

Hebrew Scriptures : A reading from the book of Deuteronomy
26:1-11

Once you have entered the land that your God is giving to you as your inheritance, and you have taken possession of it and settled in it, take some of the first fruits of all that you produce from the soil of the land that your God is giving to you, and put them in a basket. Take them to the place which your God will choose as a dwelling place for God's Name and say to the priest in office at that time, "This day I declare to our God that I have come to the land God swore to our ancestors to give us. "The priest will then receive the basket from you and will set it in front of the altar of the Holy One.

Then you will declare before the Holy One, "My ancestor was a wandering Aramean who went down to Egypt with a small household and lived there as an alien. There they became a nation great, strong and numerous. When the Egyptians mistreated and oppressed us, imposing hard labour upon us, we cried to the God of our ancestors, who heard our cry and saw our affliction, our toil and our oppression. God brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and outstretched arm, with terrifying power, with signs and wonders; God gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. Therefore, I have brought now the first fruits of the products of the soil that you, O God, have given me." Then you must set them before the Holy One, and bow down before him. Then you all, along with the Levites, and the foreigner that live among you, will feast on all the good things that your God has given to you and your household.

pause

For words of faith in ancient texts,

We give thanks.

Epistle: Listen for words of faith from Paul's letter to the Romans 10:8-13

"The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Sovereign and believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved.

For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.

The scripture says, "No one who believes in God will be put to shame."

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; all have the same Creator, who is generous toward all who call.

For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Most High shall be saved."

pause

For words of wisdom from the early church,

We give thanks.

Gospel: Listen for words of faith in the Gospel of Luke 4:1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to Jesus, "If you are God's Own, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the nations of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours."

Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Most High God. God alone will you serve.'"

Then the devil led Jesus to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are God's Own, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, God will command the angels concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered the devil, "It is said, 'Do not put God to the test.'"

When the devil had finished every test, Jesus was left alone. The devil awaited another opportunity.

pause

For words of challenge and inspiration in Scripture

We give thanks.