

Readings, Prayers & Hymns for Sunday 20/12/20

2 Samuel 7 1-11, 16

1 After the king was settled in his palace and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, 2 he said to Nathan the prophet, “Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent.”

3 Nathan replied to the king, “Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you.”

4 But that night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying:

5 “Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? 6 I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. 7 Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”’”

8 “Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. 9 I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. 10 And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning 11 and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders[a] over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. “The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you:

16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me[b]; your throne will be established forever.”’”

Romans 16 25-27

25 Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, 26 but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from[a] faith— 27 to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Luke 1 26-38

26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, 27 to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. 28 The

Readings, Prayers & Hymns for Sunday 20/12/20

angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”

29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. 30 But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. 31 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

34 “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

35 The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called[a] the Son of God. 36 Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. 37 For no word from God will ever fail.”

38 “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.

Readings, Prayers & Hymns for Sunday 20/12/20

Our Father, which 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 them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
The power, and the glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen.

Lord Jesus,
In the midst of a storm,
You said, 'Peace be still.'
Bid our anxious fears subside,
Sustain your church in faith, hope and love,
Bring our nation through this tumult,
Grant wisdom to those with heavy responsibilities,
And healing and hope to those who are infected.
Amen.

Readings, Prayers & Hymns for Sunday 20/12/20

- 1 The Lord will come and not be slow,
his footsteps cannot err;
before him righteousness shall go,
his royal harbinger.
- 2 Mercy and truth that long were missed,
now joyfully are met;
sweet peace and righteousness have kissed,
and hand in hand are set.
- 3 Surely to such as do him fear
salvation is at hand;
and glory shall ere long appear
to dwell within our land.
- 4 Rise, God, judge thou the earth in might,
this wicked earth redress;
for thou art he who shall by right
the nations all possess.
- 5 The nations all whom thou hast made
shall come, and all shall frame
to bow them low before thee, Lord,
and glorify thy name.
- 6 For great thou art, and wonders great
by thy strong hand are done;
thou in thine everlasting seat
remainest God alone.

from Psalms 82, 85, 86
para. JOHN MILTON (1608–74) altd.

Readings, Prayers & Hymns for Sunday 20/12/20

- 1 Praise and thanksgiving,
Father, we offer,
for all things living
you have made good;
harvest of sown fields,
fruits of the orchard,
hay from the mown fields,
blossom and wood.
- 2 Lord, bless the labour
we bring to serve you,
that with our neighbour
we may be fed.
Sowing or tilling,
we would work with you;
harvesting, milling,
for daily bread.
- 3 Father, providing
food for your children,
your wisdom guiding
teaches us share
one with another,
so that, rejoicing,
sister and brother
may know your care.
- 4 Then will your blessing
reach every people;
each one confessing
your gracious hand:
when you are reigning
no one will hunger,
your love sustaining
fruitful the land.

A. F. BAYLY (1901–84) altd.

Readings, Prayers & Hymns for Sunday 20/12/20

Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand,
The shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land;
A home within the wilderness, a rest upon the way,
From the burning of the noontide heat, and the burden of the day.

O safe and happy shelter, O refuge tried and sweet,
O trysting place where Heaven's love and Heaven's justice meet!
As to the holy patriarch that wondrous dream was given,
So seems my Savior's cross to me, a ladder up to heaven.

There lies beneath its shadow but on the further side
The darkness of an awful grave that gapes both deep and wide
And there between us stands the cross two arms outstretched to save
A watchman set to guard the way from that eternal grave.

Upon that cross of Jesus mine eye at times can see
The very dying form of One Who suffered there for me;
And from my stricken heart with tears two wonders I confess;
The wonders of redeeming love and my unworthiness.

I take, O cross, thy shadow for my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of His face;
Content to let the world go by to know no gain or loss,
My sinful self my only shame, my glory all the cross.

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing.
- 2 Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy.
- 3 No more let thorns infest the ground,
or sins and sorrows grow;
wherever pain and death are found
he makes his blessings flow.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love.

ISAAC WATTS (1674–1748) altd. *
based on Psalm 98