

A reading from the book of Genesis chapter 4 verses 1-10:

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord." And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it."

Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" And the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please join me in praying Psalm 106

**Leader: Remember me, O Lord,
when you show favor to your people;
help me when you save them,**

People: that I may look upon the prosperity
of your chosen ones,
that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation,
that I may glory with your inheritance.

**Leader: Both we and our fathers have sinned;
we have committed iniquity;
we have done wickedness.**

People: Our fathers, when they were in Egypt,
did not consider your wondrous works;

**Leader: they did not remember the abundance
of your steadfast love,
but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.**

People: Yet he saved them for his name's sake,
that he might make known his mighty power.

**Leader: He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry,
and he led them through the deep
as through a desert.**

People: So he saved them from the hand of the foe
and redeemed them from the power of the enemy.

**Leader: And the waters covered their adversaries;
not one of them was left.**

People: Then they believed his words;
they sang his praise.

**All: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy
Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be
forever. Amen.**

**Leader: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.**

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Leader: You may be seated.

Prayer of Confession

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. *Amen.*