

their disciples along with the Herodians in what they had determined would be the best way to trap Jesus. The Pharisees taught that the Roman tax was unlawful in the sight of God. They plotted that the King of the Jews would agree with them. The Pharisees were looking for Jesus to say the tax was lawful and thus show Him as breaking faith with God by swearing allegiance to an earthly king. The Herodians favored the Roman tax. They believed that security for the Jews existed in an alliance with the Herods. The Herodians were waiting for Jesus to say the Roman tax was unlawful and then they would be able to turn Him over to Herod. Jesus bested them all with His answer, "give allegiance to whom it is due."

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

¶ Almighty and Everlasting God, You are ever faithful to Your promises. We Your unworthy servants ask that we be allowed to walk before You with our hearts open. Look toward this place where Your name is always spoken and listen to the prayer of Your people, that we may show forth Your promises and rejoice in Your grace.

Enlighten our minds by the gift of Your Holy Spirit, that our ears are tuned, our eyes are adjusted, our minds are open, and our hearts prepared to receive Your Holy Word. Cause us to receive Your Word in reverence and gratitude. Allow the Holy Scripture to instruct us; in Your glory in the creation of the world, in Your sovereignty over the world You so created, and in Your infinite mercy in the gift of Your Son Jesus Christ, Whom You sent to be our Salvation. Enable Us to believe the Bible with our whole being and give ourselves over to the work of Your Word in the world. Help us see those times when You are working in us and through us to benefit others, not for our glory, but that we might glory with those You have chosen us to serve.

Grant us the spirit of prayer, that in faith we may boldly ask blessings for all our needs, bring our requests for loved ones and our intercessions for all people everywhere. Let us trust in Your goodness as You fulfill our prayer with an answer for the sake of Jesus.

Protect us from danger; in earthquake, fire, tornado and hurricane, from plague and famine, from war and discord, from treachery and rebellion, as well as from luxury and ease, from ignorance and superstition, from lingering illness and accidental death.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (**Time of silent prayer.**)

Though we have sinned against You and each other, we ask not for Your punishment, but that You allow us to walk in the life granted to us by Jesus.

© Amen.

PROPER TWENTY-FOUR

Chant Tone



Introit

The Lord is your — keeper;*
the Lord is your shade on | your
right hand.

I lift up my eyes | to the hills.*
From where does | my help come?
My help comes | from the Lord,*
Who made | Heaven and Earth.
He will not let your | foot be moved;*
He Who keeps you will not — slumber.
Behold, He Who keeps | Israel*
will neither slum | ber nor sleep.
The Lord will keep you from all — evil;*
He will | keep your life.

The Lord will keep your going out and
your | coming in*
from this time forth and
for | evermore.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy — Spirit;
as it was in the be — ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. — Amen.

The Lord is your — keeper;*
the Lord is your shade on | your
right hand.

(Antiphon: Psalm 121:5;
Isaiah 121:1-4, 7-8)

Collect of the Day

O God, the protector of all who trust in You, have mercy on us that with You as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

For He will command His angels con | cerning you*
to guard you in | all your ways.
Bless the Lord, | O my soul,*
and all that is within me, bless His | holy name!

(Psalm 91:11, 103:1)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: Since the beginning of time, O Lord, You have spoken to humanity. Through Moses and the prophets You made Your will known among us. When Your messages were ignored, You miraculously embodied Your Word in the person of Jesus Christ. We thank You, Lord that we have heard the message through Christ. Many have been the heroes and saints who have, at great personal sacrifice, handed the Gospel on to us today. You have always brought forth one of Your chosen servants to restore Your Word. Help us to hold fast Your Word, that we may grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Savior in Whose name we pray. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

ON ONE SUNDAY WHEN I WAS IN MY EARLY TEENS, MY PARENTS WERE BOTH ILL AND WERE NOT ABLE TO GO TO CHURCH. The following Sunday, my Pastor asked why I had used their illness as an excuse for not getting to church. He correctly pointed out that I could have ridden my bicycle or walked. Though we may use a flurry of excuses, we cannot trick God. He will always distinguishing our inclination toward sin. Though we may present a blizzard of perfectly crafted arguments which explain how we are righteous from our own works, the fact remains that all of our actions are colored by sin: Satan, the world and our own sinful flesh. God tells us to do all things to His glory, whether it be paying taxes or worshiping His Son for being the light of our salvation.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Kept By God

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Psalm 121:5;) Isaiah 121:1-4, 7-8

We use all but verse 6 of Psalm 121. This was written by David during a time of travel. David was seeking the protection of God for the dangers that can come up when we travel. The Lord will keep us from harm. He will cover us with all good things and watch over our life.

COLLECT

The world is a sinful place. We pray that God would guide us through this world in a way that leads to eternal life.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Isaiah 45:1-7

God not only accomplishes His specific purpose, but in doing so, He also gives a general witness to His sovereign existence as the world's only God. He can use people whom we would never think of as being His instruments. In the case of this King named Cyrus, God proclaimed His power and accomplished His will through a foreign King whom God said, "you do not know me." (Some have tried to make this out to be a direct prophecy of Cyrus The Great. It is more likely that when Cyrus was shown these verses he applied them to himself.) The fact that God referred to Cyrus as anointed tells us that God is fully capable of delivering help to His people through the work of the government (even those opposed to Him.) Therefore we have an allegiance, in God, to our government.

GRADUAL—Psalm 91:11, Psalm 103:1

This week Psalm 91:11 and 103:1 compliment the Introit in the theme of being kept by God. Both of these Psalms were written by David. The use of the Gradual, follows an ancient pattern which changes with the festival. We have one more week for these two verses before we move on.

EPISTLE LESSON—1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

The congregation in Thessalonica began as the fruit of Paul's work during his second missionary journey. When the Jewish leadership rose up in opposition, Paul's friends rushed him to Berea. It left behind an immature congregation. They endured and awaited Timothy's return. Paul was encouraging their faith in this letter. He told them that God must Love them a lot since God had sent Paul to give them the Word (from almost anyone else this would be quite a selfish statement.) Through His preaching they were made over into children of God. In our most recent lesson change we added verses 5-10, and thereby read all of Chapter One.

GOSPEL LESSON—Matthew 22:15-22

The Pharisees had been carefully plotting the manner to set a trap for Jesus. Because the leaders had already been embarrassed, they sent