

## BIBLE READINGS FOR FUNERALS

### **John 14.1-6**

Jesus said to his disciples:

'Do not let your hearts be troubled.

Believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.

And you know the way to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going.

How can we know the way?'

Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life.

### **John 6 35 – 40**

Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.

Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven,

not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.

And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.

This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.'

### **Romans 8:35, 37- 39**

Who will separate us from the love of Christ?

Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### **From the book of Revelation chapter 21.verses 1-7**

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth;

for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.'

And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.'

Then he said to me, 'It is done!

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

Those who conquer will inherit these things,

and I will be their God and they will be my children.'

## **1 Corinthians 15 v 51 –58**

Listen, I will tell you a mystery!

We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. Then the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

'Death has been swallowed up in victory.'

Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death is your sting?

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.

## **From the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 18**

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.'

## **The Gospel of Mark Chapter 10**

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them.

But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.

Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.'

And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

## **The First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians Chapter 4**

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died,

so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus,

God will bring with him those who have died.

For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive,

who are left until the coming of the Lord,

will by no means precede those who have died.

For the Lord himself, with a cry of command,

with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven,

and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Then we who are alive, who are left,

will be caught up in the clouds

together with them to meet the Lord in the air;

and so we will be with the Lord for ever.

Therefore encourage one another with these words.

## **OLD TESTAMENT READINGS**

## **Psalm 121**

I lift up my eyes to the hills;  
from where is my help to come?

My help comes from the Lord,  
the maker of heaven and earth.

He will not suffer your foot to stumble;  
he who watches over you will not sleep.

Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel  
shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord himself watches over you;  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand,

So that the sun shall not strike you by day,  
neither the moon by night.

The Lord shall keep you from all evil;  
it is he who shall keep your soul.

The Lord shall keep watch over your going out  
and your coming in,  
from this time forth for evermore.

## **Isaiah Chapter 61**

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour and the day of vengeance of our God,

to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—

to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes,

the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendour.

## **The Book of Lamentations in the Old Testament Chapter 3**

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end;  
they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul,

'therefore I will hope in him.'

The LORD is good to those who wait for him,  
to the soul that seeks him.

It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.

For the Lord will not reject for ever.

Although he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love;

for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone.

## **Wisdom 3 1-5,9**

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,

and no torment will ever touch them.

In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died,  
and their departure was thought to be a disaster,  
and their going from us to be their destruction;  
but they are at peace.

For though in the sight of others 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;

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 he watches over his elect.

#### **The Book of Wisdom Chapter 4**

For old age is not honoured for length of time,

or measured by number of years;

but understanding is grey hair for anyone,

and a blameless life is ripe old age.

There were some who pleased God and were loved by him,

and while living among sinners were taken up.

They were caught up

so that evil might not change their understanding

or guile deceive their souls.

Being perfected in a short time, they fulfilled long years;

for their souls were pleasing to the Lord,

therefore he took them quickly from the midst of wickedness.

Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, or take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are with his elect,

and that he watches over his holy ones.

#### **The Letter of Paul to the Romans Chapter 8 verses 31-39**

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else?

Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised,

who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ?

Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,

will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### **The Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians Chapter 4**

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an

eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. We live by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

### **The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians Chapter 15**

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.

But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power.

For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For 'God has put all things in subjection under his feet.'

But when it says, 'All things are put in subjection,' it is plain that this does not include the one who put all things in subjection under him.

When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him, so that God may be all in all.

Otherwise, what will those people do who receive baptism on behalf of the dead?

If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf?

And why are we putting ourselves in danger every hour? I die every day! That is as certain, brothers and sisters, as my boasting of you—a boast that I make in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If with merely human hopes I fought with wild animals at Ephesus, what would I have gained by it? If the dead are not raised, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.'

Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals.'

Come to a sober and right mind, and sin no more; for some people have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

But someone will ask, 'How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?'

Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.

And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. Not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for human beings, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.

There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory.

It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body.

Thus it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual.

The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.

As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven. What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and

blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled: 'Death has been swallowed up in victory.'

'Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?'

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.

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