treasures in EGYPT. MOSES was looking-forward to his reward.

 Through faith, MOSES left EGYPT. He wasn’t afraid of the king’s anger. He continued believing because he saw God, even-though no one can see Him. Through faith, MOSES celebrated Passover and sprinkling blood. Then when God killed the firstborn, He didn’t touch the ISRAELITE people.

 Through faith, the people went through the RED SEA the same-as walking on dry ground. When the EGYPTIAN people tried that, they drowned.

 Through faith, the walls of JERICHO fell-down after the people walked around the city seven days. Through faith, the prostitute named RAHAB welcomed the ISRAELITE SPIES, and she didn’t die with the people who were disobeying.

 We have that large group of witnesses around us. They are the faithful believers from the past. Now, let us throw-away every burden and sin that sticks to us, and let us continue to run the race we have now.

 Let us continue looking at Jesus. Jesus began our faith and He makes faith perfect. Jesus didn’t fear the cross and give-up. No! Jesus ignored the shame of dying on the cross, because He saw joy in-front-of Him. And now Jesus reigns in heaven with God the Father. Think about how-much sinners hated Jesus and He patiently continued and didn’t give-up. Then you won’t become tired or afraid.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

*The longer reading.*

The New Testament lesson from Hebrews chapters 11 and 12.

 When God tested ABRAHAM, ABRAHAM believed and he brought ISAAC to sacrifice him. God gave promises about that only son, and ABRAHAM was sacrificing him. God said, “Your descendants will be from ISAAC.” ABRAHAM believed God can raise dead people. ABRAHAM got ISAAC back from death.

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 Through faith, the walls of JERICHO fell-down after the people walked around the city seven days. Through faith, the prostitute named RAHAB welcomed the ISRAELITE SPIES, and she didn’t die with the people who were disobeying.

 What more should I say? I don’t have enough time to tell about GIDEON, BARAK, SAMSON, JEPHTHAH, DAVID, SAMUEL, and the prophets. Through faith, they defeated kingdoms and they reigned rightly. They received promises from God, they shut lions’ mouths, they stopped fires, and they escaped death by the sword. They were weak, but God made them strong. They were powerful in war and made enemy armies run-away. Women got their loved ones raised alive again.

 Some people got tortured, but they didn’t want freedom because they wanted a better resurrection. People mocked them and made them suffer, and put them in chains and in prison. People stoned them, sawed them in half and killed them with the sword. They dressed in sheep-skin and goat-skin. They lived poor, suffering, people abusing them. The world wasn’t good enough for them. They wandered through deserts and on mountains. They lived in caves.

 God said good things about all of them because of their faith. But none of them got what God promised. Because God is giving us something better. Then those people don’t become perfect without us.

 We have that large group of witnesses around us. They are the faithful believers from the past. Now, let us throw-away every burden and sin that sticks to us, and let us continue to run the race we have now.

 Let us continue looking at Jesus. Jesus began our faith and He makes faith perfect. Jesus didn’t fear the cross and give-up. No! Jesus ignored the shame of dying on the cross, because He saw joy in-front-of Him. And now Jesus reigns in heaven with God the Father. Think about how-much sinners hated Jesus and He patiently continued and didn’t give-up. Then you won’t become tired or afraid.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

*There are two choices for the Gospel lesson, a shorter reading from Luke 12 or a longer reading from Luke 12. Choose one.*

*The shorter reading.*

The Gospel lesson is from Luke chapter 12.

C: (copy) Glory to You, O Lord.

Jesus said, “I came to throw fire on earth. I wish that fire already started! I must get a special baptism. And I am full of stress until that baptism is-finished. You think I came to bring peace on earth? No! I don't bring peace, but I bring division. From now-on, a family with five people will be divided; three against two, and two against three. A father will be against the son, and the son against the father. A mother will be against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. A mother-in-law will be against her daughter-in-law, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: (copy) Praise to You, O Christ.

*The longer reading.*

The Gospel lesson is from Luke chapter 12.

C: (copy) Glory to You, O Lord.

Jesus said, “I came to throw fire on earth. I wish that fire already started! I must get a special baptism. And I am full of stress until that baptism is-finished. You think I came to bring peace on earth? No! I don't bring peace, but I bring division. From now-on, a family with five people will be divided; three against two, and two against three. A father will be against the son, and the son against the father. A mother will be against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. A mother-in-law will be against her daughter-in-law, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”

 Jesus said to the people, “When you see a cloud in the west, you say, ‘Rain is coming.’ And then it rains. When you see wind from the south, you say, ‘It will become very hot.’ And that happens. You hypocrites! You see signs happen in the sky and on earth and you know what that means. But you don’t know how to understand things happening now. Why?”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: (copy) Praise to You, O Christ.