

*Priest: Wisdom!*

*Reader: The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon. (Wisdom of Solomon 5:15-6:3)*

*Priest: Let us attend!*

*Reader: The just live forever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them. Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them. He will take his zeal as his whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel his enemies; he will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and will wear impartial justice as a helmet; he will take holiness as an invincible shield, and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with him to fight against his frenzied foes. Shafts of lightning will fly with true aim, and will leap from the clouds to the target, as from a well-drawn bow, and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them; a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away. Lawlessness will lay waste the whole earth, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers. Listen, therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations. For your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High.*

*Priest: Wisdom!*

*Reader: The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon. (Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-9)*

*Priest: Let us attend!*

*Reader: The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment will touch them. In the eyes of fools they seemed to die and their departure was reckoned a disaster and their going from us their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself. Like gold in the furnace he tried them and like a whole burnt offering he accepted them. And in the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through stubble. They will judge nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever. Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones and visitation on his elect.*

*Priest: Wisdom!*

*Reader: The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon. (Wisdom of Solomon 4:7-15)*

*Priest: Let us attend!*

*Reader: A righteous man, even if he die early, shall be at rest. For an honored old age is not so for length of time, nor is it measured by the number of years. Understanding is peoples' true grey hairs, and a ripe old age a spotless life. Having become pleasing to God, he was loved; and while living among sinners, he was taken away. He was snatched away lest wickedness pervert his understanding, or trickery deceive his soul. For the witchery of what is paltry dims what is good, and the inconstancy of desire undermines an innocent mind. Made perfect in a short time, he fulfilled long years, for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he hurried him from the midst of evil. But the peoples saw and did not understand, nor did they lay such a thing to heart, that grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his presence with his chosen ones.*