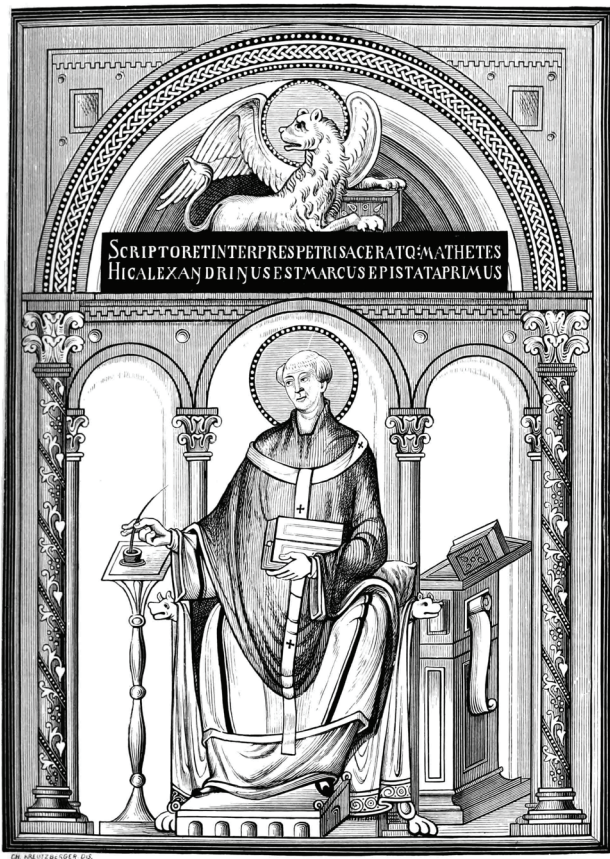


THE LECTIONARY

A NEW TRANSLATION

1st week of Advent



Excavating the rich soil of the Bible's original languages to tap the roots of meaning and fuel the fire of dialogue and transformation.

A 21st century translation from the original Hebrew and Greek following the format of the Revised Common Lectionary. By Andrew Breitenberg. Please email breitenberg@gmail.com to be added to our weekly mailing list or to enquire about this project.

The sky will be rent and the mountains turn to avalanche as your Presence flows down. The melting fires boil the seas, blazing your Name before humanity – and the whole world shakes at your Presence. Without waiting you did these incredible things! You descended and the mountains flowed down before your Presence.

From antiquity to futurity, by sight or hearing, no one has perceived any god but you – you have created all those who are eagerly awaiting you. You will meet face to face anyone who rejoices in doing justice and contemplates your Way.

Your anger flares because we have sinned, but even so, will be continually liberated. We are impure, and even our acts of justice are like filthy rags; we fade like leaves, and borne on the wind we are carried away by our lies.

Who among us still calls on your name or stirs themselves with resolve? You've hidden your face from us, and we are delivered into the world of lies we created. But now Yahweh – oh Father – you are the potter and we are all the work of your hands!

Oh God, don't be angry!

Don't remember all of our incessant lying!

Only consider this: we are all your people.

Great Shepherd of Israel, leading us like a flock –
 you sit upon a throne of cherubim,
 shining before the tribes.
 Stir your radiant power¹ to liberate us!

Oh bring us an abundance in restoration, Yahweh!
 let your face only shine upon us, and we will be rescued.

How much longer will our prayers be met with your anger?
 and given only tears and weeping for sustenance?

We are the derision of every neighbor
 and our enemies laugh among themselves.

Elohim, God of Community;
 may your face shine upon us
 and restore us to Freedom.

Guide me in the strength you've given me for your own sake
 and our road will never turn from yours.

Give us Life, and we will call out your Name,
 bring us an abundance in restoration, Yahweh –

let your face only shine upon us,
 and we will be saved.

¹ *geburah*
 courage, powerful
 action, strength,
 triumphant energy

2 *eucharisteó*
From *eú* (good)
and *xaris* (grace) –
literally, “thankful
for God’s good
grace.”

3 *apekdéxomai*
A triple compound
from *apó* (from),
déxomai (welcome)
and *ekdíkesis*, (out
of) – “welcome from
and out of” what
will remain behind;
emphasizes the
notion of positive
and total separation
(from the “world”);
total anticipation of
radical change.

4 *apokálypsis*
From *apó* (away from
and *kalýpt* (cover) –
to uncover or reveal
what is hidden
or veiled. Special
emphasis is also
laid on the interior
revelation – to make
seen or manifest,
what was previously
unseen.

5 *koinónia*
community,
co-participation,
mutual belonging,
deeply relational
fellowship in the
Spirit, authentic
communion and
sharing in common,
hospitality, and
“the whole is greater
than the sum of its
individual parts”
all wrapped up in a
single word.

To: God’s community in Corinth, made holy and pure in Christ, together with all those around the world who call on the name of Jesus

From: Paul, an apostle called by the Christ Jesus by God’s will, and Brother Sosthenes

Grace and peace to you all, from God our Source and Jesus the Christ!

I am constantly thanking God² for you. God’s grace is with you in Jesus, and you’ve been enriched in every conceivable way through him – both in your words and your wisdom.

Just as the story of Jesus has invigorated you—so that you lack not a single spiritual gift as you eagerly anticipate³ the revealing⁴ of the Lord—he will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be found pure and far beyond fault, on the day of our Lord.

God is faithful—and by God you have been called into *koinónia*⁵ with the son, Jesus the Christ, our Lord.

“And after terrible suffering, *‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon offer no light; the stars will fall from the sky and the sky will shake with energy.’*⁶

“Then they will see the Human Son ‘*coming on the clouds of the sky*’⁷ with glorious, powerful energy. And he will send out his messengers and gather up the intended from the four winds, from the ends of the earth and the heavens.”

“Remember the fig tree. When its branches become supple and begin to bud and flourish with leaves, you know that summer has nearly arrived. In the same way, when you see all of the things that I’m telling you now begin to happen, you will know that it is near – at the very gates. I’m telling you now that your generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.⁸ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“No one knows what day or hour it will come – not the messengers of heaven or the son, but only the Source.⁹ Stay attentive and awake, because you don’t know when the time will come. It’s like a man who leaves home to go on a journey and puts his servants in charge, each with his specific tasks, and orders the guards to watch the gates. So be watchful – because you don’t know when the owner of the house will return, it could be in the evening, the dead of night, or at the dawn – or he might find you asleep when he suddenly arrives.

“What I say to you now I say to everyone: Stay awake!”¹⁰

6 cf. Isaiah 13:10
“The skies will turn black above them and the stars will offer no light. The sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will offer no light.”

7 cf. Daniel 7:13
“In my vision at night I looked, and there in front of me was something like a Human Son, coming on the clouds of the sky.”

8 Here it is assumed that Jesus refers to the total destruction of Jerusalem, which did end up taking place about 40 years later in 70 CE when the Roman army sacked the city and burned the temple to the ground.

9 *Pater*
Literally, “Father” – refers to Originator, Creator, Source; to Whom one is intimately connected and related to. Implying impartation of Life; to bring into being and pass on likeness.

10 *grégoreó*
Literally “stay awake” and traditionally translated as “Be watchful” or “Be vigilant.”