

Readings for the Fourth Sunday of Easter

The Prayer of the Day

Gracious God,
you sent Jesus, the good shepherd,
to gather us together:
may we not wander from his flock,
but follow wherever he leads us,
listening for his voice and staying near him,
until we are safely in your fold,
to live with you for ever;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Acts 9.36-42

In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which is translated Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor. About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. When the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, which was near Joppa, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!" Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them. Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord.

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing.

**He will make me lie down in green pastures,
and lead me beside still waters;**

He will refresh my soul:

and guide me in right pathways for his name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death

I will fear no evil:

for you are with me, your rod and your staff comfort me.

You spread a table before me
in the face of those who trouble me:
you have anointed my head with oil and my cup will be full.
**Surely your goodness and loving-kindness
will follow me all the days of my life:
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.**

Revelation 7.9-17

John describes a vision of Christ in glory.

I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "**Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.**" They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: "**Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!**"

Then one of the elders said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

John 10.22-30

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

Then came the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon's Colonnade. The Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."

Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

For the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.