



**DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
CHRISTMAS EVE —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 96

**A: Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord a new song.**

L: Sing to the LORD, praise his name;

G: proclaim his salvation day after day.

L: Declare his glory among the nations,

G: his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

L: Worship the LORD in the splendor of his
holiness;

G: tremble before him, all the earth.

L: Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;

G: let the sea resound, and all that is in it;

L: let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them.

**G: Then all the trees of the forest will sing for
joy;**

L: for he comes to judge the world in righteousness

G: and the peoples in his truth.

**A: Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord a new song.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that light, we may also behold him in all glory in the life to come; through your only 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: Today in the town of David a Savior has
been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.
(Luke 2:11)**

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:

The Nativity of Our Lord - Christmas Eve: A child is born who changes everything for his people. The ancient Prayer of the Day has been used on this night for 1500 years. The child of light entered this sin-darkened world and shone the brightness of God's love upon all people: "Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (Verse of the Day). This child would change man's life, his death, and his destiny.

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: LUKE 2:1-20

Two thousand years ago, a child was born who seemed to change everything. This child was declared by his father to be the heir of all his glory; his kingdom and his rule would be described with the word "Gospel." He proclaimed himself the savior of his people. That child's name was Octavian. By age 33 he was the undisputed emperor of the world, and he was given a new name, Augustus, the "exalted one." Augustus raised the expectations of what a leader could accomplish and what a society could achieve. He ended wars and built roads. He found a republic built of brick and left it an empire built of marble. By the time he died, his empire was at peace and the Roman people worshipped him as a god. Yet far from imperial Rome, far from the purple of empire and the riches of power, a teenage girl—a virgin, yet pregnant—was on the move. She traveled to Bethlehem so the great Caesar could count her. While she was there, she gave birth to the one child who didn't just seem to change everything, but actually did. This child changed man's relationship with God, his life, his death, his destiny. He did not come to bring fear, but great joy for all of God's people. The promise made long ago in the Garden was now kept, and the path back to Eden was being blazed, because God himself had come in the flesh: the Christ and the Lord in one person. Here was the child who changes everything. Glory to God in the highest!

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: ISAIAH 9:2-7

The people of Judah had a king, but they needed a change for the better. Their earthly king had failed them, and his reign brought them ever closer to loss and destruction. Their predicament pictures mankind's dilemma under the reign of sin. The prophet Isaiah, however, points God's people to a future where everything changes. They were captives, oppressed and afflicted, lost in the dark, when suddenly, the light of a new dawn breaks over them. In the light of this new day, they see that everything is changed. No longer will they be enslaved and hungry and fearful. No longer will they be defeated and broken. Instead, the nation will grow, and the people will rejoice with joy that comes from the kind of abundance found only in harvest or conquest. How will God do all of this? The prophet points to a most improbable place: a child—a child who would end wars and build an eternal kingdom on righteousness and justice. How could a child change everything? He is the Wonderful Counselor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: TITUS 2:11-14

Paul tells us that the Christchild was the epiphany of God's grace to all people, and his appearance changes our destiny in the coming age. Paul reminds us, however, that this child brings changes for this present age as well. The Christ's coming changes the lives of his people because he came to purify for himself a people that are his very own. This purification cost the price of redemption: Jesus Christ gave himself for us. His death on the cross, however, changes us. God's people are redeemed from wickedness and now are eager to do what is good. This grace of God teaches us to live changed lives in the present age—lives as Christ's own people who are waiting with certain hope for the second coming of the Christchild.

My takeaways:

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