

Ecclesiasticus 35:12-26

Give to the Most High as he has given to you, and as generously as you can afford. For the Lord is the one who repays, and he will repay you sevenfold.

Do not offer him a bribe, for he will not accept it; and do not rely on a dishonest sacrifice; for the Lord is the judge, and with him there is no partiality.

He will not show partiality to the poor; but he will listen to the prayer of one who is wronged.

He will not ignore the supplication of the orphan, or the widow when she pours out her complaint.

Do not the tears of the widow run down her cheek as she cries out against the one who causes them to fall?

One whose service is pleasing to the Lord will be accepted, and his prayer will reach to the clouds.

The prayer of the humble pierces the clouds, and it will not rest until it reaches its goal; it will not desist until the Most High responds and does justice to the righteous, and executes judgement.

Indeed, the Lord will not delay, and like a warrior will not be patient until he crushes the loins of the unmerciful and repays vengeance on the nations; until he destroys the multitude of the insolent, and breaks the sceptres of the unrighteous; until he repays mortals according to their deeds, and the works of all according to their thoughts; until he judges the case of his people and makes them rejoice in his mercy.

His mercy is as welcome in time of distress as clouds of rain in time of drought.

The Word of the Lord

Luke 18:1-8

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, ‘In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, “Grant me justice against my opponent.” For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, “Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.”’ And the Lord said, ‘Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?’