

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 8:18 – 9:1 Jeremiah mourns for the people (NIVUK)

¹⁸ You who are my Comforter^[a] in sorrow, my heart is faint within me. ¹⁹ Listen to the cry of my people from a land far away: 'Is the LORD not in Zion? Is her King no longer there?' 'Why have they aroused my anger with their images, with their worthless foreign idols?' ²⁰ 'The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and we are not saved.' ²¹ Since my people are crushed, I am crushed; I mourn, and horror grips me. ²² Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people? ⁹ ^[b] Oh, that my head were a spring of water and my eyes a fountain of tears! I would weep day and night for the slain of my people.

PSALM 79: 1-9

¹ O God, the nations have invaded your inheritance; they have defiled your holy temple, they have reduced Jerusalem to rubble. ² They have left the dead bodies of your servants as food for the birds of the sky, the flesh of your own people for the animals of the wild. ³ They have poured out blood like water all around Jerusalem, and there is no one to bury the dead. ⁴ We are objects of contempt to our neighbours, of scorn and derision to those around us. ⁵ How long, LORD? Will you be angry for ever? How long will your jealousy burn like fire? ⁶ Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not acknowledge you, on the kingdoms that do not call on your name; ⁷ for they have devoured Jacob and devastated his homeland. ⁸ Do not hold against us the sins of past generations; may your mercy come quickly to meet us, for we are in desperate need. ⁹ Help us, God our Saviour, for the glory of your name; deliver us and forgive our sins for your name's sake.

SECOND READING: 1 Timothy 2:1-7 The church is to pray for all people (NIVUK)

² I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people – ² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³ This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, ⁴ who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God and one

mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus,⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.⁷ And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle – I am telling the truth, I am not lying – and a true and faithful teacher of the Gentiles.

GOSPEL: Luke 16:1-13 The parable of the shrewd manager (NIVUK)

¹⁶ Jesus told his disciples: ‘There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. ² So he called him in and asked him, “What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.” ³ ‘The manager said to himself, “What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I’m not strong enough to dig, and I’m ashamed to beg – ⁴ I know what I’ll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.” ⁵ ‘So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, “How much do you owe my master?” ⁶ “Three thousand litres of olive oil,” he replied. ‘The manager told him, “Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifteen hundred.” ⁷ ‘Then he asked the second, “And how much do you owe?” “Thirty tons of wheat,” he replied. ‘He told him, “Take your bill and make it twenty-four.” ⁸ ‘The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. ⁹ I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. ¹⁰ ‘Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. ¹¹ So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ¹² And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own? ¹³ ‘No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.’