

Read the Whole Bible with Pastor

Monday (December 25) – Psalm 67, 68

Psalm 67 is a prayer for God's blessing. Remember the words of the Benediction spoken first by the high priest Aaron and now by your pastor, "The Lord bless you and keep you..." (Numbers 6:24-26). Today, the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, is a fitting day to contemplate blessing. "To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given." The Lord who was born in Bethlehem and who went to the cross to accomplish our salvation sent His apostles to the ends of the earth to bless the nations and proclaim God's saving power. "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world" (Romans 10:18).

The context of Psalm 68 is during the forty years when the Israelites wandered the wilderness. "And whenever the ark set out, Moses said, 'Arise, O Lord, and let your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate you flee before you.'" (Numbers 10:35) This is a processional psalm praising God for His mighty works of deliverance on behalf of His people and rejoicing that He now dwells with them.

Tuesday (December 26) – Psalm 69, 70

From the very beginning, the church has read Psalm 69 in the context of our Lord's passion and death (v. 9, cf. Romans 15:3). The waters in verses 1–2 refer to the baptism of blood with which Jesus must be baptized (Mark 10:38; Luke 12:50; Romans 6:3). The "zeal" for the Lord's house in verse 9 refers to Jesus cleansing the temple (John 2:17). The "comforters" in verse 21 are Jesus' disciples who can't even stay awake with him during the night prior to his arrest. The "sour wine" in verse 22 is the sour wine that was held up to Jesus to drink while he hung on the cross. Verse 25 refers to the betrayal of Judas (Acts 1:20). The writer to the Hebrews speaks of this psalm: "In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to Him who was able to save him from death, and He was heard because of His reverence" (Hebrews 5:7).

The prayer offices of Matins and Vespers include verse 1 of Psalm 70 in the opening versicles. It's a concise and profound prayer anytime anywhere.

Wednesday (December 27) – Psalm 71, 72

At the end of the litany in the office of Evening Prayer, the pastor chants, "Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord." We commend our whole life to Christ, not just what we have in the present, but also that which is out of our control: the past (with its thanksgivings and regrets) and the future (with its hopes and fears). Psalm 71 is a prayer by which we commend all things to Christ. He is our refuge. "Your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3).

Psalm 72 is a coronation Psalm written by King Solomon. No Old Testament king ever lived up to these coronation promises. The promises of this psalm are fulfilled in the messianic king. David's son and Lord, born of the virgin in Bethlehem, is the king who has lived up to such a profound coronation hymn. When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, He said, "The

Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.” (Luke 1:32–33).

Thursday (December 28) – Psalm 73, 74

Psalm 73 is concerned with the same problem that Job had. Holy Scripture promises blessings to the righteous and curses upon evildoers (see Psalm 1), but that is often not what we see. If God is just and also almighty, then why do wickedness and injustice seem to prevail? The psalmist wrestles with this very question. “But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end” (vv. 16–17). In the gathering of the faithful around the Word of God and the Breaking of the Bread, there is relief from these thoughts that plague the Christian. God knows how to deal with the unjust, and He will do so in His time. Christians must be content to live in faith and trust in God.

Psalm 74 considers the themes of chaos and order. Injustice and evil run rampant in the world. Sin is chaos. The psalmist reflects on God’s act of creating the world. God took that which was “without form and void” and spoke light into the darkness. He spoke order into chaos. Out of the chaos of this desecrated, sinful world, you have been called out and born from above as children of God.

Friday (December 29) – Psalm 75, 76, 77

Psalm 75 is about praise. In Hebrew, the word here translated as “to give thanks” or “praise” can also be translated as “confess.” Giving praise and thanks to God means recounting His deeds; confessing or testifying to what He has done. On the other hand, the wicked boast in themselves. They lift up a horn to recount their own works, but God is not impressed with the pitiful works of the proud.

Psalm 76 is about Jesus’ crucifixion. Jesus did battle on the cross. God was made known in Judah when the Father “uttered judgment” from heaven and poured out His wrath on the Son. God arose to establish judgment and to save all the humble of the earth” when Christ was lifted up on the cross. “There he broke the flashing arrows, the shield, the sword, and the weapons of war” of sin, death, and the power of the devil.

Psalm 77 is the prayer of a Christian beset by troubles and seeking God’s deliverance in prayer. The psalmist recounts God’s mighty deeds of old, specifically when He brought his people through the Red Sea waters and destroyed Pharaoh and his hosts.

Saturday (December 30) – Psalm 78:1–33

Psalm 78 is a poetic summary of the Books of Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and parts of Joshua, Judges, and 1 Samuel.

Sunday (December 31) – Psalm 78:34–72

St. Paul writes “Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.” (1 Corinthians 10:11)