

Psalm 50:1-15

A psalm of Asaph.

- ¹ The Mighty One, God, the LORD,
speaks and summons the earth
from the rising of the sun to where it sets.
- ² From Zion, perfect in beauty,
God shines forth.
- ³ Our God comes
and will not be silent;
a fire devours before him,
and around him a tempest rages.
- ⁴ He summons the heavens above,
and the earth, that he may judge his people:
- ⁵ "Gather to me this consecrated people,
who made a covenant with me by sacrifice."
- ⁶ And the heavens proclaim his righteousness,
for he is a God of justice. ^{[a][b]}
- ⁷ "Listen, my people, and I will speak;
I will testify against you, Israel:
I am God, your God.
- ⁸ I bring no charges against you concerning your sacrifices
or concerning your burnt offerings, which are ever before me.
- ⁹ I have no need of a bull from your stall
or of goats from your pens,
- ¹⁰ for every animal of the forest is mine,
and the cattle on a thousand hills.
- ¹¹ I know every bird in the mountains,
and the insects in the fields are mine.
- ¹² If I were hungry I would not tell you,
for the world is mine, and all that is in it.
- ¹³ Do I eat the flesh of bulls
or drink the blood of goats?
- ¹⁴ "Sacrifice thank offerings to God,
fulfill your vows to the Most High,
- ¹⁵ and call on me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you will honor me."

Old Testament Reading – Isaiah 66:18-23

¹⁸ "And I, because of what they have planned and done, am about to come^[a] and gather the people of all nations and languages, and they will come and see my glory.

¹⁹ "I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of those who survive to the nations—to Tarshish, to the Libyans^[b] and Lydians (famous as archers), to Tubal and Greece, and to the distant islands that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory among the nations. ²⁰ And they will bring all your people, from all the nations, to my holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the LORD—on horses, in chariots and wagons, and on mules and camels," says the LORD. "They will bring them, as the Israelites bring their grain offerings, to the temple of the LORD in ceremonially clean vessels. ²¹ And I will select some of them also to be priests and Levites," says the LORD.

²² "As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure. ²³ From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me," says the LORD.

Epistle Reading - Hebrews 12:4-24

God Disciplines His Children

⁴ In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵ And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says,

"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline,

and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,

⁶ because the Lord disciplines the one he loves,

and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son."^[a]

⁷ Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? ⁸ If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. ⁹ Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How

much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! ¹⁰ They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

¹² Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. ¹³ "Make level paths for your feet," ^[b] so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

Warning and Encouragement

¹⁴ Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. ¹⁶ See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. ¹⁷ Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. Even though he sought the blessing with tears, he could not change what he had done.

The Mountain of Fear and the Mountain of Joy

¹⁸ You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; ¹⁹ to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, ²⁰ because they could not bear what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death." ^[c] ²¹ The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear." ^[d]

²² But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, ²³ to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Gospel Reading – Luke 13:22-30

The Narrow Door

²² Then Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. ²³ Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?"

He said to them, ²⁴ "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. ²⁵ Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.'

"But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.'

²⁶ "Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.'

²⁷ "But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!'

²⁸ "There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. ²⁹ People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last."