**A reading from the Wisdom of Solomon.**

*Wisdom of Solomon 7:26—8:1*

*Read by Mary Dickinson*

Wisdom is a reflection of eternal light,

a spotless mirror of the working of God,

and an image of his goodness.

Although she is but one, she can do all things,

and while remaining in herself, she renews all things;

in every generation she passes into holy souls

and makes them friends of God, and prophets;

for God loves nothing so much

as the person who lives with wisdom.

She is more beautiful than the sun,

and excels every constellation of the stars.

Compared with the light she is found to be superior,

for it is succeeded by the night,

but against wisdom evil does not prevail.

She reaches mightily from one end of the earth to the other,

and she orders all things well.

***[END]***

**A reading from the book of the prophet Zechariah.**

*Zechariah 9:9-14, 16*

*Read by Lynne Markova*

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!

Lo, your king comes to you;

triumphant and victorious is he,

humble and riding on a donkey,

on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim [*ef-RAY-um*]

and the war-horse from Jerusalem;

and the battle bow shall be cut off,

and he shall command peace to the nations;

his dominion shall be from sea to sea,

and from the River to the ends of the earth.

As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,

I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.

Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;

today I declare that I will restore to you double.

For I have bent Judah [*JOO-duh*] as my bow;

I have made Ephraim [*ef-RAY-um*] its arrow.

***[MORE]***

I will arouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons,

O Greece, and wield you like a warrior’s sword.

Then the LORD will appear over them,

and his arrow go forth like lightning;

the Lord GOD will sound the trumpet

and march forth in the whirlwinds of the south.

On that day the LORD their God will save them

for they are the flock of his people;

for like the jewels of a crown they shall shine on his land.

***[END]***

**A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.**

*Isaiah 11:1-10*

*Read by Patricia Burke*

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,

and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,

the spirit of wisdom and understanding,

the spirit of counsel and might,

the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,

or decide by what his ears hear;

but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,

and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;

he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,

and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,

and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

***[MORE]***

The wolf shall live with the lamb,

the leopard shall lie down with the kid,

the calf and the lion and the fatling together,

and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze,

their young shall lie down together;

and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,

and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder’s den.

They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;

for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord

as the waters cover the sea.

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand

as a signal to the peoples;

the nations shall inquire of him,

and his dwelling shall be glorious.

***[END]***

**A reading from the Revelation to John.**

*Revelation 3:7b-8, 11-13*

*Read by J Wong*

These are the words of the holy one, the true one,

who has the key of David,

who opens and no one will shut,

who shuts and no one opens:

“I know your works.

Look, I have set before you an open door,

which no one is able to shut.

I know that you have but little power,

and yet you have kept my word

and have not denied my name.

I am coming soon; hold fast to what you have,

so that no one may seize your crown.

If you conquer, I will make you a pillar

in the temple of my God;

you will never go out of it.

***[MORE]***

I will write on you the name of my God,

and the name of the city of my God,

the new Jerusalem that comes down

from my God out of heaven,

and my own new name.

Let anyone who has an ear listen

to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

***[END]***

**An excerpt from *A Visit from Wisdom*, by Gibran Khalil Gibran [***jih-BRAHN kuh-LEEL jih-BRAHN***].**

*Read by Emily Meeks*

In the stillness of night Wisdom came and stood

By my bed. She gazed upon me like a tender mother

And wiped away my tears, and said: “I have heard

The cry of your spirit and I am come to comfort it.

Open your heart to me and I shall fill it with light.

Ask of me and I shall show you the way of truth.”

And I said: “Who am I, Wisdom, and how came

I to this frightening place?”

And she answered, saying:

“All that you see with your eyes was

And is for your sake.

The many books and the strange patterns and

Beautiful thoughts are the shades of those spirits

That came ere you were come. The words that you

Do weave are a bond between you and your brothers.

***[MORE]***

The conclusions, grievous and joyous, are the

Seeds that the past did scatter in the field of the

Spirit to be reaped by the future. That youth who

Plays with your desires is he who will open the door

Of your heart to let enter the light. This earth with

The ever-open mouth is the savior of your spirit from

The body’s slavery. This world which walks with

You is your heart; and your heart is all that you

Think that world. This creature whom you see as

Ignorant and small is the same who has come from

God’s side to learn pity through sadness, and knowledge

By way of darkness.”

***[END]***

**A reading from the Revelation to John.**

*Revelation 19:6-8, 11-16*

*Read by Richard Tait*

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude,

like the sound of many waters

and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying out,

“Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty

reigns.

Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory,

for the marriage of the Lamb has come,

and his bride has made herself ready;

to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine

linen, bright and pure”—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse!

Its rider is called Faithful and True,

and in righteousness he judges and makes war.

His eyes are like a flame of fire,

and on his head are many diadems;

and he has a name inscribed that no one knows but himself.

He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood,

and his name is called The Word of God.

***[MORE]***

And the armies of heaven, wearing fine linen, white and pure,

were following him on white horses.

From his mouth comes a sharp sword

with which to strike down the nations,

and he will rule them with a rod of iron;

he will tread the wine press of the fury

of the wrath of God the Almighty.

On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed,

“King of kings and Lord of lords.”

***[END]***

***The Midwife of God*, by Saint John of the Cross.**

*Read by Carol Green*

If you want, the Virgin will come walking down the road

pregnant with the holy and say,

“I need shelter for the night,

please take me inside your heart, my time is close.”

Then, under the roof of your being,

you will witness the sublime intimacy,

the Anointed One will take birth inside you,

as the Virgin grasps your hands for help,

for each of us is the midwife of God, each of us.

Yes, there, under the dome of your being

Creation comes into existence,

through your womb, dear pilgrim –

the sacred womb of your soul,

as God grasps our arms for help;

for each of us is a beloved servant never far,

so yes, if you want

the Virgin will come walking down the street toward you

pregnant with light and singing.

***[END]***