

COLLECT: (*Remain Standing*)

Eternal God, who gave your servant James Weldon Johnson a heart and voice to praise your Name in verse: As he gave us powerful words to glorify you, may we also speak with joy and boldness to banish hatred from your creation; in the Name of Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Numbers 16:20-35 (*Please be seated*)

Reader: A reading from the book of Numbers.

Then the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying: Separate yourselves from this congregation, so that I may consume them in a moment. They fell on their faces, and said, 'O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one person sin and you become angry with the whole congregation?'

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Say to the congregation: Get away from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. So Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram; the elders of Israel followed him. He said to the congregation, 'Turn away from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, or you will be swept away for all their sins.' So they got away from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the entrance of their tents, together with their wives, their children, and their little ones. And Moses said, 'This is how you shall know that the Lord has sent me to do all these works; it has not been of my own accord: If these people die a natural death, or if a natural fate comes on them, then the Lord has not sent me. But if the Lord creates something new, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up, with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into Sheol, then you shall know that these men have despised the Lord.'

As soon as he finished speaking all these words, the ground under them was split apart. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, along with their households—everyone who belonged to Korah and all their goods. So they with all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol; the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. All Israel around them fled at their outcry, for they said, 'The earth will swallow us too!' And fire came out from the Lord and consumed the two hundred and fifty men offering the incense.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God

Psalm

Reader: Let us pray together the words of **Psalm 97**.

1 The Lord is King; let the earth rejoice; *
let the multitude of the isles be glad.

2 Clouds and darkness are round about
him, *
righteousness and justice are the
foundations of his throne.

3 A fire goes before him *
and burns up his enemies on every side.

4 His lightnings light up the world; *
the earth sees it and is afraid.

5 The mountains melt like wax at the
presence of the Lord, *
at the presence of the Lord of the whole
earth.

6 The heavens declare his righteousness, *
and all the peoples see his glory.

7 Confounded be all who worship carved

images
and delight in false gods! *
Bow down before him, all you gods.

8 Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of
Judah rejoice, *
because of your judgments, O Lord.

9 For you are the Lord,
most high over all the earth; *
you are exalted far above all gods.

10 The Lord loves those who hate evil; *
he preserves the lives of his saints
and delivers them from the hand of the
wicked.

11 Light has sprung up for the righteous, *
and joyful gladness for those who are
truehearted.

12 Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous, *
and give thanks to his holy Name.

Romans 4:1-12 (*Please be seated*)

Reader: A reading from the book of **Romans**.

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. So also David speaks of the blessedness of those to whom God reckons righteousness irrespective of works:

'Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered;
blessed is the one against whom the Lord will not reckon sin.'

Is this blessedness, then, pronounced only on the circumcised, or also on the uncircumcised? We say, 'Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness.' How then was it reckoned to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the ancestor of all who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them, and likewise the ancestor of the circumcised who are not only circumcised but who also follow the example of the faith that our ancestor Abraham had before he was circumcised.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Matthew 19:23-30 (*Please stand as you are able*)

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

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'Truly I tell you, it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.' When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astounded and said, 'Then who can be saved?' But Jesus looked at them and said, 'For mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible.'

Then Peter said in reply, 'Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.'

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Christ