

Collect

O God,
 the strength of all those who put their trust in you,
 mercifully accept our prayers
 and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature
 we can do no good thing without you,
 grant us the help of your grace,
 that in the keeping of your commandments
 we may please you both in will and deed;

1 Samuel 8.4–11 [12–15] 16–20

⁴ Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, ⁵ and said to him, 'You are old and your sons do not follow in your ways; appoint for us, then, a king to govern us, like other nations.' ⁶ But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, 'Give us a king to govern us.' Samuel prayed to the Lord, ⁷ and the Lord said to Samuel, 'Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. ⁸ Just as they have done to me, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so also they are doing to you. ⁹ Now then, listen to their voice; only—you shall solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.'

¹⁰ So Samuel reported all the words of the Lord to the people who were asking him for a king. ¹¹ He said, 'These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots; ¹² and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plough his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. ¹³ He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. ¹⁴ He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his courtiers. ¹⁵ He will take one-tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and his courtiers.] ¹⁶ He will take your male and female slaves, and the best of your cattle and donkeys, and put them to his work. ¹⁷ He will take one-tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. ¹⁸ And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the Lord will not answer you in that day.'

¹⁹ But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel; they said, 'No! but we are determined to have a king over us, ²⁰ so that we also may be like other nations, and that our king may govern us and go out before us and fight our battles.'

This is the word of the Lord. **All:** Thanks be to God.

Psalms 138

- 1 I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart; •
before the gods will I sing praise to you.
- 2 I will bow down towards your holy temple and praise your name, because of your love and faithfulness; •
for you have glorified your name
and your word above all things.
- 3 In the day that I called to you, you answered me; •
you put new strength in my soul.
- 4 All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord, •
for they have heard the words of your mouth.
- 5 They shall sing of the ways of the Lord, •
that great is the glory of the Lord.
- 6 Though the Lord be high, he watches over the lowly; •
as for the proud, he regards them from afar.
- 7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you will preserve me; •
you will stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right hand will save me.
- 8 The Lord shall make good his purpose for me; •
your loving-kindness, O Lord, endures for ever;
forsake not the work of your hands.

Gospel Reading Mark 3.20–end

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

²⁰ The crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. ²¹ When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, 'He has gone out of his mind.' ²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, 'He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.' ²³ And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, 'How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. ²⁷ But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

²⁸ 'Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin'— ³⁰ for they had said, 'He has an unclean spirit.'

³¹ Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. ³² A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, 'Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.' ³³ And he replied, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?' ³⁴ And looking at those who sat around him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵ Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **All:** Praise to you, O Christ.