

**Christmas Eve and Christmas Day**  
**Cycles ABC RCL**  
**Proper III**  
**Revised**

**Isaiah 52:7–10**

Isaiah 51:1-52:12 is a single poem from the unnamed disciple of Isaiah we call “Second Isaiah,” (Isaiah 40–55). This prophet believed that the Jews’ would return triumphantly to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon and often describes this return in glorious metaphor. The prophet invites the very ruins of Jerusalem to break into song when the Lord returns, a thought much like Isaiah 40:9-11. This return will be a sign for all nations of the supremacy of the God of Israel over the whole earth.

**Psalm 98**

This psalm shares so much of the imagery of the Second Isaiah as described above in the note on Isaiah 52:7-10) that some consider it to be to be a *hymn* from the time after the Babylonian Exile. The focus of this psalm is upon the reestablishment of a righteous judgment not only for Jerusalem but also for the entire earth over which Yahweh reigns.

**Hebrews 1:1–12**

In the early chapters of this epistle the unknown author attempts to establish by biblical proof the superiority of Christ over the angels and over Moses. These may be arguments against those Christians who held Christ to be savior only of the human realm, whereas Melchizedek, who appears later in the epistle in a non-saving role, to be redeemer of the divine realm. It also represents a strong argument against those who have divinized the lawgiver Moses. Researchers debate the date of the work as much as its authorship, but a date between 70 CE and 100 CE appears likely to many.

**John 1:1–14**

The author combines the Stoic idea of the “word” (*logos*) as the single, divine element in creation with the Jewish idea of the Wisdom of God as preceding the creation of the world and being the organizing principle of creation. Whatever else this divine word or wisdom might be, it became a living human being, Jesus of Nazareth, and through this human being we mortals can see the fullness of divinity. For the anonymous writer of this Gospel, then, the story of Jesus is nothing less than the manifestation of the eternal *logos* in space and time.

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