**Psalm 85 (1-7) 8-13**

**For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm.**

**1**You, Lord, showed favor to your land;
    you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
**2**You forgave the iniquity of your people
    and covered all their sins.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+85&version=NIV#fen-NIV-15274b)]
**3**You set aside all your wrath
    and turned from your fierce anger.

**4**Restore us again, God our Savior,
    and put away your displeasure toward us.
**5**Will you be angry with us forever?
    Will you prolong your anger through all generations?
**6**Will you not revive us again,
    that your people may rejoice in you?
**7**Show us your unfailing love, Lord,
    and grant us your salvation.

**8**I will listen to what God the Lord says;
    he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants—
    but let them not turn to folly.
**9**Surely his salvation is near those who fear him,
    that his glory may dwell in our land.

**10**Love and faithfulness meet together;
    righteousness and peace kiss each other.
**11**Faithfulness springs forth from the earth,
    and righteousness looks down from heaven.
**12**The Lord will indeed give what is good,
    and our land will yield its harvest.
**13**Righteousness goes before him
    and prepares the way for his steps.

**Old Testament Reading – Amos 7:7-15**

**7**This is what he showed me: The Lord was standing by a wall that had been built true to plumb,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=amos+7&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22472a)] with a plumb line[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=amos+7&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22472b)] in his hand. **8**And the Lord asked me, “What do you see, Amos?”

“A plumb line,” I replied.

Then the Lord said, “Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.

**9**“The high places of Isaac will be destroyed
    and the sanctuaries of Israel will be ruined;
    with my sword I will rise against the house of Jeroboam.”

**Amos and Amaziah**

**10**Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent a message to Jeroboam king of Israel: “Amos is raising a conspiracy against you in the very heart of Israel. The land cannot bear all his words. **11**For this is what Amos is saying:

“‘Jeroboam will die by the sword,
    and Israel will surely go into exile,
    away from their native land.’”

**12**Then Amaziah said to Amos, “Get out, you seer! Go back to the land of Judah. Earn your bread there and do your prophesying there. **13**Don’t prophesy anymore at Bethel, because this is the king’s sanctuary and the temple of the kingdom.”

**14**Amos answered Amaziah, “I was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but I was a shepherd, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees. **15**But the Lord took me from tending the flock and said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’

**Epistle Reading – Ephesians 1:3-14**

**Praise for Spiritual Blessings in Christ**

**3**Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. **4**For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love **5**he[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29212b)] predestined us for adoption to sonship[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29212c)] through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— **6**to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. **7**In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace **8**that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, **9**he[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29216d)] made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, **10**to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

**11**In him we were also chosen,[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29218e)] having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, **12**in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. **13**And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, **14**who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.

**Gospel Reading – Mark 6:14-29**

**John the Baptist Beheaded**

**14**King Herod heard about this, for Jesus’ name had become well known. Some were saying,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+6&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24422b)] “John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him.”

**15**Others said, “He is Elijah.”

And still others claimed, “He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago.”

**16**But when Herod heard this, he said, “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!”

**17**For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, whom he had married. **18**For John had been saying to Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” **19**So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, **20**because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+6&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24428c)]; yet he liked to listen to him.

**21**Finally the opportune time came. On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. **22**When the daughter of[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+6&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24430d)] Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests.

The king said to the girl, “Ask me for anything you want, and I’ll give it to you.” **23**And he promised her with an oath, “Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom.”

**24**She went out and said to her mother, “What shall I ask for?”

“The head of John the Baptist,” she answered.

**25**At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: “I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”

**26**The king was greatly distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he did not want to refuse her. **27**So he immediately sent an executioner with orders to bring John’s head. The man went, beheaded John in the prison, **28**and brought back his head on a platter. He presented it to the girl, and she gave it to her mother. **29**On hearing of this, John’s disciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.