

## The Psalms

The book of Wisdom literature that has had the greatest influence upon Israel and the Church over the centuries is the Book of Psalms. It has been used in the liturgy of the temple/synagogue as well as of Christian communities ever since the psalms were written (over a period of some 1,000 years).

One can identify various forms of literature in the psalms: wisdom, lamentation, hymns, regal or messianic, historic, etc. They often depend upon parallelism (repeating the same idea with similar or identical words to add emphasis) for this is one of the most important techniques in Hebrew poetry. Many of the more subtle forms of poetic structure (alliteration, rhythm, etc.) are difficult to reproduce in modern language translations.

## The Languages of the Old Testament

Most of the Old Testament was written in Hebrew. One can often determine when a particular passage was written by the grammatical forms or the borrowed words from other languages (e.g., Aramaic, Persian, Greek) for Hebrew, like all languages, evolved over the centuries.

A few chapters of the books of Daniel and Ezra were written in Aramaic, the language that was spoken by most Jews after the Babylonian exile.

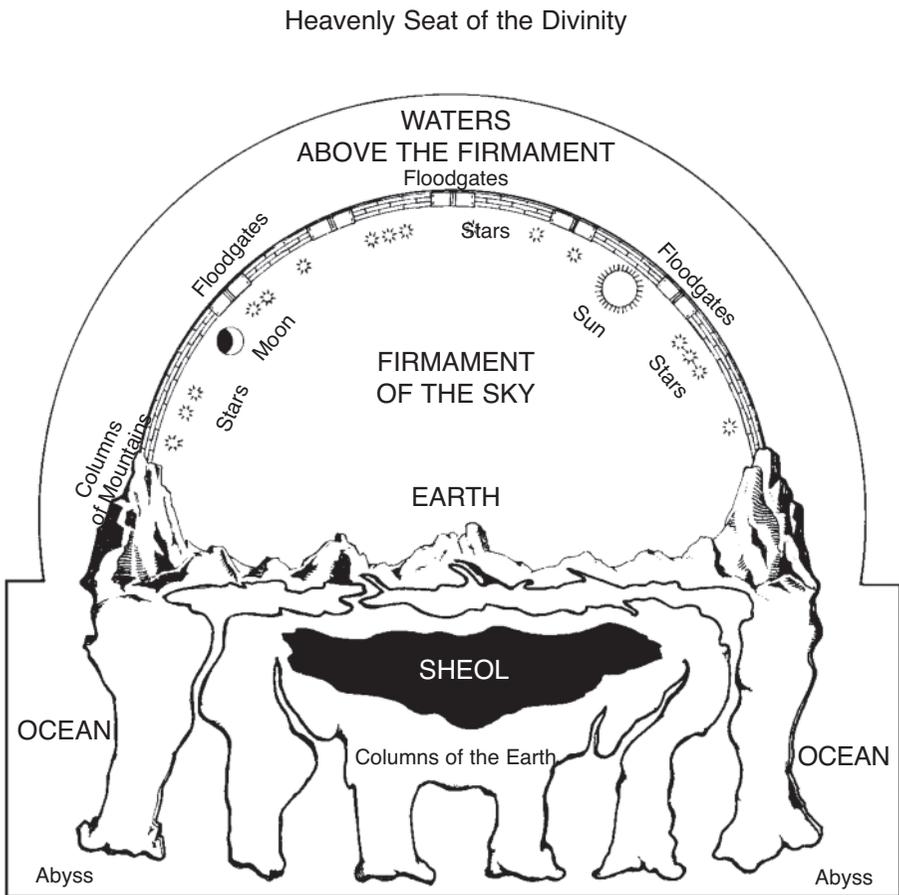
Beginning with that exile, more and more Jews lived outside of Israel. Many of them spoke Greek as their mother tongue. This is why a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible called the Septuagint was sponsored. This translation was used by Greek-speaking Jews until the end of the first century A.D. and continues to be used by Christians, especially the Orthodox, until this day.

In the last centuries before the birth of Jesus, certain books were written in Greek: 1 and 2 Maccabees, Judith, Tobit, Baruch, Wisdom and Sirach (although a Hebrew original text for Sirach has now been found). These Greek books were excluded from the canon of the Hebrew Bible by a decision issued by a gathering of rabbis in Jamnia around 85 A.D. Most Christians continued to consider these books to be a part of the Bible. These books became controversial in the days of Martin Luther who argued that Christians should use the rabbis' canon and who excluded them from his Bible (hence the difference between the Catholic and the Protestant Old Testament).

## The Qumran Documents

When these texts are translated into modern languages, scholars work from the original languages in which they were written. That is difficult for the Old Testament, though, for the texts were mostly written in Hebrew and Aramaic. Early Christians tended not to conserve those manuscripts for they used the Greek and later the Latin translations. The Hebrew manuscripts were conserved by the Jewish rabbis. In the 6th to the 10th centuries, the rabbis decided to produce a critical edition of the Hebrew Bible called the Masoretic text (this is when they added vowels to the text for previously the Hebrew text had been written only with consonants). After they finished, they destroyed all the older manuscripts to avoid confusion. How could we now be sure that the Hebrew Masoretic text was accurate?

Over the past century, archaeologists have discovered a number of Hebrew manuscripts that date back to the first and second centuries B.C. In 1896, they dis-



## THE WORLD OF THE HEBREWS

**THE WORLD OF THE HEBREWS** — Graphic representation of the Hebrew conception of the world. God's heavenly seat rests above the superior waters. Below these waters lies the firmament or sky which resembles an overturned bowl and is supported by columns. Through the openings (floodgates) in its vault the superior waters fall down upon the earth in the form of rain or snow. The earth is a platform resting on columns and surrounded by waters, the seas. Underneath the columns lie the inferior waters. In the depths of the earth is Sheol, the home of the dead (also called the netherworld). This was the same prescientific concept of the universe as that held by the Hebrews' pagan neighbors.

ence of the Hittites, all who entered the gate of Ephron's city. <sup>19</sup> After this, Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave of the field of Machpelah, facing Mamre—now Hebron—in the land of Canaan. <sup>20</sup> Thus the field with its cave was transferred from the Hittites to Abraham as a burial place.

## CHAPTER 24

**Isaac and Rebekah.\*** <sup>1</sup> Abraham was old, having seen many days, and the LORD had blessed him in every way. <sup>2 a</sup> Abraham said to the senior servant of his household, who had charge of all his possessions: "Put your hand under my thigh,\* <sup>3</sup> and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I live, <sup>4</sup> but that you will go to my own land and to my relatives to get a wife for my son Isaac." <sup>5</sup> The servant asked him: "What if the woman is unwilling to follow me to this land? Should I then take your son back to the land from which you came?" <sup>6</sup> Abraham told him, "Never take my son back there for any reason! <sup>7</sup> The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and the land of my relatives, and who confirmed by oath the promise he

a. [24:2-3] Gn 47:29. — b. [24:3] Gn 24:37; 28:1-2; Jgs 14:3; Tb 4:12. — c. [24:7] Gn 12:7; Ex 6:8; Tb 5:17; Gal 3:16. — d. [24:15] Gn 22:23.

**24:1-67** The story of Abraham and Sarah is drawing to a close. The promises of progeny (21:1-7) and land (chap. 23) have been fulfilled and Sarah has died (23:1-2). Abraham's last duty is to ensure that his son Isaac shares in the promises. Isaac must take a wife from his own people (vv. 3-7), so the promises may be fulfilled. The extraordinary length of this story and its development of a single theme contrast strikingly with the spare style of the preceding Abraham and Sarah stories. It points ahead to the Jacob and Joseph stories.

The length of the story is partly caused by its meticulous attention to the sign (vv. 12-14), its fulfillment (vv. 15-20), and the servant's retelling of sign and fulfillment to Rebekah's family to win their consent (vv. 34-49).

**24:2** *Put your hand under my thigh*: the symbolism of this act was apparently connected with the Hebrew concept of children issuing from their father's "thigh" (the literal meaning of "direct descendants" in 46:26; Ex 1:5). Perhaps the man who took such an oath was thought to bring the curse of sterility on himself if he did not fulfill his sworn promise. Jacob made Joseph swear in the same way (Gn 47:29). In both these instances, the oath was taken to carry out the last request of a man upon his death.

**24:10** *Nahor*: it is uncertain whether this is the place where Abraham's brother Nahor (11:27) had lived or whether it is the city Nahur, named in the Mari documents (nineteenth and eighteenth centuries B.C.), near the confluence of the Balikh and Middle Euphrates rivers. *Aram Naharaim*, lit., "Aram between the two rivers," is the Yahwist designation for Terah's homeland. The two rivers are the Habur and the Euphrates. The Priestly designation for the area is Paddan-aram, which is from the Assyrian *padana*, "road or garden," and Aram, which refers to the people or land of the Arameans.

**24:12** *Let it turn out favorably for me*: let me have a favorable sign; cf. end of v. 14.

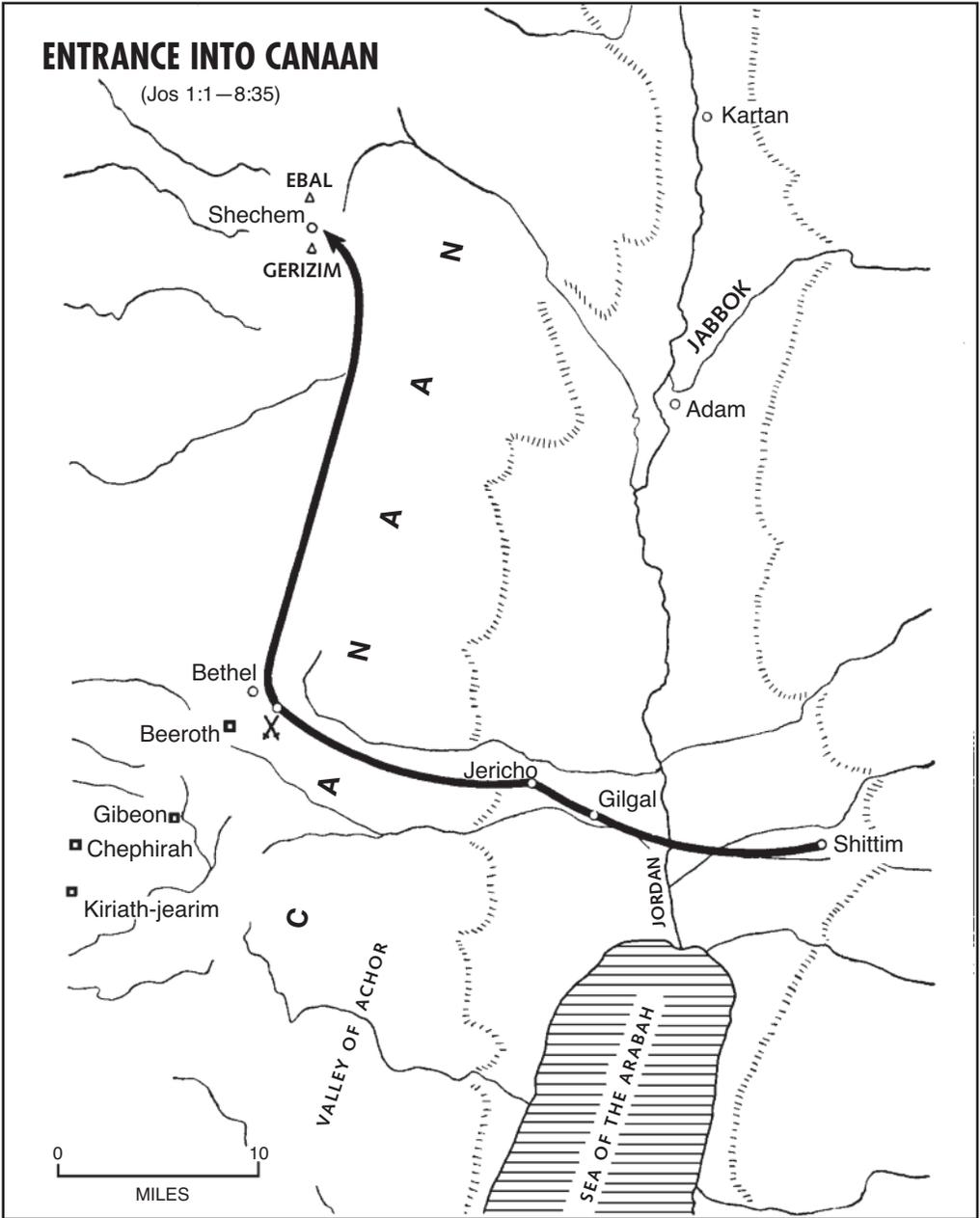
made to me, 'I will give this land to your descendants'—he will send his angel before you, and you will get a wife for my son there. <sup>c</sup> <sup>8</sup> If the woman is unwilling to follow you, you will be released from this oath to me. But never take my son back there!" <sup>9</sup> So the servant put his hand under the thigh of his master Abraham and swore to him concerning this matter.

<sup>10</sup> The servant then took ten of his master's camels, and bearing all kinds of gifts from his master, he made his way to the city of Nahor\* in Aram Naharaim. <sup>11</sup> Near evening, at the time when women go out to draw water, he made the camels kneel by the well outside the city. <sup>12</sup> Then he said: "LORD, God of my master Abraham, let it turn out favorably for me\* today and thus deal graciously with my master Abraham. <sup>13</sup> While I stand here at the spring and the daughters of the townspeople are coming out to draw water, <sup>14</sup> if I say to a young woman, 'Please lower your jug, that I may drink,' and she answers, 'Drink, and I will water your camels, too,' then she is the one whom you have decided upon for your servant Isaac. In this way I will know that you have dealt graciously with my master."

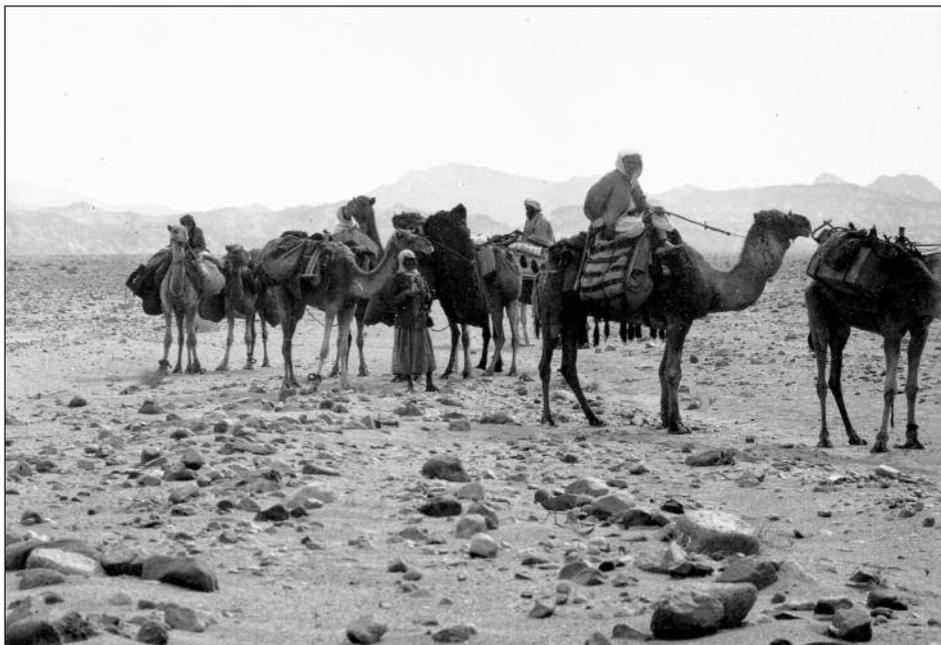
<sup>15 d</sup> He had scarcely finished speaking when Rebekah—who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor—came out with a jug on her shoulder. <sup>16</sup> The young woman was very beautiful, a virgin, untouched by man. She went down to the spring and filled her jug. As she came up, <sup>17</sup> the servant ran toward her and said, "Please give me a sip of water from your jug." <sup>18</sup> "Drink, sir," she replied, and quickly lowering the jug into her hand, she gave him a drink. <sup>19</sup> When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels, too, until they have finished drinking." <sup>20</sup> With that, she quickly emptied her jug into the drinking trough and ran back to the well to draw more water, until she had drawn enough for all the camels. <sup>21</sup> The man watched her the whole time, silently waiting to learn whether or not the LORD had made his journey successful. <sup>22</sup> When the camels had finished drinking, the man took out a gold nose-ring weighing half a shekel, and two gold bracelets weighing ten shekels for her wrists. <sup>23</sup> Then he asked her: "Whose daughter are you? Tell me, please. And is there a place in your father's house for us to spend the night?" <sup>24</sup> She answered: "I am the

# ENTRANCE INTO CANAAN

(Jos 1:1—8:35)

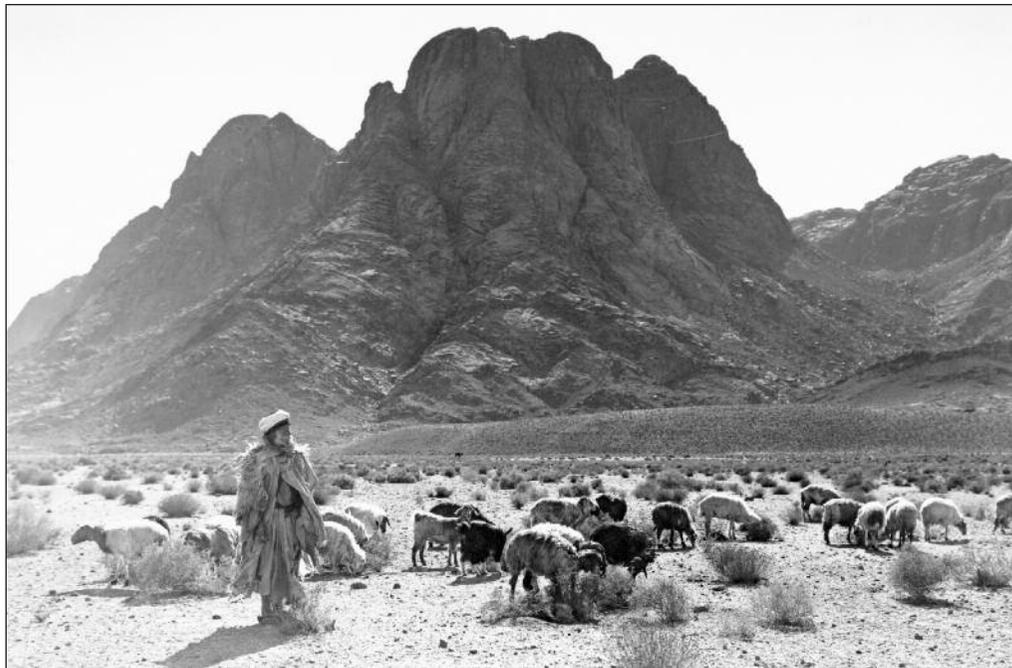


**ENTRANCE INTO CANAAN (between 1220 and 1200: Jos 1:1—8:35)** — (a) At Shittim Joshua makes plans for passage across the Jordan. He sends spies to Jericho (1:1—2:4). (b) At the Jordan: the entry into the Promised Land marks the end of the Exodus. Joshua leaves Shittim with all the Israelites and crosses the Jordan opposite Jericho and camps at Gilgal, to the east of Jericho where the people celebrate the Passover (3:1—4:19). (c) At Ai, the Israelites are defeated by the people of Ai and driven back from the city. Violation of the anathema by Achan, who is stoned in the Valley of Achor. Joshua captures Ai by an ambush between Bethel and Ai, to the west of the town (7:2—8:28) (e) At Shechem, confirmation of the covenant takes place (8:30—35).



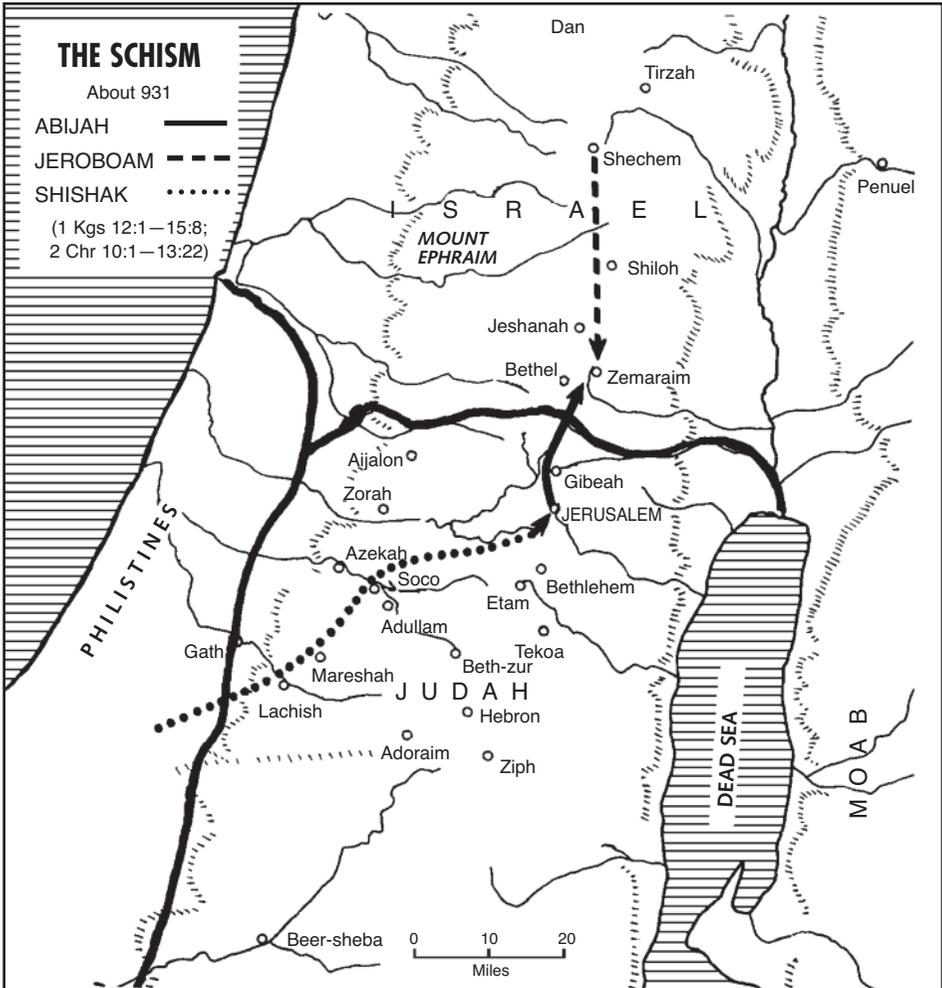
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**WILDERNESS OF SIN** — Modern Debbet er-Ramleh, the most likely site of the wilderness (whose name was probably derived from the moon-god Sin) through which the Hebrews passed on their way from Egypt to Mount Sinai. (See Ex 16:1; 17:1; Nm 33:11–12.)



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**TRADITIONAL MOUNT SINAI** — A modern shepherd tends his flock before the rugged slopes of Jebel Musa, one of the four possible sites (the others are Mount Serbal, Jebel Hallal, and Mount Seir). Mount Sinai was the location for the theophany of Yahweh and the giving of the law. (See Ex 19:3.)



**THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH**

1. REHOBOAM (931–913)

1 Kgs 12:1—14:30; 2 Chr 10:1—12:16

At **Shechem**, convocation of the people and revolt of the northern tribes.

(a) Rehoboam reigns over Judah and Benjamin. The prophet Shemaiah advises against any attempt at forced reunification (12:17–24). Rehoboam builds fortified cities: **Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam, Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, Zorah, Aijalon, Hebron** (2 Chr 11:5–12). (b) Persecuted by Jeroboam, the priests, scattered in Israel, come to Jerusalem (2 Chr 11:13–17). (c) However, Sheshonk (Shishak), king of Egypt, invades Judah, pillages the temple and the royal palace (1 Kgs 14:25–27).

**THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL**

1. JEROBOAM (931–910)

1 Kgs 12:20—14:18

(a) Returning from Egypt, Jeroboam is crowned king of Israel by the people of the dissident tribes (12:1–16). (b) He fortifies **Shechem** and **Penuel**; he institutes idolatrous worship at **Bethel** and **Dan** (12:25–32). A prophet from Judah condemns the altar at **Bethel**. The prophet Ahijah of **Shiloh** predicts the death of Abijah, son of Jeroboam (12:32—13:34).

2. ABIJAH (913–911)

1 Kgs 15:1–8; 2 Chr 13

War between Abijah and Jeroboam. The latter is defeated at **Mount Zemaraim**, in the highlands of Ephraim. Abijah annexes **Bethel, Jeshanah, Ephron** (2 Chr 13:1–21).

and a nation\* that knew you not shall run to you,  
Because of the LORD, your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, who has glorified you.<sup>c</sup>

- 6\* Seek the LORD while he may be found,  
call upon him while he is near.
- 7 Let the wicked forsake their way,  
and sinners their thoughts;  
Let them turn to the LORD to find mercy;  
to our God, who is generous in forgiving.
- 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
nor are your ways my ways—oracle of the LORD.
- 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways,  
my thoughts higher than your thoughts.
- 10\* Yet just as from the heavens  
the rain and snow come down  
And do not return there  
till they have watered the earth,  
making it fertile and fruitful,  
Giving seed to the one who sows  
and bread to the one who eats,
- 11 So shall my word be  
that goes forth from my mouth;  
It shall not return to me empty,  
but shall do what pleases me,  
achieving the end for which I sent it.
- 12 Yes, in joy you shall go forth,  
in peace you shall be brought home;  
Mountains and hills shall break out in song before you,  
all trees of the field shall clap their hands.
- 13 In place of the thornbush, the cypress shall grow,  
instead of nettles,\* the myrtle.

c. [55:5] Acts 13:34.—a. [56:1] Is 59:9, 14, 19–20.—b. [56:2] Is 1:13; 58:13–14; Ex 23:12.—c. [56:3] Dt 23:3–5; Neh 13:1–3.—d. [56:4] Wis 3:14.

**55:5** The "nation" is Persia under Cyrus, but the perspective is worldwide.

**55:6–9** The invitation to seek the Lord is motivated by the mercy of a God whose "ways" are completely mysterious.

**55:10–11** The efficacy of the word of God recalls 40:5, 8.

**55:13** *Thornbush . . . nettles*: suggestive of the desert and therefore symbolic of suffering and hardship; *cypress . . . myrtle*: suggestive of fertile land and therefore symbolic of joy and strength. *To the Lord's renown*: lit., "to the name of the Lord."

**56:1–8** This poem inaugurates the final section of the Book of Isaiah, often referred to as Third or Trito-Isaiah. While Second or Deutero-Isaiah (Is 40–55) gave numerous references to the hopes of the community of Israel during the Babylonian exile (ca. 587–538 B.C.), Third Isaiah witnesses to the struggles and hoped-for blessings of the postexilic community now back in the homeland of Israel. In this opening poem, the references to "keeping the sabbath" (vv. 2, 4, 6), "holding fast to the covenant" (vv. 4, 6) and "God's holy

This shall be to the LORD's renown,  
as an everlasting sign that shall not fail.

### III. ISAIAH 56—66

#### CHAPTER 56

##### Salvation for the Just\*

- 1\* Thus says the LORD:  
Observe what is right, do what is just,  
for my salvation is about to come,  
my justice, about to be revealed.<sup>a</sup>
- 2 Happy is the one who does this,  
whoever holds fast to it:  
Keeping the sabbath without profaning  
it,  
keeping one's hand from doing any  
evil.<sup>b</sup>
- Obligations and Promises to Share  
in the Covenant**
- 3\* The foreigner joined to the LORD should  
not say,  
"The LORD will surely exclude me  
from his people";  
Nor should the eunuch say,  
"See, I am a dry tree."<sup>c</sup>
- 4 For thus says the LORD:  
To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths,  
who choose what pleases me,  
and who hold fast to my covenant,<sup>d</sup>
- 5 I will give them, in my house  
and within my walls, a monument and  
a name\*  
Better than sons and daughters;  
an eternal name, which shall not be cut  
off, will I give them.
- 6 And foreigners who join themselves to  
the LORD,  
to minister to him,

mountain" as a house of prayer (v. 7), all tell of the postexilic community that was establishing itself again in the land according to the pattern of God's word given through the prophet. The poem can be classified as a "prophetic exhortation" in which the prophet gives instruction for those who wish to live according to God's word and covenant. What is important to note are the conditions placed upon the people of God; while Is 40–55 show an unconditional promise of redemption, these final chapters delineate clear expectations for receiving God's salvific promises. Both the expectations and the great promises of God will unfold in the succeeding chapters of Third Isaiah.

**56:1** This opening verse echoes themes that are well known throughout the Book of Isaiah: justice and right judgment (1:27; 5:7, 16; 9:6; 16:5; 26:9; 28:17; 32:1, 16; 33:5; 42:1, 4, 6; 45:8, 13, 19), salvation and deliverance (12:3; 26:18; 33:2; 45:8, 21; 46:13; 51:5, 6, 8). These themes will be developed also throughout Third Isaiah.

**56:3** Eunuchs had originally been excluded from the community of the Lord; cf. Dt 23:2; Neh 13:1–3; Wis 3:14.

**56:5** *A monument and a name*: literally in Hebrew, "a hand and a name"; a memorial inscription to prevent oblivion for one who had no children; cf. 2 Sm 18:18; Neh 7:5; 13:14.

and racked with pain, those who were possessed, lunatics, and paralytics, and he cured them. <sup>25 n</sup> And great crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis,\* Jerusalem, and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan followed him.

## CHAPTER 5

**The Sermon on the Mount.** <sup>1</sup> \* When he saw the crowds,\* he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> He began to teach them, saying:

### The Beatitudes\*

- <sup>3</sup> “Blessed are the poor in spirit,\*  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>a</sup>  
<sup>4</sup>\* Blessed are they who mourn, <sup>b</sup>  
for they will be comforted.  
<sup>5</sup>\* Blessed are the meek, <sup>c</sup>  
for they will inherit the land.  
<sup>6</sup> Blessed are they who hunger and thirst  
for righteousness,\*  
for they will be satisfied.  
<sup>7</sup> Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy. <sup>d</sup>  
<sup>8</sup>\* Blessed are the clean of heart, <sup>e</sup>  
for they will see God.  
<sup>9</sup> Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of  
God.

n. [4:25] Mk 3:7–8; Lk 6:17–19.—a. [5:3–12] Lk 6:20–23.—b. [5:4] Is 61:2–3; Rev 21:4.—c. [5:5] Gn 13:15; Ps 37:11.—d. [5:7] 18:33; Jas 2:13.—e. [5:8] Ps 24:4–5; 73:1.—f. [5:10] 1 Pt 2:20; 3:14; 4:14.—g. [5:11] 10:22; Acts 5:41.—h. [5:12] 2 Chr 36:16; Heb 11:32–38; Jas 5:10.—i. [5:13] Mk 9:50; Lk 14:34–35.—j. [5:14] Jn 8:12.—k. [5:15] Mk 4:21; Lk 8:16; 11:33.—l. [5:16] Jn 3:21.

**4:25** *The Decapolis*: a federation of Greek cities in Palestine, originally ten in number, all but one east of the Jordan.

**5:1–7:29** The first of the five discourses that are a central part of the structure of this gospel. It is the discourse section of the first book and contains sayings of Jesus derived from Q and from M. The Lucan parallel is in that gospel’s “Sermon on the Plain” (Lk 6:20–49), although some of the sayings in Matthew’s “Sermon on the Mount” have their parallels in other parts of Luke. The careful topical arrangement of the sermon is probably not due only to Matthew’s editing; he seems to have had a structured discourse of Jesus as one of his sources. The form of that source may have been as follows: four beatitudes (5:3–4, 6, 11–12), a section on the new righteousness with illustrations (5:17, 20–24, 27–28, 33–48), a section on good works (6:1–6, 16–18), and three warnings (7:1–2, 15–21, 24–27).

**5:1–2** Unlike Luke’s sermon, this is addressed not only to the disciples but to the crowds (see 7:28).

**5:3–12** The form *Blessed are (is)* occurs frequently in the Old Testament in the Wisdom literature and in the psalms. Although modified by Matthew, the first, second, fourth, and ninth beatitudes have Lucan parallels (Mt 5:3 // Lk 6:20; Mt 5:4 // Lk 6:21, 22; Mt 5:6 // Lk 6:21a; Mt 5:11–12 // Lk 5:22–23). The others were added by the evangelist and are probably his own composition. A few manuscripts, Western and Alexandrian, and many versions and patristic quotations give the second and third beatitudes in inverted order.

<sup>10</sup> Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,\*  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>f</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you [falsely] because of me. <sup>g</sup>  
<sup>12</sup> \* Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. <sup>h</sup> Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**The Similes of Salt and Light.** <sup>13</sup> <sup>i</sup> “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.\* <sup>14</sup> You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. <sup>j</sup> <sup>15</sup> Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. <sup>k</sup> <sup>16</sup> Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father. <sup>l</sup>

**5:3** *The poor in spirit*: in the Old Testament, the poor (*‘anāwīm*) are those who are without material possessions and whose confidence is in God (see Is 61:1; Zep 2:3; in the NAB the word is translated *lowly* and *humble*, respectively, in those texts). Matthew added *in spirit* in order either to indicate that only the devout poor were meant or to extend the beatitude to all, of whatever social rank, who recognized their complete dependence on God. The same phrase *poor in spirit* is found in the Qumran literature (1QM 14:7).

**5:4** Cf. Is 61:2, “(The Lord has sent me) . . . to comfort all who mourn.” *They will be comforted*: here the passive is a “theological passive” equivalent to the active “God will comfort them”; so also in vv. 6, 7.

**5:5** Cf. Ps 37:11, “. . . the meek shall possess the land.” In the psalm “the land” means the land of Palestine; here it means the kingdom.

**5:6** *For righteousness*: a Matthean addition. For the meaning of *righteousness* here, see note on 3:14–15.

**5:8** Cf. Ps 24:4. Only one “whose heart is clean” can take part in the temple worship. To be with God in the temple is described in Ps 42:3 as “beholding his face,” but here the promise to the *clean of heart* is that they will *see God* not in the temple but in the coming kingdom.

**5:10** *Righteousness* here, as usually in Matthew, means conduct in conformity with God’s will.

**5:12** *The prophets who were before you*: the disciples of Jesus stand in the line of the persecuted prophets of Israel. Some would see the expression as indicating also that Matthew considered all Christian disciples as prophets.

**5:13–16** By their deeds the disciples are to influence the world for good. They can no more escape notice than *a city set on a mountain*. If they fail in good works, they are as useless as flavorless salt or as a lamp whose light is concealed.

**5:13** The unusual supposition of salt losing its flavor has led some to suppose that the saying refers to the salt of the Dead Sea that, because chemically impure, could lose its taste.

grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once, for the harvest has come.”

**The Mustard Seed.** <sup>30</sup> *k* He said, “To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use for it? <sup>31</sup> It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. <sup>32</sup> \* But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade.” <sup>33</sup> With many such parables <sup>l</sup> he spoke the word to them as they were able to understand it. <sup>34</sup> Without parables he did not speak to them, but to his own disciples he explained everything in private.

**The Calming of a Storm at Sea.** <sup>35</sup> \* On that day, as evening drew on, he said to them, “Let us cross to the other side.” <sup>m</sup> <sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat just as he was. And other boats were with him. <sup>37</sup> A violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up. <sup>38</sup> Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” <sup>39</sup> He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Quiet! Be still!” \* The wind ceased and there was great calm. <sup>40</sup> Then he asked them, “Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?”

*k*. [4:30–32] Mt 13:31–32; Lk 13:18–19. — *l*. [4:33–34] Mt 13:34. — *m*. [4:35–40] Mt 8:18, 23–37; Lk 8:22–25. — *n*. [4:41] 1:27. — *a*. [5:1–20] Mt 8:28–34; Lk 8:26–39. — *b*. [5:9] Mt 12:45; Lk 8:2; 11:26.

**4:32** The universality of the kingdom of God is indicated here; cf. Ez 17:23; 31:6; Dn 4:17–19.

**4:35–5:43** After the chapter on parables, Mark narrates four miracle stories: 4:35–41; 5:1–20; and two joined together in 5:21–43. See also notes on Mt 8:23–34 and Mt 9:8–26.

**4:39** *Quiet! Be still!*: as in the case of silencing a demon (1:25), Jesus rebukes the wind and subdues the turbulence of the sea by a mere word; see note on Mt 8:26.

**4:41** Jesus is here depicted as exercising power over wind and sea. In the Christian community this event was seen as a sign of Jesus’ saving presence amid persecutions that threatened its existence.

**5:1** *The territory of the Gerasenes*: the reference is to pagan territory; cf. Is 65:1. Another reading is “Gadarenes”; see note on Mt 8:28.

**5:2–6** The man was an outcast from society, dominated by unclean spirits (vv. 8, 13), living among the tombs. The prostration before Jesus (v. 6) indicates Jesus’ power over evil spirits.

**5:7** *What have you to do with me?*: cf. 1:24 and see note on Jn 2:4.

**5:9** *Legion is my name*: the demons were numerous and the condition of the possessed man was extremely serious; cf. Mt 12:45.

**5:11** *Herd of swine*: see note on Mt 8:30.

<sup>41</sup> \* <sup>n</sup> They were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?”

## CHAPTER 5

### The Healing of the Gerasene Demoniac.

<sup>1</sup> \* <sup>a</sup> They came to the other side of the sea, to the territory of the Gerasenes. <sup>2</sup> When he got out of the boat, at once a man\* from the tombs who had an unclean spirit met him. <sup>3</sup> The man had been dwelling among the tombs, and no one could restrain him any longer, even with a chain. <sup>4</sup> In fact, he had frequently been bound with shackles and chains, but the chains had been pulled apart by him and the shackles smashed, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. <sup>5</sup> Night and day among the tombs and on the hillsides he was always crying out and bruising himself with stones. <sup>6</sup> Catching sight of Jesus from a distance, he ran up and prostrated himself before him, <sup>7</sup> crying out in a loud voice, “What have you to do with me,\* Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me!” <sup>8</sup> (He had been saying to him, “Unclean spirit, come out of the man!”) <sup>9</sup> \* He asked him, “What is your name?” He replied, “Legion is my name. There are many of us.” <sup>b</sup> <sup>10</sup> And he pleaded earnestly with him not to drive them away from that territory.

<sup>11</sup> Now a large herd of swine\* was feeding there on the hillside. <sup>12</sup> And they pleaded with him, “Send us into the swine. Let us enter them.” <sup>13</sup> And he let them, and the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine. The herd of about two thousand rushed down a steep bank into the sea, where they were drowned. <sup>14</sup> The swineherds ran away and reported the incident in the town and throughout the countryside. And people came out to see what had happened. <sup>15</sup> As they approached Jesus, they caught sight of the man who had been possessed by Legion, sitting there clothed and in his right mind. And they were seized with fear. <sup>16</sup> Those who witnessed the incident explained to them what had happened to the possessed man and to the swine. <sup>17</sup> Then they began to beg him to leave their district. <sup>18</sup> As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed pleaded to remain with him. <sup>19</sup> But he would not permit him but told him

seen God. The only Son, God,\* who is at the Father's side, has revealed him. "

## II. THE BOOK OF SIGNS

### John the Baptist's Testimony to Himself.

<sup>19</sup> \* And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews\* from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites [to him] to ask him, "Who are you?" <sup>20</sup> \* he admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, <sup>o</sup> "I am not the Messiah." <sup>21</sup> So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?"\* And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." <sup>p</sup> <sup>22</sup> So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" <sup>23</sup> He said:

"I am 'the voice of one crying out in the desert, <sup>q</sup>

"Make straight the way of the Lord,"\* "

as Isaiah the prophet said." <sup>24</sup> Some Pharisees\* were also sent. <sup>25</sup> They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet?"\* <sup>r</sup> <sup>26</sup> John answered them, "I baptize with water;\* but there is one among you whom you do not

n. [1:18] 5:37; 6:46; Ex 33:20; Jgs 13:21-22; 1 Tm 6:16; 1 Jn 4:12.—o. [1:20] 3:28; Lk 3:15; Acts 13:25.—p. [1:21] Dt 18:15, 18; 2 Kgs 2:11; Sir 48:10; Mal 3:1, 23; Mt 11:14; 17:11-13; Mk 9:13; Acts 3:22.—q. [1:23] Is 40:3; Mt 3:3; Mk 1:2; Lk 3:4.—r. [1:25] Ez 36:25; Zec 13:1; Mt 16:14.—s. [1:26] Mt 3:11; Mk 1:7-8; Lk 3:16; Acts 13:25.—t. [1:29] 1:36; Ex 12; Is 53:7; Rev 5-7; 17:14.—u. [1:30] 1:15; Mt 3:11; Mk 1:7; Lk 3:16.—v. [1:33] Sg 5:2; Is 11:2; Hos 11:11; Mt 3:16; Mk 1:10; Lk 3:21-22.—w. [1:33] Is 42:1; Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16.—x. [1:34] Is 42:1; Mt 3:17; Mk 1:11; Lk 9:35.—y. [1:35-51] Mt 4:18-22; Mk 1:16-20; Lk 5:1-11.

**1:18** *The only Son, God:* while the vast majority of later textual witnesses have another reading, "the Son, the only one" or "the only Son," the translation above follows the best and earliest manuscripts, *monogenēs theos*, but takes the first term to mean not just "Only One" but to include a filial relationship with the Father, as at Lk 9:38 ("only child") or Heb 11:17 ("only son") and as translated at v. 14. The Logos is thus "only Son" and God but not Father/God.

**1:19-51** The testimony of John the Baptist about the Messiah and Jesus' self-revelation to the first disciples. This section constitutes the introduction to the gospel proper and is connected with the prose inserts in the prologue. It develops the major theme of testimony in four scenes: John's negative testimony about himself; his positive testimony about Jesus; the revelation of Jesus to Andrew and Peter; and the revelation of Jesus to Philip and Nathanael.

**1:19** *The Jews:* throughout most of the gospel, the "Jews" does not refer to the Jewish people as such but to the hostile authorities, both Pharisees and Sadducees, particularly in Jerusalem, who refuse to believe in Jesus. The usage reflects the atmosphere, at the end of the first century, of polemics between church and synagogue, or possibly it refers to Jews as representative of a hostile world (vv. 10-11).

**1:20** *Messiah:* the anointed agent of Yahweh, usually considered to be of Davidic descent. See further the note on v. 41.

**1:21** *Elijah:* the Baptist did not claim to be Elijah returned to earth (cf. Mal 3:19; Mt 11:14). *The Prophet:* probably the prophet like Moses (Dt 18:15; cf. Acts 3:22).

recognize, <sup>s</sup> <sup>27</sup> the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." <sup>28</sup> This happened in Bethany across the Jordan,\* where John was baptizing.

### John the Baptist's Testimony to Jesus.

<sup>29</sup> The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God,\* who takes away the sin of the world. <sup>t</sup> <sup>30</sup> \* He is the one of whom I said, <sup>u</sup> 'A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.' <sup>31</sup> I did not know him,\* but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel." <sup>32</sup> John testified further, saying, "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove\* from the sky and remain upon him. <sup>33</sup> I did not know him, <sup>v</sup> but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the holy Spirit.' <sup>w</sup> <sup>34</sup> \* <sup>x</sup> Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

**The First Disciples.** <sup>y</sup> <sup>35</sup> The next day John was there again with two of his disciples,

**1:23** This is a repunctuation and reinterpretation (as in the synoptic gospels and Septuagint) of the Hebrew text of Is 40:3 which reads, "A voice cries out: In the desert prepare the way of the LORD."

**1:24** *Some Pharisees:* other translations, such as "Now they had been sent from the Pharisees," misunderstand the grammatical construction. This is a different group from that in v. 19; the priests and Levites would have been Sadducees, not Pharisees.

**1:26** *I baptize with water:* the synoptics add "but he will baptize you with the holy Spirit" (Mk 1:8) or "... holy Spirit and fire" (Mt 3:11; Lk 3:16). John's emphasis is on purification and preparation for a better baptism.

**1:28** *Bethany across the Jordan:* site unknown. Another reading is "Bethabara."

**1:29** *The Lamb of God:* the background for this title may be the victorious apocalyptic lamb who would destroy evil in the world (Rev 5-7; 17:14); the paschal lamb, whose blood saved Israel (Ex 12); and/or the suffering servant led like a lamb to the slaughter as a sin-offering (Is 53:7, 10).

**1:30** *He existed before me:* possibly as Elijah (to come, v. 27); for the evangelist and his audience, Jesus' preexistence would be implied (see note on v. 1).

**1:31** *I did not know him:* this gospel shows no knowledge of the tradition (Lk 1) about the kinship of Jesus and John the Baptist. *The reason why I came baptizing with water:* in this gospel, John's baptism is not connected with forgiveness of sins; its purpose is revelatory, that Jesus may be made known to Israel.

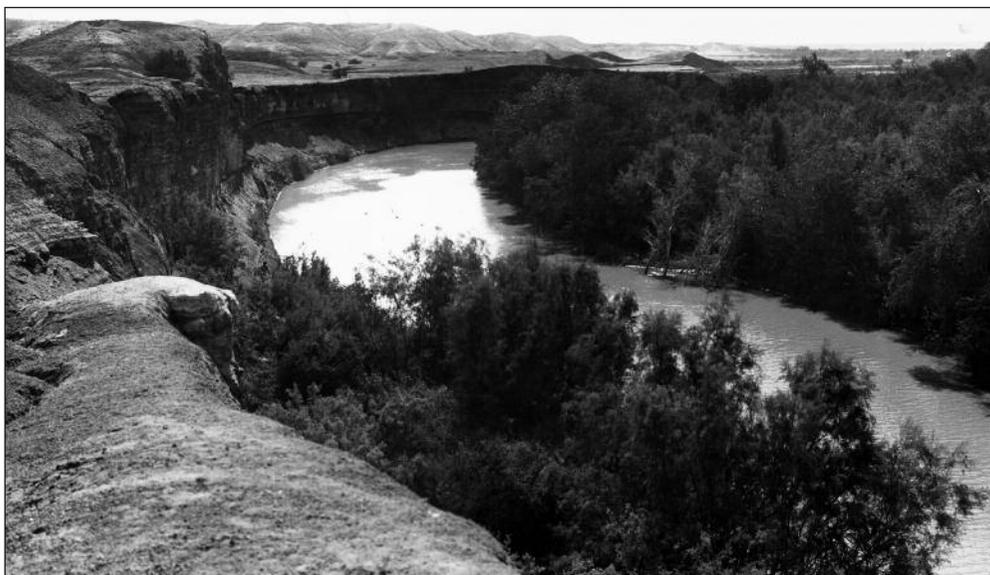
**1:32** *Like a dove:* a symbol of the new creation (Gn 8:8) or the community of Israel (Hos 11:11). *Remain:* the first use of a favorite verb in John, emphasizing the permanency of the relationship between Father and Son (as here) and between the Son and the Christian. Jesus is the permanent bearer of the Spirit.

**1:34** *The Son of God:* this reading is supported by good Greek manuscripts, including the Chester Beatty and Bodmer Papyri and the Vatican Codex, but is suspect because it harmonizes this passage with the synoptic version: "This is my beloved Son" (Mt 3:17; Mk 1:11; Lk 3:22). The poorly attested alternate reading, "God's chosen One," is probably a reference to the Servant of Yahweh (Is 42:1).



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**CANA OF GALILEE** — View of the town of Cana in the highlands of Galilee (showing the Nazareth-Tiberias road) about five miles northeast of Nazareth. Here Jesus attended a marriage feast with his mother and disciples and worked his first miracle. (See Jn 2:1–11.)



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**THE RIVER JORDAN** — The most important river in Palestine measures 135 miles in a straight line, but because of its numerous windings covers a distance of about 250 miles. Its width varies from 80 to 180 feet and its depth from 5 to 12 feet. It was at the Jordan that Jesus was pointed out by John the Baptist and eventually baptized by him. (See Jn 1:19–37 and Mt 3:13.)

saw and spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that neither was he abandoned to the netherworld nor did his flesh see corruption.<sup>p</sup> <sup>32</sup> God raised this Jesus; of this we are all witnesses. <sup>33</sup> Exalted at the right hand of God,\* he received the promise of the holy Spirit from the Father and poured it forth, as you [both] see and hear. <sup>q</sup> <sup>34</sup> For David did not go up into heaven, but he himself said:

“The Lord said to my Lord,  
“Sit at my right hand”

<sup>35</sup> until I make your enemies your footstool.”<sup>r</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Therefore let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.”<sup>s</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and they asked Peter and the other apostles, “What are we to do, my brothers?”<sup>t</sup> <sup>38</sup> Peter [said] to them, “Repent and be baptized,\* every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the holy Spirit.”<sup>u</sup> <sup>39</sup> For the promise is made to you and to your children and to all those far off, whomever the Lord our God will call.”<sup>v</sup> <sup>40</sup> He testified with many other arguments, and was exhorting them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”<sup>w</sup> <sup>41</sup> Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand persons were added that day.<sup>x</sup>

p. [2:31] 13:35; Ps 16:10.—q. [2:33] 1:4–5.—r. [2:34–35] Ps 110:1.—s. [2:36] 9:22; Rom 10:9; Phil 2:11.—t. [2:37] Lk 3:10.—u. [2:38] 3:19; 16:31; Lk 3:3.—v. [2:39] Is 57:19; Jl 3:5; Eph 2:17.—w. [2:40] Dt 32:5; Ps 78:8; Lk 9:41; Phil 2:15.—x. [2:41] 2:47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7; 11:21, 24; 21:20.—y. [2:42–47] 4:32–35.—z. [2:42] 1:14; 6:4.—a. [2:43] 5:12–16.—b. [2:44] 4:32, 34–35.—a. [3:2–8] 14:8–10.—b. [3:6] 4:10.

**2:33** At the right hand of God: or “by the right hand of God.”

**2:38** Repent and be baptized: repentance is a positive concept, a change of mind and heart toward God reflected in the actual goodness of one’s life. It is in accord with the apostolic teaching derived from Jesus (v. 42) and ultimately recorded in the four gospels. Luke presents baptism in Acts as the expected response to the apostolic preaching about Jesus and associates it with the conferring of the Spirit (1:5; 10:44–48; 11:16).

**2:42–47** The first of three summary passages (along with 4:32–37; 5:12–16) that outline, somewhat idyllically, the chief characteristics of the Jerusalem community: adherence to the teachings of the Twelve and the centering of its religious life in the eucharistic liturgy (v. 42); a system of distribution of goods that led wealthier Christians to sell their possessions when the needs of the community’s poor required it (v. 44 and the note on 4:32–37); and continued attendance at the temple, since in this initial stage there was little or no thought of any dividing line between Christianity and Judaism (v. 46).

**Communal Life.**\* <sup>42</sup> <sup>y</sup> They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. <sup>z</sup> <sup>43</sup> Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. <sup>a</sup> <sup>44</sup> All who believed were together and had all things in common; <sup>b</sup> <sup>45</sup> they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one’s need. <sup>46</sup> Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, <sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

## CHAPTER 3

**Cure of a Crippled Beggar.** <sup>1</sup> \* Now Peter and John were going up to the temple area for the three o’clock hour of prayer.\* <sup>2</sup> <sup>a</sup> And a man crippled from birth was carried and placed at the gate of the temple called “the Beautiful Gate” every day to beg for alms from the people who entered the temple. <sup>3</sup> When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked for alms. <sup>4</sup> But Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.” <sup>5</sup> He paid attention to them, expecting to receive something from them. <sup>6</sup> \* Peter said, “I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, [rise and] walk.” <sup>b</sup> <sup>7</sup> Then Peter took him by the

**3:1–4:31** This section presents a series of related events: the dramatic cure of a lame beggar (3:1–10) produces a large audience for the kerygmatic discourse of Peter (3:11–26). The Sadducees, taking exception to the doctrine of resurrection, have Peter, John, and apparently the beggar as well, arrested (4:1–4) and brought to trial before the Sanhedrin. The issue concerns the authority by which Peter and John publicly teach religious doctrine in the temple (4:5–7). Peter replies with a brief summary of the kerygma, implying that his authority is prophetic (4:8–12). The court warns the apostles to abandon their practice of invoking prophetic authority in the name of Jesus (4:13–18). When Peter and John reply that the prophetic role cannot be abandoned to satisfy human objections, the court nevertheless releases them, afraid to do otherwise since the beggar, lame from birth and over forty years old, is a well-known figure in Jerusalem and the facts of his cure are common property (4:19–22). The narrative concludes with a prayer of the Christian community imploring divine aid against threats of persecution (4:23–31).

**3:1** For the three o’clock hour of prayer: lit., “at the ninth hour of prayer.” With the day beginning at 6 a.m., the ninth hour would be 3 p.m.

**3:6–10** The miracle has a dramatic cast; it symbolizes the saving power of Christ and leads the beggar to enter the temple, where he hears Peter’s proclamation of salvation through Jesus.

Egypt under Moses? <sup>17</sup> With whom was he “provoked for forty years”? Was it not those who had sinned, whose corpses fell in the desert?<sup>i</sup> <sup>18</sup> And to whom did he “swear that they should not enter into his rest,” if not to those who were disobedient?<sup>j</sup> <sup>19</sup> And we see that they could not enter for lack of faith.

## CHAPTER 4

**The Sabbath Rest.** <sup>1</sup> Therefore, let us be on our guard while the promise of entering into his rest remains, that none of you seem to have failed. <sup>2</sup> For in fact we have received the good news just as they did. But the word that they heard did not profit them, for they were not united in faith with those who listened. <sup>3</sup> For we who believed enter into [that] rest, just as he has said:<sup>a</sup>

“As I swore in my wrath,  
“They shall not enter into my rest,””

and yet his works were accomplished at the foundation of the world. <sup>4</sup> For he has spoken somewhere about the seventh day in this manner, “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works”;<sup>b</sup> <sup>5</sup> and again, in the previously mentioned place, “They shall not enter into my rest.”<sup>c</sup> <sup>6</sup> Therefore, since it remains that some will enter into it, and those who formerly received the good news did not enter because of disobedience, <sup>7</sup> he once more set a day, “today,” when long afterwards he spoke through David, as already quoted:<sup>d</sup>

“Oh, that today you would hear his voice:

“Harden not your hearts.””

i. [3:17] Nm 14:29.—j. [3:18] Nm 14:22–23; Dt 1:35.—a. [4:3] 3:11; Ps 95:11.—b. [4:4] Gn 2:2.—c. [4:5] Ps 95:11.—d. [4:7] 3:7–8, 15; Ps 95:7–8.—e. [4:8] Dt 31:7; Jos 22:4.—f. [4:12] Wis 18:15–16; Is 49:2; Eph 6:17; Rev 1:16; 2:12.—g. [4:13] Jb 34:21–22; Ps 90:8; 139:2–4.—h. [4:14] 9:11, 24.—i. [4:15] 2:17–18; 5:2.—j. [4:16] 8:1; 10:19, 22, 35; 12:2; Eph 3:12.—a. [5:3] Lv 9:7; 16:15–17, 30, 34.

4:14–16 These verses, which return to the theme first sounded in 2:16–3:1, serve as an introduction to the section that follows. The author here alone calls Jesus a *great high priest* (v. 14), a designation used by Philo for the Logos; perhaps he does so in order to emphasize Jesus' superiority over the Jewish high priest. He has *been tested in every way, yet without sin* (v. 15); this indicates an acquaintance with the tradition of Jesus' temptations, not only at the beginning (as in Mk 1:13) but throughout his public life (cf. Lk 22:28). Although the reign of the exalted Jesus is a theme that occurs elsewhere in Hebrews, and Jesus' throne is mentioned in 1:8, *the throne of grace* (v. 16) refers to the throne of God. The similarity of v. 16 to 10:19–22 indicates that the author is thinking of our confident access to God, made possible by the priestly work of Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> Now if Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterwards of another day.<sup>e</sup> <sup>9</sup> Therefore, a sabbath rest still remains for the people of God. <sup>10</sup> And whoever enters into God's rest, rests from his own works as God did from his. <sup>11</sup> Therefore, let us strive to enter into that rest, so that no one may fall after the same example of disobedience.

<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart.<sup>f</sup> <sup>13</sup> No creature is concealed from him, but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account.<sup>g</sup>

### Jesus, Compassionate High Priest.

<sup>14</sup> \* Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession.<sup>h</sup> <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin.<sup>i</sup> <sup>16</sup> So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help.<sup>j</sup>

## CHAPTER 5

<sup>1</sup> \* Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.\* <sup>2</sup> He is able to deal patiently\* with the ignorant and erring, for he himself is beset by weakness <sup>3</sup> and so, for this reason, must make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people.<sup>a</sup> <sup>4</sup> No one takes this honor upon

5:1–10 The true humanity of Jesus (see note on 2:5–18) makes him a more rather than a less effective high priest to the Christian community. In Old Testament tradition, the high priest was identified with the people, guilty of personal sin just as they were (vv. 1–3). Even so, the office was of divine appointment (v. 4), as was also the case with the sinless Christ (v. 5). For v. 6, see note on Ps 110:4. Although Jesus was Son of God, he was destined as a human being to learn obedience by accepting the suffering he had to endure (v. 8). Because of his perfection through this experience of human suffering, he is the cause of salvation for all (v. 9), a *high priest according to the order of Melchizedek* (v. 10; cf. v. 6 and 7:3).

5:1 *To offer gifts and sacrifices for sins:* the author is thinking principally of the Day of Atonement rite, as is clear from 9:7. This ritual was celebrated to atone for “all the sins of the Israelites” (Lv 16:34).

5:2 *Deal patiently:* the Greek word *metriopathein* occurs only here in the Bible; this term was used by the Stoics to designate the golden mean between excess and defect of passion. Here it means rather the ability to sympathize.

**ELDER.** In the Old Testament the word refers to an official class having both civil and religious jurisdiction (Ex 3:16; 24:1). In the New Testament it refers to an official of the early Christian Church, such as a bishop or priest (Acts 20:17, 28; Jas 5:14).

**ELECT, ELECTION.** This refers to the divine choice. (1) Abraham is chosen and taken from his family and country. This election culminates in the election of Israel (Gn 12:1-7; Ex 19:1-9). (2) Certain persons are said to be chosen (David, the Messiah) (2 Sm 7:14ff). (3) Jesus is called the elect ("chosen one") of God (Lk 23:35). (4) Christ chooses his apostles (Mt 10:2-4). (5) All Christians are the object of a divine election (Rom 1:6).

**ELOHIM.** Ordinary Hebrew word for God. It is the plural of majesty. Elohim ordinarily designates God in his action on the world in contrast to Yahweh, which is used of the God of the covenant (Ex 3:14).

**EMMAUS.** Village situated about twenty miles from Jerusalem. Two disciples were on the way there when Jesus appeared to them on the evening of the resurrection (Lk 24:13-35).

**EPAPHRAS.** President of the Christian community at Colossae and companion of Paul the apostle in his captivity (Col 1:7; Phlm 23).

**EPHAH.** Measure of capacity of about one bushel (Is 5:10).

**EPHESUS.** Important city of Asia Minor, famous for its temple of Artemis (Diana) and theater that held about 24,000 people. The riot of the silversmiths took place during Paul's stay (of almost three years) there (Acts 19).

**EPHOD.** This word has several meanings: (1) Linen priestly vestment (Ex 28:4); (2) Idol (Jgs 8:27); (3) A small instrument, used in ancient times, for the purpose of drawing lots to ascertain the will of God (Lv 8:7).

**EPHRAIM.** Name of one of the sons of the Patriarch Joseph (Gn 41:52). By extension it often denotes the northern tribes of Israel (Jer 7:15). It is also the name of a village about seventeen miles north of Jerusalem to which Jesus was wont to withdraw (Jn 11:54).

**ESSENES.** The Dead Sea Scrolls have indicated that the Essenes ranked in impor-

tance with the Pharisees and Sadducees. There were about 4000 Essenes, although only 200 lived in Qumran, their most important center. A member had to undergo a one-year "postulancy" and a three-year "novitiate." He then vowed to be reverent, just, hate sinners, help the just, obey his superiors, tell the truth, share his property, and keep Essene teaching secret. Meals and ritual baths were of great importance. Some think that John the Baptist was a member of this sect (Lk 1:80; 3:1-21).

**ETERNAL.** This corresponds to the Hebrew word *olam*, signifying a long period of time; these terms indicate primarily something that perdures throughout the centuries (Gn 17:8); then something that has neither beginning nor end, like God (Gn 21:33); and finally something outside of time (1 Jn 5:11-12).

**ETHNARCH.** A subaltern ruler over a racial group whose office needed confirmation by a higher authority within the empire (1 Mc 14:47; 2 Cor 11:32).

**EXPIATION-PROPIIATION.** Translation of the Hebrew *Kippur* signifying pardon or suppression of sin. Jesus is called "expiation" because he assures pardon of all sins (Rom 3:25).

**FACE.** Word that often designates God himself in his relations with man. It is found in the expressions "to contemplate the Face," in the sense of to be admitted into the presence of God, or "to see the Face," that is, obtain an understanding of the divine transcendence (Ex 33:11, 14-23; Ps 27:8-9).

**FAITH.** In the Old Testament, faith is rarely mentioned. Its essential component is trust in God. Thus, Abraham's trust becomes the type of true faith (Gal 3:6). In the New Testament, faith holds a predominant place: Jesus requires faith in himself, which presupposes the acceptance of his message and trust in the person of the Master (Jn 6:29-40). In St. Paul, faith is the chief element of his teaching and the key to salvation (Rom 1:16).

**FASTS.** The chief Jewish fast was that of the Day of Atonement known as "the (autumn) fast" (Acts 27, 9). The especially devout customarily fasted on the second and fifth days of the week (Mt 9:14; Lk 18:12). Our Lord's great fast (Mt 4:2) was foreshadowed by those of Moses (Ex 24:18) and Elijah (1 Kgs 19:8).

**Cycle**

**2013 2019 2025 2031 2037**  
**2016 2022 2028 2034 2040**

GUIDE—

- 1- refers to Reading I
- 2- refers to Reading II
- 3- refers to Gospel

	Old Test.	New Test.
<b>ADVENT SEASON</b>		
<b>1st Sunday of Advent</b>		
1- Jer 33:14-16 .....	974	
2- 1 Thes 3:12—4:2 .....		315
3- Lk 21:25-28, 34-36 .....		135
<b>2nd Sunday of Advent</b>		
1- Bar 5:1-9 .....		1010
2- Phil 1:4-6, 8-11 .....		302
3- Lk 3:1-6 .....		102
<b>3rd Sunday of Advent</b>		
1- Zep 3:14-18a .....		1135
2- Phil 4:4-7 .....		306
3- Lk 3:10-18 .....		103
<b>4th Sunday of Advent</b>		
1- Mi 5:1-4a .....		1122
2- Heb 10:5-10 .....		349
3- Lk 1:39-45 .....		98
<b>CHRISTMAS SEASON</b>		
<b>Christmas Vigil</b>		
1- Is 62:1-6 .....		929
2- Acts 13:16-17, 22-25 .....		198
3- Mt 1:1-25 .....		11
<b>Christmas (At Midnight)</b>		
1- Is 9:1-6 .....		873
2- Ti 2:11-14 .....		334
3- Lk 2:1-14 .....		100
<b>Christmas (At Dawn)</b>		
1- Is 62:11-12 .....		929
2- Ti 3:4-7 .....		334
3- Lk 2:15-20 .....		101
<b>Christmas (During the Day)</b>		
1- Is 57:7-10 .....		923
2- Heb 1:1-6 .....		339
3- Jn 1:1-18 .....		145
<b>Sunday After Christmas (Holy Family)</b>		
1- 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28 .....		283
2- 1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24 .....		372
3- Lk 2:41-52 .....		102
<b>January 1 (Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God)</b>		
1- Nm 6:22-27 .....		152
2- Gal 4:4-7 .....		289
3- Lk 2:16-21 .....		101
<b>2nd Sunday After Christmas</b>		
1- Sir 24:1-2, 8-12 .....		829
2- Eph 1:3-6, 15-18 .....		293
3- Jn 1:1-18 .....		145
<b>Epiphany</b>		
1- Is 60:1-6 .....		927
2- Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6 .....		295
3- Mt 2:1-12 .....		12

	Old Test.	New Test.
<b>Sunday After Epiphany (Baptism of the Lord)</b>		
1- Is 40:1-5, 9-11 .....		904
2- Ti 2:11-14; 3:4-7 .....		334
3- Lk 3:15-16, 21-22 .....		103
<b>LENTEN SEASON</b>		
<b>Ash Wednesday</b>		
1- Jl 2:12-18 .....		1100
2- 2 Cor 5:20—6:2 .....		272
3- Mt 6:1-6, 16-18 .....		18
<b>1st Sunday of Lent</b>		
1- Dt 26:4-10 .....		216
2- Rom 10:8-13 .....		235
3- Lk 4:1-13 .....		104
<b>2nd Sunday of Lent</b>		
1- Gn 15:5-12, 17-18 .....		21
2- Phil 3:17—4:1 .....		306
3- Lk 9:28b-36 .....		116
<b>3rd Sunday of Lent</b>		
1- Ex 3:1-8a, 13-15 .....		67
2- 1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12 .....		254
3- Lk 13:1-9 .....		123
<b>4th Sunday of Lent</b>		
1- Jos 5:9a, 10-12 .....		233
2- 2 Cor 5:17-21 .....		272
3- Lk 15:1-3, 11-32 .....		126
<b>5th Sunday of Lent</b>		
1- Is 43:16-21 .....		909
2- Phil 3:8-14 .....		305
3- Jn 8:1-11 .....		157
<b>Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday)</b>		
Procession Lk 19:28-40 .....		132
1- Is 50:4-7 .....		917
2- Phil 2:6-11 .....		303
3- Lk 22:14—23:56 .....		137
<b>EASTER TRIDUUM AND EASTER SEASON</b>		
<b>Holy Thursday</b>		
<b>Chrism Mass</b>		
1- Is 61:1-3ab, 6a, 8b-9 .....		928
2- Rev 1:5:8 .....		387
3- Lk 4:16-21 .....		105
<b>Mass of Lord's Supper</b>		
1- Ex 12:1-8, 11-14 .....		77
2- 1 Cor 11:23-26 .....		257
3- Jn 13:1-15 .....		166
<b>Good Friday</b>		
1- Is 52:13—53:12 .....		919
2- Heb 4:4-16; 5:7-9 .....		342
3- Jn 18:1—19:42 .....		172
<b>Easter Vigil</b>		
1- Gn 1:1—2:2 .....		6
Gn 22:1-18 .....		29
Ex 14:15—15:1 .....		81

	Old Test.	New Test.
Is 54:5-14 .....		921
Is 55:1-11 .....		921
Bar 3:9-15, 32—4:4 .....		1007
Ez 36:16-17a, 18-28 .....		1051
2- Rom 6:3-11 .....		229
3- Lk 24:1-12 .....		140
<b>Easter Sunday</b>		
1- Acts 10:34a, 37-43 .....		195
2- Col 3:1-4 .....		311
or 1 Cor 5:6b-8 .....		248
3- Jn 20:1-9 .....		176
or Lk 24:1-12 .....		140
Evening 3- Lk 24:13-35 .....		141
<b>2nd Sunday of Easter</b>		
1- Acts 5:12-16 .....		186
2- Rev 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19 .....		387
3- Jn 20:19-31 .....		177
<b>3rd Sunday of Easter</b>		
1- Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41 .....		187
2- Rev 5:11-14 .....		392
3- Jn 21:1-19 .....		177
<b>4th Sunday of Easter</b>		
1- Acts 13:14, 43-52 .....		198
2- Rev 7:9, 14b-17 .....		394
3- Jn 10:27-30 .....		162
<b>5th Sunday of Easter</b>		
1- Acts 14:21-27 .....		198
2- Rev 21:1-5a .....		407
3- Jn 13:31-33a, 34-35 .....		167
<b>6th Sunday of Easter</b>		
1- Acts 15:1-2, 22-29 .....		201
2- Rev 21:10-14, 22-23 .....		407
3- Jn 14:23-29 .....		169
<b>Ascension of the Lord</b>		
1- Acts 1:1-11 .....		180
2- Eph 1:17-23 .....		294
or Heb 9:24-28; 10:19-23 ...		348
3- Lk 24:46-53 .....		142
<b>7th Sunday of Easter</b>		
1- Acts 7:55-60 .....		190
2- Rev 22:12-14, 16-17, 20 .....		409
3- Jn 17:20-26 .....		172
<b>Pentecost</b>		
<b>Vigil</b>		
1- Gn 11:1-9 .....		13
or Ex 19:3-8a, 16-20b .....		77
or Ez 37:1-14 .....		1007
or Jl 3:1-5 .....		1056
2- Rom 8:22-27 .....		232
3- Jn 7:37-39 .....		157