

THE LESSONS APPOINTED FOR USE ON THURSDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT

Jeremiah 7:23–28

Luke 11:14–23

Psalms 95:6–11

Preface of Lent

THE COLLECT

Keep watch over your Church, O Lord, with your unfailing love; and, since it is grounded in human weakness and cannot maintain itself without your aid, protect it from all danger, and keep it in the way of salvation; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

OLD TESTAMENT

JEREMIAH 7:23–28

This command I gave them, “Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk only in the way that I command you, so that it may be well with you.” Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but, in the stubbornness of their evil will, they walked in their own counsels, and looked backward rather than forward. From the day that your ancestors came out of the land of Egypt until this

day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day; yet they did not listen to me, or pay attention, but they stiffened their necks. They did worse than their ancestors did.

So you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you. You shall call to them, but they will not answer you. You shall say to them: This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the Lord their God, and did not accept discipline; truth has perished; it is cut off from their lips.

PSALM 95:6–11

6. Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, *
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
7. For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his
hand. *
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!
8. Harden not your hearts,
as your forebears did in the wilderness, *
at Meribah, and on that day at Massah,
when they tempted me.
9. They put me to the test, *
though they had seen my works.
10. Forty years long I detested that generation and said, *
"This people are wayward in their hearts;
they do not know my ways."

11. So I swore in my wrath, *
"They shall not enter into my rest."

THE GOSPEL: LUKE 11:14–23

Jesus was casting out a demon that was mute; when the demon had gone out, the one who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed. But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons." Others, to test him, kept demanding from him a sign from heaven. But he knew what they were thinking and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself becomes a desert, and house falls on house. If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? —for you say that I cast out the demons by Beelzebul. Now if I cast out the demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your exorcists cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his castle, his property is safe. But when one stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his plunder. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters."

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