

# FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

## Anthem of the Chancel

### *He fashioned the earth upon its foundations.*

By his gesture the Self-existent One, who is before all, made the whole creation, and adapted it so as to teach about him through itself. Some of it he made visible, another part invisible, and bound up all of it in man, that it might confess that one is its Creator, who in his love would make known concerning himself.

### *He who is before the ages.*

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### *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

God, the good Lord, Creator of the world, in his loving-kindness created and fashioned four elements: fire, water, earth, and air. By their mixture he gave life to all flesh, and by them he indicated his greatness and the power of his wisdom, for with diverse things he established his creation.

### *From everlasting, and for ever and ever. Amen.*

On the first day of the week, the great day, light was created; on the second the firmament; on the third trees of every kind. On the fourth day of the week he created the sun and the moon; on the fifth birds and flying creatures. On the Day of Preparation he fashioned Adam and called him his own image. On the Sabbath the Lord rested from his labor.

## The Lections

Joshua 6:27-7:15

. . . . . [T]he LORD was with Joshua; and his fame was in all the land.

But the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things; for Achan the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things; and the anger of the LORD burned against the people of Israel.

Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Bethaven, east of Bethel, and said to them, "Go up and spy out the land." And the men went up and spied out Ai. And they returned to Joshua, and said to him, "Let not all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai; do not make the whole people toil up there, for they are but few." So about three thousand went up there from the people; and they fled before the men of Ai, and the men of Ai killed about thirty-six men of them, and chased them before the gate as far as Shebarim, and slew them at the descent. And the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.

Then Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust upon their heads. And Joshua said, "Alas, O Lord GOD, why hast thou brought this people over the Jordan at all, to give us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would that we had been content to dwell beyond the Jordan! O Lord, what can I say, when Israel has turned their backs before their enemies! For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it, and will surround us, and cut off our name from the earth; and what wilt thou do for thy great name?"

The LORD said to Joshua, "Arise, why have you thus fallen upon your face? Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant which I commanded them; they have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, and lied, and put them among their own stuff. Therefore the people

of Israel cannot stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, because they have become a thing for destruction. I will be with you no more, unless you destroy the devoted things from among you. Up, sanctify the people, and say, 'Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow; for thus says the LORD, God of Israel, "There are devoted things in the midst of you, O Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies, until you take away the devoted things from among you." In the morning therefore you shall be brought near by your tribes; and the tribe which the LORD takes shall come near by families; and the family which the LORD takes shall come near by households; and the household which the LORD takes shall come near man by man. And he who is taken with the devoted things shall be burned with fire, he and all that he has, because he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he has done a shameful thing in Israel.'"

### **The Shuraya**

They have all alike turned aside and have become defiled; \*  
There is none that does good, not even one. \*  
The evildoers have not understood, \*  
Who ate up my people as though a provision of bread, \*  
And did not call upon God. \*  
There they were in great terror. \*  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. \*  
From everlasting, and for ever and ever. Amen.\*

## The Apostle

Romans 8:12-27

. . . . . Brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

## The Zumara

O LORD my God, in you I have hoped; save me,  
And deliver me from all my persecutors,  
Lest like a lion they rend my soul,  
And there is none to save and to rescue. \*

O LORD my God, if I have done this,  
If there is wrong in my hands,  
If I have repaid one who does me evil  
Or oppressed my enemy without cause,  
Let the enemy pursue my soul and overtake it,  
And let him trample my life to the ground. \*

## The Gospel

Matthew 21:23-end

And when [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus answered them, "I also will ask you a question; and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven or from men?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From men,' we are afraid of the multitude; for all hold that John was a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

"What do you think? A man had two sons; and he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' And he answered, 'I will

not'; but afterward he repented and went. And he went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the harlots believed him; and even when you saw it, you did not afterward repent and believe him.

"Hear another parable. There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

'The very stone which the builders rejected  
has become the head of the corner;  
this was the Lord's doing,  
and it is marvelous in our eyes'?

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them. But when they tried to arrest him, they feared the multitudes, because they held him to be a prophet.

## **Anthem of the Mysteries**

*You gave a sign to those who fear you.*

The gift of new life has been given to mortals within the spiritual Sanctuary, one which slays sin, the cause of death. Let us draw near and receive the life-giving Mysteries, by which Satan, the enemy of our race, is condemned.

*To those who are upright in their heart.*

The gift of new life has been given to mortals within the spiritual Sanctuary, one which slays sin, the cause of death. Let us draw near and receive the life-giving Mysteries, by which Satan, the enemy of our race, is condemned.

## **Anthem of the Bema**

Prophets and kings longed for your life-giving Body and Blood.

**Verses:**

David longed for and made request, but he did not drink of the water for which he asked. Give thanks that you have been made worthy to drink the Cup of Christ.

Salt was taken from a new pitcher and it restored the springs: the body which came out from Mary healed the bruises of the nations.

The light wood sank down, but the burden, which was immersed, floated up. Come, receive the Holy Thing which causes one who eats of it to fly in the air at last.