

Week One

Monday: Old Testament

¹ Oh, that you would burst from the heavens and come down!
How the mountains would quake in your presence!

² As fire causes wood to burn
and water to boil,

your coming would make the nations tremble.

Then your enemies would learn the reason for your fame!

³ When you came down long ago,
you did awesome deeds beyond our highest expectations.
And oh, how the mountains quaked!

⁴ For since the world began,
no ear has heard

and no eye has seen a God like you,
who works for those who wait for him!

⁵ You welcome those who gladly do good,
who follow godly ways.

But you have been very angry with us,
for we are not godly.

We are constant sinners;
how can people like us be saved?

⁶ We are all infected and impure with sin.
When we display our righteous deeds,
they are nothing but filthy rags.

Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall,
and our sins sweep us away like the wind.

⁷ Yet no one calls on your name
or pleads with you for mercy.

Therefore, you have turned away from us
and turned us over to our sins.

⁸ And yet, O LORD, you are our Father.
We are the clay, and you are the potter.
We all are formed by your hand.

⁹ Don't be so angry with us, LORD.
Please don't remember our sins forever.

Look at us, we pray,
and see that we are all your people. – Isaiah 64:1-9

Tuesday: Psalm

Please listen, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph's descendants like a flock.
O God, enthroned above the cherubim,
display your radiant glory
² to Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh.
Show us your mighty power.
Come to rescue us!

³ Turn us again to yourself, O God.
Make your face shine down upon us.
Only then will we be saved.

⁴ O LORD God of Heaven's Armies,
how long will you be angry with our prayers?

⁵ You have fed us with sorrow
and made us drink tears by the bucketful.

⁶ You have made us the scorn of neighboring nations.
Our enemies treat us as a joke.

⁷ Turn us again to yourself, O God of Heaven's Armies.
Make your face shine down upon us.
Only then will we be saved...

¹⁷ Strengthen the man you love,
the son of your choice.

¹⁸ Then we will never abandon you again.
Revive us so we can call on your name once more.

¹⁹ Turn us again to yourself, O LORD God of Heaven's Armies.
Make your face shine down upon us.
Only then will we be saved. – Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Wednesday: New Testament

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. ⁴ I always thank my God for you and for the gracious gifts he has given you, now that you belong to Christ Jesus. ⁵ Through him, God has enriched your church in every way—with all of your eloquent words and all of your knowledge. ⁶ This confirms that what I told you about Christ is true. ⁷ Now you have every spiritual gift you need as you eagerly wait for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸ He will keep you strong to the end so that you will be free from all blame on the day when our Lord Jesus Christ returns. ⁹ God will do this, for he is faithful to do what he says, and he has invited you into partnership with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. – 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Thursday: Gospel

“At that time, after the anguish of those days,

the sun will be darkened,
the moon will give no light,
²⁵ the stars will fall from the sky,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

²⁶ Then everyone will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ And he will send out his angels to gather his chosen ones from all over the world—from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven.

²⁸ “Now learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branches bud and its leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ In the same way, when you see all these things taking place, you can know that his return is very near, right at the door. ³⁰ I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass from the scene before all these things take place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will disappear, but my words will never disappear.

³² “However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows. ³³ And since you don’t know when that time will come, be on guard! Stay alert!

³⁴ “The coming of the Son of Man can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. When he left home, he gave each of his slaves instructions about the work they were to do, and he told the gatekeeper to watch for his return. ³⁵ You, too, must keep watch! For you don’t know when the master of the household will return—in the evening, at midnight, before dawn, or at daybreak. ³⁶ Don’t let him find you sleeping when he arrives without warning. ³⁷ I say to you what I say to everyone: Watch for him!” – Mark 13:24-37

Friday: Find the Intersection!

Review all four texts from this week. Where do they intersect? What is God saying?

Week Two

Monday: Old Testament

Comfort, comfort my people,"
says your God.

² "Speak tenderly to Jerusalem.

Tell her that her sad days are gone
and her sins are pardoned.

Yes, the LORD has punished her twice over
for all her sins."

³ Listen! It's the voice of someone shouting,
"Clear the way through the wilderness
for the LORD!

Make a straight highway through the wasteland
for our God!

⁴ Fill in the valleys,
and level the mountains and hills.

Straighten the curves,
and smooth out the rough places.

⁵ Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
The LORD has spoken!"

⁶ A voice said, "Shout!"
I asked, "What should I shout?"

"Shout that people are like the grass.
Their beauty fades as quickly
as the flowers in a field.

⁷ The grass withers and the flowers fade
beneath the breath of the LORD.
And so it is with people.

⁸ The grass withers and the flowers fade,
but the word of our God stands forever."

⁹ O Zion, messenger of good news,
shout from the mountaintops!
Shout it louder, O Jerusalem.
Shout, and do not be afraid.

Tell the towns of Judah,
"Your God is coming!"

¹⁰ Yes, the Sovereign LORD is coming in power.

He will rule with a powerful arm.
See, he brings his reward with him as he comes.
¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd.
He will carry the lambs in his arms,
holding them close to his heart.
He will gently lead the mother sheep with their young. – Isaiah 40:1-11

Tuesday: Psalm

LORD, you poured out blessings on your land!
You restored the fortunes of Israel.
² You forgave the guilt of your people—
yes, you covered all their sins...

s saying,
for he speaks peace to his faithful people.
But let them not return to their foolish ways.
⁹ Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him,
so our land will be filled with his glory.

¹⁰ Unfailing love and truth have met together.
Righteousness and peace have kissed!

¹¹ Truth springs up from the earth,
and righteousness smiles down from heaven.

¹² Yes, the LORD pours down his blessings.
Our land will yield its bountiful harvest.

¹³ Righteousness goes as a herald before him,
preparing the way for his steps. – Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Wednesday: New Testament

But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. ⁹The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment.

¹¹Since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this, what holy and godly lives you should live, ¹²looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along. On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames. ¹³But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness.

¹⁴And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight.

¹⁵And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. – 2 Peter 3:8-15a

Thursday: Gospel

This is the Good News about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. It began ²just as the prophet Isaiah had written:

“Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
and he will prepare your way.

³He is a voice shouting in the wilderness,
‘Prepare the way for the LORD's coming!
Clear the road for him!’ ”

⁴This messenger was John the Baptist. He was in the wilderness and preached that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven. ⁵All of Judea, including all the people of Jerusalem, went out to see and hear John. And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River. ⁶His clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey.

⁷John announced: “Someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not even worthy to stoop down like a slave and untie the straps of his sandals. ⁸I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit!” – Mark 1:1-8

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Week Three

Monday: Old Testament

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is upon me,
for the LORD has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted
and to proclaim that captives will be released
and prisoners will be freed.

² He has sent me to tell those who mourn
that the time of the LORD's favor has come,
and with it, the day of God's anger against their enemies.

³ To all who mourn in Israel,
he will give a crown of beauty for ashes,
a joyous blessing instead of mourning,
festive praise instead of despair.

In their righteousness, they will be like great oaks
that the LORD has planted for his own glory.

⁴ They will rebuild the ancient ruins,
repairing cities destroyed long ago.

They will revive them,
though they have been deserted for many generations...

⁸ "For I, the LORD, love justice.
I hate robbery and wrongdoing.
I will faithfully reward my people for their suffering
and make an everlasting covenant with them.

⁹ Their descendants will be recognized
and honored among the nations.
Everyone will realize that they are a people
the LORD has blessed."

¹⁰ I am overwhelmed with joy in the LORD my God!
For he has dressed me with the clothing of salvation
and draped me in a robe of righteousness.
I am like a bridegroom dressed for his wedding
or a bride with her jewels.

¹¹ The Sovereign LORD will show his justice to the nations of the world.
Everyone will praise him!

His righteousness will be like a garden in early spring,
with plants springing up everywhere. – Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Tuesday: Psalm

Sometimes, the Lectionary replaces a Psalm with another song from Scripture. This week, we're reading Mary's song she sings to celebrate her pregnancy. It's called the Magnificat (the first word in the Latin translation of the passage).

Oh, how my soul praises the Lord.

⁴⁷ How my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!

⁴⁸ For he took notice of his lowly servant girl,
and from now on all generations will call me blessed.

⁴⁹ For the Mighty One is holy,
and he has done great things for me.

⁵⁰ He shows mercy from generation to generation
to all who fear him.

⁵¹ His mighty arm has done tremendous things!
He has scattered the proud and haughty ones.

⁵² He has brought down princes from their thrones
and exalted the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away with empty hands.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel
and remembered to be merciful.

⁵⁵ For he made this promise to our ancestors,
to Abraham and his children forever." – Luke 1:46b-55

Wednesday: New Testament

Always be joyful. ¹⁷ Never stop praying. ¹⁸ Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

¹⁹ Do not stifle the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Do not scoff at prophecies, ²¹ but test everything that is said. Hold on to what is good. ²² Stay away from every kind of evil.

²³ Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. ²⁴ God will make this happen, for he who calls you is faithful. – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Thursday: Gospel

God sent a man, John the Baptist, ⁷ to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. ⁸ John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light...

This was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders sent priests and Temple assistants from Jerusalem to ask John, "Who are you?" ²⁰ He came right out and said, "I am not the Messiah."

²¹ "Well then, who are you?" they asked. "Are you Elijah?"

"No," he replied.

"Are you the Prophet we are expecting?"

"No."

²² "Then who are you? We need an answer for those who sent us. What do you have to say about yourself?"

²³ John replied in the words of the prophet Isaiah:

"I am a voice shouting in the wilderness,
'Clear the way for the LORD's coming!'"

²⁴ Then the Pharisees who had been sent ²⁵ asked him, "If you aren't the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet, what right do you have to baptize?"

²⁶ John told them, "I baptize with water, but right here in the crowd is someone you do not recognize. ²⁷ Though his ministry follows mine, I'm not even worthy to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandal."

²⁸ This encounter took place in Bethany, an area east of the Jordan River, where John was baptizing. – John 1:6-8, 19-28

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Week Four

Monday: Old Testament

When King David was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all the surrounding enemies, ²the king summoned Nathan the prophet. “Look,” David said, “I am living in a beautiful cedar palace, but the Ark of God is out there in a tent!”

³Nathan replied to the king, “Go ahead and do whatever you have in mind, for the LORD is with you.”

⁴But that same night the LORD said to Nathan,

⁵“Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the LORD has declared: Are you the one to build a house for me to live in? ⁶I have never lived in a house, from the day I brought the Israelites out of Egypt until this very day. I have always moved from one place to another with a tent and a Tabernacle as my dwelling. ⁷Yet no matter where I have gone with the Israelites, I have never once complained to Israel’s tribal leaders, the shepherds of my people Israel. I have never asked them, “Why haven’t you built me a beautiful cedar house?”’

⁸“Now go and say to my servant David, ‘This is what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies has declared: I took you from tending sheep in the pasture and selected you to be the leader of my people Israel. ⁹I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have destroyed all your enemies before your eyes. Now I will make your name as famous as anyone who has ever lived on the earth! ¹⁰And I will provide a homeland for my people Israel, planting them in a secure place where they will never be disturbed. Evil nations won’t oppress them as they’ve done in the past, ¹¹starting from the time I appointed judges to rule my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies.

“ ‘Furthermore, the LORD declares that he will make a house for you—a dynasty of kings! ... Your house and your kingdom will continue before me for all time, and your throne will be secure forever.’ ” – 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Tuesday: Psalm

I will sing of the LORD's unfailing love forever!

Young and old will hear of your faithfulness.

²Your unfailing love will last forever.

Your faithfulness is as enduring as the heavens.

³The LORD said, "I have made a covenant with David, my chosen servant.

I have sworn this oath to him:

⁴'I will establish your descendants as kings forever;

they will sit on your throne from now until eternity...'

"Long ago you spoke in a vision to your faithful people.

You said, "I have raised up a warrior.

I have selected him from the common people to be king.

²⁰I have found my servant David.

I have anointed him with my holy oil.

²¹I will steady him with my hand;

with my powerful arm I will make him strong.

²²His enemies will not defeat him,

nor will the wicked overpower him.

²³I will beat down his adversaries before him

and destroy those who hate him.

²⁴My faithfulness and unfailing love will be with him,

and by my authority he will grow in power.

²⁵I will extend his rule over the sea,

his dominion over the rivers.

²⁶And he will call out to me, 'You are my Father,

my God, and the Rock of my salvation.' – Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Wednesday: New Testament

Now all glory to God, who is able to make you strong, just as my Good News says. This message about Jesus Christ has revealed his plan for you Gentiles, a plan kept secret from the beginning of time. ²⁶ But now as the prophets foretold and as the eternal God has commanded, this message is made known to all Gentiles everywhere, so that they too might believe and obey him. ²⁷ All glory to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, forever. Amen. – Romans 16:25-27

Thursday: Gospel

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. ²⁸ Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!"

²⁹ Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. ³⁰ "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!"

³⁴ Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

³⁵ The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. ³⁷ For the word of God will never fail."

³⁸ Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her. – Luke 1:26-38

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