



DAILY BREAD  
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS  
ADVENT 2 —YEAR A

**INVOCATION**

L: In the name of the Father  
and of the Son +  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**G: Amen**

**PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 130**

**A: Remember your mercy, O Lord;  
remember your mercy and love.**

L: Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;

**G: O Lord, hear my voice.**

L: Let your ears be attentive

**G: to my cry for mercy.**

L: If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins,

**G: O Lord, who could stand?**

L: But with you there is forgiveness;

**G: therefore you are feared.**

L: I wait for the LORD and in his Word I put my  
hope.

**G: My soul waits for the Lord more than  
watchmen wait for the morning.**

L: O Israel, put your hope in the LORD,

**G: for with the LORD is unfailing love  
and with him is full redemption.**

**A: Remember your mercy, O Lord;  
remember your mercy and love.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

L: Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the way for  
your only Son. By his coming give us strength in our  
conflicts and shed light on our path through the  
darkness of this world; through your Son, Jesus  
Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and  
the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**READING & MEDITATION** *see next page*

**PRAYER**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**A: Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.**

**VERSE OF THE DAY**

**A: Prepare the way for the Lord, make  
straight paths for him. All mankind will see  
God's salvation. (Luke 3:4,6 cf. NIV)**

**BENEDICTION**

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ  
and the love of God  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.

**A: Amen**

## READING AND MEDITATION:

**Second Sunday in Advent:** Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near! The Forerunner prepares for the coming Christ by preaching repentance that brings renewal of life. The Root of Jesse will come in swift judgment on the unrepentant but in mercy and grace for God's people. His coming will end the wickedness of the world and usher in a new age restored to the perfection with which God made it.

**As you study this week, seek to find the connecting theme in all the lessons by using Luther's Four Big Barber Questions to ponder and discuss each individual reading:**

1. *What is God saying to me in this lesson?*
2. *For what does this lesson lead me to give thanks?*
3. *What sins does this lesson lead me to confess?*
4. *For what does this lesson lead me to pray?*

## THE GOSPEL: MATTHEW 3:1-12

A voice in the desert cried out, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near!" A fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, John dressed like the first Elijah (2 Kings 1:8) and fulfilled the role of the second Elijah (Malachi 4:5-6) as foretold by Gabriel (Luke 1:17). Many people responded to John's preaching with repentance, baptism, and spiritual renewal. Others neither repented nor produced the fruits of a life renewed by the Spirit. John warned them that God's ax chops down unfruitful trees and leaves only stumps as witness to his judgment. John told both groups that the Messiah was near: near to the people to save them; near to the religious leaders to judge them. Harvest time had come, and God's winnowing fork was in his hand to separate the wheat from the chaff.

*My takeaways:*

## FIRST LESSON: ISAIAH 11:1-10

David's dynasty died in 586 B.C. The Babylonians served as the ax of God that cut off the line of Jesse and made David's family tree nothing but a stump. The lifeless stump was a witness to God's judgment. But behold, a branch is growing! A new shoot sprouts from Jesse's stump. God would renew the stump of David's kingdom, but it wouldn't be the restoration of an earthly rule and reign over Israel. No, God had greater things in mind. Instead, David's greater Son would rule over a renewed earth and heaven. "I am making everything new" (Revelation 21:5). In this renewed kingdom, sin and its effects

are gone; peace and righteousness rule. The Root of Jesse is a banner for the peoples, and his place of rest will be glorious.

*My takeaways:*

## SECOND LESSON: ROMANS 15:4-13

God renewed the hope of his people by raising up the root of Jesse. Hope in him reshapes our hearts and the resulting fruits of repentance show themselves in our renewed lives. Examples of those fruits can be seen in the unity of our walk and our witness and in our acceptance of our brothers and sisters. The Holy Spirit brings forth such faith and fruit to the glory and praise of God.

*My takeaways:*

## SUPPLEMENTAL FIRST LESSON: DANIEL 4:19-37

God had used Nebuchadnezzar as his ax to chop down the unrepentant tree of David. But the king of Babylon failed to heed Daniel's warning that the ax now sat at the root of his own tree. The prophet told him to repent, for God's coming judgment was near. Nebuchadnezzar failed to acknowledge God's sovereign power; he failed to repent and live in newness of life. So God fulfilled the dream: the tree of Nebuchadnezzar's reign was chopped down. God struck his glory and power and left him with neither civility nor sanity. How true it is: God is able to humble those who walk in pride. The world's greatest sovereign became like an animal. Yet look at the mercy of God! When Nebuchadnezzar repented and acknowledged and glorified God, the Lord forgave him, renewed him, and restored him.

*My takeaways:*

## SUPPLEMENTAL SECOND LESSON: ACTS 3:19-26

God used the miracle of the beggar's healing to capture the attention of the crowd so that Peter and John could preach a message of repentance to the people. They preached the harsh accusations of the law: "You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead," to prepare the hearts of the people to repent. Then they offered the sweetest gospel message that repentance brings renewal by wiping away sins and bringing God's refreshment through Christ.

*My takeaways:*

***What major theme(s) connect(s) all the lessons?***