

**Prayer of the Day**

O God,  
who from the line of your servant David  
raised up the carpenter Joseph  
to be the guardian of your incarnate Son  
and the husband of Mary his virgin mother:  
give us grace to follow Joseph's integrity of life  
and his obedience to your commands;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.     **Amen**

**A reading from the Second Book of Samuel,**  
*Chapter 7 beginning at Verse 4*

<sup>4</sup>But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup>Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup>I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup>Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" <sup>8</sup>Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup>and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup>And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup>from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. <sup>12</sup>When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup>He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup>I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings. <sup>15</sup>But I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. <sup>16</sup>Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.     [NRSV 2 Samuel 7:4-16]

Hear the word of the Lord,                      ***thanks be to God***

**Psalm 89:19-30**

- <sup>19</sup> You spoke once in a vision:  
and said to your faithful one,
- <sup>20</sup> 'I have set a youth above a warrior:  
I have exalted a young man out of the people.
- <sup>21</sup> 'I have found my servant David:  
and anointed him with my holy oil.
- <sup>22</sup> 'My hand shall uphold him:  
and my arm shall strengthen him.
- <sup>23</sup> 'No enemy shall deceive him:  
nor shall the wicked hurt him.
- <sup>24</sup> 'I will crush his adversaries before him:  
and strike down those that hate him.
- <sup>25</sup> 'My faithfulness and loving-kindness shall be with him:  
and through my name his head shall be lifted high.
- <sup>26</sup> 'I will set the hand of his dominion  
upon the Western Sea:  
and his right hand shall stretch  
to the streams of Mesopotamia.
- <sup>27</sup> 'He will call to me "You are my Father:  
my God, and the rock of my salvation."
- <sup>28</sup> 'I will make him my first-born son:  
and highest among the kings of the earth.
- <sup>29</sup> 'I will ever maintain my loving-kindness toward him:  
and my covenant with him shall stand firm.
- <sup>30</sup> 'I will establish his line for ever:  
and his throne like the days of heaven.

**A reading from the book of Romans,**

*Chapter 4 beginning at Verse 13*

<sup>13</sup> For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. <sup>14</sup> If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. <sup>15</sup> For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

<sup>16</sup> For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, <sup>17</sup> as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations") - in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do

not exist. <sup>18</sup> Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." <sup>19</sup> He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. <sup>20</sup> No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup> being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. <sup>22</sup> Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." [NRSV Romans 4:13-22]

Hear the word of the Lord, ***thanks be to God.***

**The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew,**

*Chapter 1 beginning at Verse 18*

***Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.***

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

[NRSV Matthew 1:18-25]

This is the Gospel of the Lord, ***praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.***

Sentence

**I have calmed and quieted my soul like a weaned child with its mother.  
O Israel, hope in the Lord, from this time on and for evermore.**