

FIRST READING: Joel 2:23-32 The coming day of the Lord for his people (NIVUK)

²³ Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given you the autumn rains because he is faithful. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before. ²⁴ The threshing-floors will be filled with grain; the vats will overflow with new wine and oil. ²⁵ 'I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten – the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm^[a] – my great army that I sent among you. ²⁶ You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the LORD your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will my people be shamed. ²⁷ Then you will know that I am in Israel, that I am the LORD your God, and that there is no other; never again will my people be shamed. ²⁸ 'And afterwards, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. ²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. ³⁰ I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. ³¹ The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. ³² And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, even among the survivors whom the LORD calls.^[b]

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¹ Praise awaits^[b] you, our God, in Zion; to you our vows will be fulfilled. ² You who answer prayer, to you all people will come. ³ When we were overwhelmed by sins, you forgave^[c] our transgressions. ⁴ Blessed are those you choose and bring near to live in your courts! We are filled with the good things of your house, of your holy temple. ⁵ You answer us with awesome and righteous deeds, God our Saviour, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas, ⁶ who formed the mountains by your power, having armed yourself with strength, ⁷ who stilled the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the turmoil of the nations. ⁸ The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders; where morning dawns, where evening fades, you call forth songs of joy. ⁹ You care for the land and water it; you

enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with corn, for so you have ordained it.^[d]¹⁰ You drench its furrows and level its ridges; you soften it with showers and bless its crops. ¹¹ You crown the year with your bounty, and your carts overflow with abundance. ¹² The grasslands of the wilderness overflow; the hills are clothed with gladness. ¹³ The meadows are covered with flocks and the valleys are mantled with corn; they shout for joy and sing.

SECOND READING: 2 Timothy 4:6-8,16-18 Christian courage in the face of death (NIVUK)

⁶ For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day – and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. ¹⁶ At my first defence, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. ¹⁷ But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸ The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

GOSPEL: Luke 18:9-14 Parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (NIVUK)

⁹ To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: "God, I thank you that I am not like other people – robbers, evildoers, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get." ¹³ 'But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." ¹⁴ 'I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.'

