

The Passages are from the 1995 Version of the New American Standard



Friday, 12/25 at 6:00

*The Nativity of Our Lord – 2020*

Saturdays at 4:00; Sundays at 9:00; New Year's Eve at 6:00

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: It's been a year of opinions about what is ESSENTIAL, and what is not. Even though opinions vary greatly, *receiving Jesus is MOST ESSENTIAL for everyone!* Today, as we focus on the lectionary readings, let's find the Christ and receive Him anew!

**OLD TESTAMENT:** Isaiah 52:7-10 NAU

**POINTING AHEAD TO THE SAVIOR**

The southern kingdom of Judah fell to the Babylonians around 600 BC; however, about 70 years later, the LORD restored that nation. The JOY of *that restoration* pointed ahead to *personal restoration through the Christ!*

<sup>7</sup> How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news [*good news of victory*], Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, "Your God reigns [*your God, thus not the enemy*]!"

<sup>8</sup> The voice of your watchmen [*your prophets*]--they lift up their voices [*a phrase from the ESV*]; They shout joyfully together; For they will see with their own eyes When the LORD restores Zion.

<sup>9</sup> Break forth, shout joyfully together, You waste places of Jerusalem; For the LORD has comforted His people, He has redeemed [*bought back*] Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup> The LORD has bared His holy arm In the sight of all the nations [*restoring Judah and pointing ahead to the restoring of all sinners through Jesus*], That all the ends of the earth may see The salvation of our God.

**PSALM: 2 ESV – BE BLESSED! TAKE REFUGE IN THE SON!**

**The Nations Oppose the Lord:** <sup>1</sup> Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? <sup>2</sup> The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, <sup>3</sup> “Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.”

**Notes:** v. 1: *in vain*: Without the truth or the power to reach their goal.  
v. 2: *His anointed*: David, anointed by Samuel to be the next king.  
v. 3: *us*: The kings who opposed David, and thought they could resist him.

**The Lord Establishes His King:** <sup>4</sup> He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. <sup>5</sup> Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, <sup>6</sup> “As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.”

**Notes:** v. 4: *derision*: The Lord ridiculed them, since they could not succeed.  
v. 6: *my King*: The kingship of David points ahead to the much greater kingship of Jesus.

**The Son’s Rule:** <sup>7</sup> I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. <sup>8</sup> Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. <sup>9</sup> You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

**Notes:** v. 9: *break*: “In Mesopotamian texts, a king’s rule was often likened to the act of smashing pottery. Thus, ‘break’ here means to rule” (TLSB).

**A Warning:** <sup>10</sup> Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. <sup>11</sup> Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. <sup>12</sup> Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

**Note:** v. 11: *fear*: Have reverence for, and trust in the LORD. *Rejoice with trembling*: Thankful for God’s forgiveness, and continued living in repentance.  
v. 12: *take refuge*. “To acknowledge and surrender to the one whom God, in His infinite wisdom, has chosen to rule” (TLSB).

**EPISTLE: Hebrews 1:1-6 NAU – JESUS IS GREAT!**

**LET US WORSHIP HIM!**

**Jesus’ Importance:** <sup>1</sup> God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, <sup>2</sup> in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things [in a figurative sense, pointing to Jesus’ greatness], through whom also He made

the world [the Father created all things through the Son]. // Jesus is great: The Father spoke through Him; heir of all; and all created through Him!

**Jesus' Power:** <sup>3</sup> And He [God's Son] is the radiance of His [God the Father's] glory and the exact representation of His nature [His essence, His being], and upholds all things by the word of His power. // Jesus is great: He is the essence of the Father; He upholds all things!

**Jesus' Saving Work:** When He [Jesus] had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup> having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they [because He is God's Son]. // Jesus fulfilled His mission to remove all sins; now He has the name above all names!

**Jesus' Greatness:** <sup>5</sup> For to which of the angels did He [God the Father] ever say, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"? And again, "I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME"? <sup>6</sup> And when He [God the Father] again brings the firstborn [that is, Jesus] into the world, He says, "AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM." // Even though angels are not saved through Jesus, they worship Him; how MUCH MORE should we worship Him!!

**HOLY GOSPEL: John 1:1-14 NAU – THE SON OF GOD IN HUMAN FLESH!  
LET US KEEP RECEIVING HIM!**

**The Word and Creation:** <sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word [the Son of God], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God [before the creation of the world]. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through Him [the Son of God], and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. // Look around... everything in existence was made by the Father through the Son!

**Life and Light:** <sup>4</sup> In Him [the Son of God] was life [the source of physical life and eternal life], and the life was the Light of men [to show them the truth about sin and God's work of salvation]. <sup>5</sup> The Light shines in the darkness [the darkness of sin and death], and the darkness did not comprehend [understand it] it. // We do understand; we are so blessed!

**John the Baptizer:** <sup>6</sup> There came a man sent from God, whose name was John [John the Baptizer]. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness, to testify [to tell the truth] about the Light [the Son of God], so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the

**Light.** // God sent John for that purpose – *to tell the truth about Jesus*; then, *through that truth*, the Spirit made them sorry for their sins and gave them faith to trust in Jesus as their Savior!

**Unknown to the World:** <sup>9</sup> There was the true Light [the Son of God] which, coming into the world, enlightens every man [as He spoke God's truth and removed all sins]. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through Him [the Father working through the Son], and the world did not know Him [☺]. // Hmm... the Son of God made all people, yet most do not know Him. **Why?** They don't know ☞ God's Word, nor ☞ His righteous requirement, nor ☞ their own great need for God's righteousness. May God, in His mercy, open eyes to see His truth!

**Some are Born of God:** <sup>11</sup> He came to His own [to His own people, the Jews], and those who were His own did not receive Him. <sup>12</sup> But as many as received Him [believed in Him], to them He [Jesus] gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name [with their God-given faith], <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood [physical descent] nor of the will of the flesh [like two people choosing to have a child] nor of the will of man [since no one of himself can choose God], **but of God.** // By God's power we were born of our mothers; by God's grace we are born of God, thus spiritually alive and restored in our relationship with God through the Christ of Christmas!

**The Son of God in Human Flesh:** <sup>14</sup> And the Word [the Son of God] became flesh [in the Virgin Mary], and dwelt among us [for a while, to remove all sins], and we [Peter, James, and John] saw His glory [when He was transfigured], glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace [kindness, undeserved love] and truth [about all that is important for this life and the life to come]. // **What is essential?** Giant Eagle, Home Depot, Walmart? God uses those stores to bless us with our earthly needs; however, **Jesus is MOST ESSENTIAL because we need Him for forgiveness, life, and salvation! Let us keep receiving Him!**

**Let Us Pray:** Dear Father, TY for Jesus, and our celebration of His virgin birth and essential work! Enable us and many others to ☺love Him, ☺trust Him, ☺honor Him, ☺serve Him, and ☺share Him!

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