



**DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
EPIPHANY — YEAR B**

INVOCATION

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

G: Amen

PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 72

**A: Let the people praise you, O God.
Let all the people praise you.**

L: Endow the King with your justice, O God,

G: the royal Son with your righteousness.

L: He will defend the afflicted among the people

G: and save the children of the needy.

L: He will endure as long as the sun,

**G: as long as the moon, through all
generations.**

L: He will be like rain falling on a mown field,

G: like showers watering the earth.

L: All kings will bow down to him,

G: and all nations will serve him.

L: All nations will be blessed through him,

G: and they will call him blessed.

L: Praise be to the LORD God, who alone does
marvelous deeds.

**G: May the whole earth be filled with his
glory.**

**A: Let the people praise you, O God.
Let all the people praise you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Lord God, by the leading of a star you once made
known to the nations your one and only Son. Guide
us, also, who know him now by faith, to come at last
to the perfect joy of your heavenly glory; through
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: We saw his star in the east and have come
to worship him. (Matthew 2:2b)**

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 Epiphany of Our Lord: In the readings for the feast day itself there is a manifestation of his glory in the simple fact that Jesus doesn't die yet! But who sees that that is an amazing thing? Almost no one sees the glory. But always some, just a few, do.

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 2:1-12

The gospel lesson is full of surprises and mysteries and questions. How did the Magi know so much? Why were they not discouraged when they were met with only ignorance and fear in Jerusalem? Why didn't the priests and the scribes run with them to Bethlehem to see the fulfillment of the Scriptures? Why didn't Herod send a company of soldiers with the Magi, so that there would be no possibility of the Holy Family escaping his sword? Since the Magi knew who Jesus was, why did they leave him there? The glory of the Savior is hidden under veils and veils of mystery and still it is revealed. Mary and Joseph, poor people and virtual refugees in Bethlehem since the census, know the secret. The Magi, wise and rich, but Gentiles, know the secret. Everybody else in the story who should have known it best recognized it not at all. But look closely: the Savior has come for the poor and lowly without leaving out the wise and the rich; he has come for the Jewish descendants of David and for all the rest of us, too. Look closely: Herod and the priests and the scribes are blind to what is going on, and so they must be; for soon the Savior will have to flee for his life in the arms of his Mother and foster father. Had Herod and Jerusalem acted rationally, the whole story of redemption would have been wrecked before it even got started. Give thanks that you know the secret! That's grace!

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: ISAIAH 60:1-6

Isaiah knew the secret too. He saw it all from a great distance away and he saw it bursting the bonds of time and space. Over the thousands of years thousands of people—a few here, a few there, but adding up to a mighty throng—would catch a glimpse of the glory that is Christ. They would come; we are in their number! That and we would come from all over the world to the brightness of the Light of the world. Our faces shine for joy reflecting that Light. Our offerings and our prayers, precious in the sight of the Lord who possesses all and already knows all, will rise with those of saints in every age. To the unbelieving world, we are just a few not very bright or well off people outside of the mainstream. But God, Isaiah, and we see the reality and know the secret: a mighty host of the redeemed, rescued by this Jesus from the damning darkness of unbelief. He alone is my Savior, he alone is my God and Lord!

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: EPHESIANS 3:2-12

It's all a mystery. No one can penetrate that mystery but the ones to whom God makes it known. And to whom does he want to make it known? He wants to make it known to all in these last days! And so he has preserved the message of the apostles and prophets. He has sent those who have their words to the ends of the world to make known to Jews and Gentile alike the mystery of salvation hidden in this Jesus. Perhaps you wonder if you are included; the Epiphany gospel says: *yes!* So too does St. Paul with all the other apostles and prophets. The very fact that you hear the message is proof of God's desire to call you by that message. It's just for you, otherwise you wouldn't have heard it. That's God's eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. In him and by faith in his work for your salvation even you, no less than any apostle or prophet, have access to God in all freedom and confidence.

My takeaways:

**SUPPLEMENTAL FIRST LESSON:
RUTH 4:13-17**

Ruth and Boaz were ancestors of Christ. Naomi by the law of the levirate became an ancestress of Christ when the child of Ruth was put in her lap. She who had lost everything now got it all back a hundred fold in the child placed in her lap. She who had lost all hope that God would keep his promises to remain her loving Savior now holds the ancestor of all hope in her lap. While we don't want to get lost in allegory, God has left none of us as widows or orphans at Christmas time. As Naomi rejoiced in receiving a child that was hers only by a law, so we rejoice to receive this Child whom God has placed in the manger of our hearts by faith. That God has done this is a secret made known in the Word and wonderful to our eyes.

My takeaways:

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