

Tuesday, October 31st

Paul Shinji Sasaki & Philip Lindel Tsen

BISHOP OF TOKYO, 1946; BISHOP OF HONAN, CHINA, 1954; Oct. 31

COLLECT: (*Remain Standing*)

Almighty God, we thank you for the faith and witness of Paul Sasaki, bishop in the Nippon Sei Ko Kai, tortured and imprisoned by his government, and Philip Tsen, leader of the Chinese Anglican Church, arrested for his faith. We pray that all Church leaders oppressed by hostile governments may be delivered by your mercy, and that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may be faithful to the Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Ezra 5:1-17 (*Please be seated*)

Reader: A reading from the book of Ezra.

Now the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them. Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak set out to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem; and with them were the prophets of God, helping them.

At the same time Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and their associates came to them and spoke to them thus, 'Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?' They also asked them this: 'What are the names of the men who are building this building?' But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until a report reached Darius and then answer was returned by letter in reply to it.

The copy of the letter that Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and his associates the envoys who were in the province Beyond the River sent to King Darius; they sent him a report, in which was written as follows: 'To Darius the king, all peace! May it be known to the king that we went to the province of Judah, to the house of the great God. It is being built of hewn stone, and timber is laid in the walls; this work is being done diligently and prospers in their hands. Then we spoke to those elders and asked them, "Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?" We also asked them their names, for your information, so that we might write down the names of the men at their head. This was their reply to us: "We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the house that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished. But because our ancestors had angered the God of heaven, he gave them into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house and carried away the people to Babylonia. However, King Cyrus of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, made a decree that this house of God should be rebuilt. Moreover, the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem and had brought into the temple of Babylon, these King Cyrus took out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered to a man named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. He said to him, 'Take these vessels; go and put them in the temple in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its site.' Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the house of God in Jerusalem; and from that time until now it has been under construction, and it is not yet finished." And now, if it seems good to the king, have a search made in the royal archives there in Babylon, to see whether a decree was issued by King Cyrus for the rebuilding of this house of God in Jerusalem. Let the king send us his pleasure in this matter.'

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God

Psalm

Reader: Let us pray together the words of Psalm 45.

1 My heart is stirring with a noble song;
let me recite what I have fashioned for the
king; *
my tongue shall be the pen of a skilled
writer.

2 You are the fairest of men; *
grace flows from your lips,
because God has blessed you for ever.

3 Strap your sword upon your thigh, O
mighty warrior, *
in your pride and in your majesty.

4 Ride out and conquer in the cause of
truth *
and for the sake of justice.

5 Your right hand will show you marvelous
things; *
your arrows are very sharp, O mighty
warrior.

6 The peoples are falling at your feet, *
and the king's enemies are losing heart.

7 Your throne, O God, endures for ever and
ever, *
a scepter of righteousness is the scepter
of your kingdom;
you love righteousness and hate iniquity.

8 Therefore God, your God, has anointed
you *
with the oil of gladness above your fellows.

9 All your garments are fragrant with
myrrh, aloes, and cassia, *
and the music of strings from ivory
palaces makes you glad.

10 Kings' daughters stand among the
ladies of the court; *

on your right hand is the queen,
adorned with the gold of Ophir.

11 "Hear, O daughter; consider and listen
closely; *
forget your people and your father's
house.

12 The king will have pleasure in your
beauty; *
he is your master; therefore do him
honor.

13 The people of Tyre are here with a gift; *
the rich among the people seek your
favor."

14 All glorious is the princess as she
enters; *
her gown is cloth-of-gold.

15 In embroidered apparel she is brought
to the king; *
after her the bridesmaids follow in
procession.

16 With joy and gladness they are
brought, *
and enter into the palace of the king.

17 "In place of fathers, O king, you shall
have sons; *
you shall make them princes over all the
earth.

18 I will make your name to be
remembered
from one generation to another; *
therefore nations will praise you for ever
and ever."

Revelation 4:1-1150 *(Please be seated)*

Reader: A reading from the book of Revelation.

After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.' At once I was in the spirit, and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne! And the one seated there looks like jasper and cornelian, and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald. Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones are twenty-four elders, dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads. Coming from the throne are flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God; and in front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass, like crystal.

Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing,

'Holy, holy, holy,
the Lord God the Almighty,
who was and is and is to come.'

And whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives for ever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing,

'You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honour and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created.'

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Matthew 13:1-9 *(Please stand as you are able)*

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!'

Deacon or Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Christ