

Devotion for Epiphany

Psalm 72

**Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness.
He will judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice.**

The mountains will bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness.

**He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy,
He will crush the oppressor.**

He will endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations.

He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth.

**In His days the righteous will flourish, prosperity will abound till the moon is no more.
He will rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.**

The desert tribes will bow before Him and His enemies will lick the dust.

The kings of Tarshish and of distant shores will bring tribute to Him, the kings of Sheba and Seba will present Him gifts. All kings will bow down to Him and all nations will serve Him.

For He will deliver the needy who cry out the afflicted who have no one to help.

He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death.

He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in His sight.

Long may He live! May gold from Sheba be given Him.

May people ever pray for Him and bless Him all day long.

Let grain abound throughout the land; on the top of the hills may it sway.

Let its fruit flourish like Lebanon; let it thrive like the grass of the field.

May His Name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun.

All nations will be blessed through Him, and they will call Him blessed

Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

Praise be to His glorious name forever; may his glory fill the whole earth. Amen and Amen.

This concludes the prayers of David son of Jesse

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;

As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen

Questions for Reflection

Isaiah 60:1-22

Gods glory will shine on His people

What light draws the nations to God's people?

To Whom in particular are the nations drawn?

What verse suggests peace and security?

Matthew 2:1-23

The infancy of Jesus

What parts of the visit of the wisemen are similar to Isaiah 60?

Who do the wisemen represent and why is their worship important?

What draws the wisemen to the child Jesus?

Epiphany: The Light of the Lord Has Arisen

Isaiah spoke of the light of the Lord rising upon Israel and His glory being revealed to all nations through Israel. Epiphany (a season in which the light of the Lord shines on Israel through the birth of Jesus) begins with the light of a star leading wise men from the east, to a house where they found the child Jesus, whom they worshipped and offered gifts of frankincense, gold and myrrh.

Isaiah spoke of this event with great accuracy, saying, *“They shall bring gold and frankincense...”* The visit of the wise men—called Magi in the original text—foreshadowed the death of the Christ for the salvation of the world. Their gifts spoken of by Isaiah as gold and frankincense, were augmented by a third gift, myrrh. Myrrh as it says in the song *“We Three Kings,”* is a bitter perfume, used at burial to cloak the smell of decaying flesh. It represented the death of Christ, which was for the sins of the world. The visit of the magi—numbered three, because Matthew speaks of three gifts, was the first sign that Christ had come for the salvation of the Gentiles, as well as the Jews.

Another group of Gentiles visited Jesus near the end of His life. John’s gospel says a group of Gentiles approached Philip in Jerusalem during Holy Week, wishing to see Jesus. When Philip told Him, Jesus said, *“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified...And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”* These two visits of Gentiles to Jesus, underscore the mystery of the Gospel, which as St. Paul says, *“is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise of Christ Jesus through the gospel.”*

We thank God for this, because we are all Gentiles. And through Christ, a son of Israel according to His human DNA. we have seen the light of salvation and have become adopted sons and daughters of God, members of the new Israel, the body of Christ, the holy Christian Church. We rejoice that through faith we see Jesus. We join the magi at the feet of Jesus and worship Him as our God and Saviour!

Hymn: As with Gladness Men of Old (Public Domain)

**As with gladness men of old, Did the guiding star behold; As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward,
beaming bright; So, most gracious Lord, may we, evermore be led by Thee.**

**As with joyful steps they sped, Saviour, to Thy lowly bed, there to bend the knee before, Thee whom heaven
and earth adore; so may we with willing feet, Ever seek Thy mercy seat.**

**As they offered gifts most rare, At Thy cradle rude and bare, so may we with holy joy, pure and free from
sin’s alloy, All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.**

**Holy Jesus, every day, keep us in the narrow way; And when earthly things are past, Bring our ransomed
souls at last, Where they need no star to guide, Where no clouds Thy glory hide.**

**In the heavenly country bright, need they no created light; Thou its light, its joy, its crown, Thou its sun
which goes not down; There forever may we sing, Alleluias to our King.**

Prayer

Lord Jesus we join the magi and worship you at this time of Epiphany. We see your revelation in your word, in the washing of our baptism into your dying and rising and in the gift of your body and blood; given and shed for our forgiveness in the sacrament of Holy Communion. We experience your presence in Spirit through our fellowship as members of the church, your body. Bless us with your grace each day as we move forward through time, until the great day when we see you in the fullness of glory at your great Epiphany. In your Name. Amen

The Lord’s Prayer

**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**

The Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our
Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was
crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He
ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to
judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen**

Benediction
Isaiah 59:21

“As for me, this is my covenant with them,” says the Lord: “My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your offspring, or out of the mouth of your children’s offspring,” says the Lord, “from this time forth and forevermore.”

Bible Knowledge Quiz

What did Herod tell the Magi he wanted to do for the infant Christ?

Who warned the Magi not to return to Herod?

How did the Magi show that Jesus is the divine Son of God?

Answers to last week’s quiz

1) Benjamin Romans 11:1

2) King Saul 1 Samuel 9:1-3

3) The Levites Leviticus 18:1-3

