

First Reading Ezekiel 20: 1 – 8, 33 – 44

¹ In the seventh year, in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, certain elders of Israel came to consult the Lord, and sat down before me. ² And the word of the Lord came to me: ³ Mortal, speak to the elders of Israel, and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: Why are you coming? To consult me? As I live, says the Lord God, I will not be consulted by you. ⁴ Will you judge them, mortal, will you judge them? Then let them know the abominations of their ancestors, ⁵ and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: On the day when I chose Israel, I swore to the offspring of the house of Jacob - making myself known to them in the land of Egypt - I swore to them, saying, I am the Lord your God. ⁶ On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands. ⁷ And I said to them, Cast away the detestable things your eyes feast on, every one of you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the Lord your God. ⁸ But they rebelled against me and would not listen to me; not one of them cast away the detestable things their eyes feasted on, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. Then I thought I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. ³³ As I live, says the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, I will be king over you. ³⁴ I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; ³⁵ and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgement with you face to face. ³⁶ As I entered into judgement with your ancestors in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgement with you, says the Lord God. ³⁷ I will make you pass under the staff, and will bring you within the bond of the covenant. ³⁸ I will purge out the rebels among you, and those who transgress against me; I will bring them out of the land where they reside as aliens, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord. ³⁹ As for you, O house of Israel, thus says the Lord God: Go, serve your idols, every one of you now and hereafter, if you will not listen to me; but my holy name you shall no more profane with your gifts and your idols. ⁴⁰ For on my holy mountain, the mountain height of Israel, says the Lord God, there all the house of Israel, all of them, shall serve me in the land; there I will accept them, and there I will require your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your sacred things. ⁴¹ As a pleasing odour I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered; and I will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations. ⁴² You shall know that I am the Lord, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the country that I swore to give to your ancestors. ⁴³ There you shall remember your ways and all the deeds by which you have polluted yourselves; and you shall loathe yourselves for all the evils that you have committed. ⁴⁴ And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I deal with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways or corrupt deeds, O house of Israel, says the Lord God.

Second Reading (Continued)

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' ¹² So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Gospel Reading Matthew 18: 21 – 35

²¹ Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' ²² Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. ²³ 'For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

