

FIRST LESSON Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

God announces in the Garden of Eden Adam and Eve's punishment for their rebellion and that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

- 8** When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees.
- 9** Then the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"
- 10** He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked."
- 11** "Who told you that you were naked?" the Lord God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?"
- 12** The man replied, "It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it."
- 13** Then the Lord God asked the woman, "What have you done?" "The serpent deceived me," she replied. "That's why I ate it."
- 14** Then the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly groveling in the dust as long as you live.
- 15** And I will cause hostility between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."
- 16** Then he said to the woman, "I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you."
- 17** And to the man he said, "Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it.
- 18** It will grow thorns and thistles for you though you will eat of its grains.

19 By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return.”

SECOND LESSON Genesis 22:15-18

God promises to Abraham that by his descendants all the nations of the earth will obtain blessings.

15 Then the angel of the Lord called again to Abraham from heaven.

16 “This is what the Lord says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that

17 I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies.

18 And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me.”

THIRD LESSON Isaiah 9:2,6-7

The prophet announces the birth of a king to a people in darkness.

2 The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine.

6 For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies will make this happen!

FOURTH LESSON Isaiah 11:1-9

The king is coming and will usher in a reign of justice for the poor and peace for all God's creation.

- 1 Out of the stump of David's family will grow a shoot—yes, a new Branch bearing fruit from the old root.**
- 2 And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.**
- 3 He will delight in obeying the Lord. He will not judge by appearance nor make a decision based on hearsay.**
- 4 He will give justice to the poor and make fair decisions for the exploited. The earth will shake at the force of his word, and one breath from his mouth will destroy the wicked.**
- 5 He will wear righteousness like a belt and truth like an undergarment.**
- 6 In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together; the leopard will lie down with the baby goat. The calf and the yearling will be safe with the lion, and a little child will lead them all.**
- 7 The cow will graze near the bear. The cub and the calf will lie down together. The lion will eat hay like a cow.**
- 8 The baby will play safely near the hole of a cobra. Yes, a little child will put its hand in a nest of deadly snakes without harm.**
- 9 Nothing will hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for as the waters fill the sea, so the earth will be filled with people who know the Lord.**

FIFTH LESSON Luke 1:26-35,38

The angel Gabriel announces to the virgin Mary that she will give birth to Gods promised Son, whose kingdom will never end.

- 26 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.
- 38** Mary responded, “I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true.” And then the angel left her.

SIXTH LESSON Luke 2:1-7

Against a backdrop of emperors and taxes, Jesus is born.

- 1** At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire.
- 2** (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.)

- 3 All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census.**
- 4 And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David’s ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee.**
- 5 He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child.**
- 6 And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born.**
- 7 She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.**

SEVENTH LESSON Luke 2:8-16

The shepherds go to see the Savior of the world and find him lying in a manger.

- 8 That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep.**
- 9 Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord’s glory surrounded them. They were terrified,**
- 10 but the angel reassured them. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people.**
- 11 The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!**
- 12 And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger.”**
- 13 Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,**

- 14 “Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.”**
- 15 When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “Let’s go to Bethlehem! Let’s see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”**
- 16 They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was The baby, lying in the manger.**