

## OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

Genesis 1:26-28, 31a

*Male and female God created them.*

A reading from the book of Genesis.

God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground."

God created man in his image: in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth." God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good.

The Word of the Lord.

Genesis 2:18-24

*They will be two in one flesh.*

A reading from the book of Genesis

The Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helpmate."

So from the soil the Lord God fashioned all the wild beasts and all the birds of heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it.

The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild beasts. But no helpmate suitable for man was found for him.

So the Lord God made the man fall into deep sleep. And while he slept, he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh.

The Lord God built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man.

The man exclaimed: "This at last is bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh! This is to be called woman, for this was taken from man."

This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.

The word of the Lord.

Genesis 24:48-51, 58-67

*Isaac loved Rebekah, and so he was consoled for the loss of his mother.*

A reading from the book of Genesis

The servant of Abraham said to Laban: "I bowed down in worship to the Lord, blessing the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right road to obtain the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son. If, therefore, you have in mind to show true loyalty to my master, let me know; but if not let me know that, too. I can then proceed accordingly."

Laban and his household said in reply: "This thing comes from the Lord; we can say nothing to you either for or against it. Here is Rebekah, ready for you; take her with you, that she may become the wife of you master's son, as the Lord has said."

So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Do you wish to go with this man?" She answered, "I do." At this they allowed their sister Rebekah and her nurse to take leave, along with Abraham's servant and his men. Invoking a blessing on Rebekah, they said: "Sister, may you grow into thousand of myriads; and may your descendants gain possession of the gates of their enemies!"

Then Rebekah and her maids started out; they mounted their camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and went on his way.

Meanwhile Isaac had gone from Beer-lahairoi and was living in the region of the Negeb. One day toward evening he went out. . . in the field, and as he looked around, he noticed that camels were approaching. Rebekah, too, was looking about, and when she saw him, she alighted from her camel and asked the servant, "Who in the man out there, walking through the fields toward us?" "That is my master," replied the servant. Then she covered herself with her veil.

The servant recounted to Isaac all the things he had done. Then Isaac took Rebekah into his tent; he married her, and thus she became his wife. In his love for her Isaac found solace after the death of his mother Sarah.

The word of the Lord

Tobit 7:9c-10, 11c-15

*May God join you together and fill you with blessings.*

A reading from the book of Tobit.

Tobiah said to Raphael, "Brother Azariah, ask Raguel to let me marry my kinswoman Sarah." Raguel overheard the words; so he said to the body: "Eat and drink and be merry tonight, for no man is more entitled to marry my daughter Sarah than you, brother. Besides, not even I have the right to give her to anyone but you, because you are my closest relative. But I will explain the situation to you very frankly. She is yours according to the decree of the Book of Moses. Your marriage to her has been decided in heaven! Take your kinswoman; from now on you are her love, and she is your beloved. She is your today and ever after. And tonight, son, may the Lord of heaven prosper you both. May he grant you mercy and peace."

Then Raguel called his daughter Sarah, and she came to him. He took her by the hand and gave her to Tobiah with the words: "Take her according to the law. According to the decree written in the Book of Moses she is your wife. Take her and bring her back safely to your father. And may the God of heaven grant both of you peace and prosperity." He then called her mother and told her to bring a scroll, so that he might draw up a marriage contract stating that he gave Sarah to Tobiah as his wife according to the decree of the Mosaic law. Her mother brought the scroll, and he drew up the contract, to which they affixed their seals.

Afterward they began to eat and drink.

The word of the Lord.

### Tobit 8:5-7

*May God bring us to old age together.*

A reading from the book of Tobit

On the wedding night Sarah got up, and she and Tobiah started to pray and beg that deliverance might be theirs. He began with these words: "Blessed are you, O God of our fathers; praised be your name forever and ever. Let the heavens and all your creation praise you forever.

You made Adam and you gave him his wife Eve to be his help and support; and from these two the human race descended. You said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; let us make him a partner like himself.'

Now, Lord, you know that I take this wife of mine not because of lust, but for a noble purpose. Call down your mercy on me and on her, and allow us to live together to a happy old age."

The word of the Lord.

### Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16a; 8:6-7a

*For love is as strong as death.*

A reading from the Song of Songs

Hark! My lover here he comes springing across the mountains, leaping across the hills. My lover is like a gazelle or a young stag. Here he stands behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattices. My lover speaks; he says to me, "Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come! O my dove in the clefts of the rock, in the secret recesses of the cliff, Let me see you, let me hear your voice, For your voice is sweet, and you are lovely."

My lover belongs to me and I to him. Set me as a seal on your heart, as a seal on your arm; For stern as death is love, relentless as the nether world is devotion; its flames are a blazing fire. Deep waters cannot quench love, nor floods sweep it away.

The word of the Lord.

### Jeremiah 31:31-32a, 33-34a

*I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and Judah.*

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and kinsmen how to know the Lord. All, from least to greatest. Shall know me, says the Lord.

The word of the Lord.