

Sermon Notes – January 5, 2025
Second Sunday of Christmas
The Holy Gospel of St. John 1: 1-18
Peace Lutheran Church
“God is Revealed”

Luther said that finding the *hertzpunkt* (heart-point) of the texts for preaching is the foundation out of which the gospel springs. Today's Jeremiah and John readings offer up images of brooks of water, food (grain), oil, wine, a watershed garden, light, Word, law, and grace.

On this second Sunday of Christmas, while we celebrate God's Son who is the reason for the Christian witness, the church's appointed readings give us a means for linking Jesus' Jewishness with his place in Christianity. How so? Wisdom is the portal because God “established” it in Zion (Jerusalem), the home of Israel, and it “took root in an honored people” (v. 12). And it was to those beloved enslaved people freed by the power of Wisdom (in the burning bush in Moses, in God's leading) that He gave the law.

A study of the word *grace* (used four times in John's prologue) yielded the definition “gracious gift.” Understanding “grace” as “gracious gift” shows us that “the gift” that took place in and through Jesus Christ is placed side-by-side with His gift of the law through Moses.

Moses' law and Christ's incarnation are both essential for freedom. Jesus Christ does not cancel out the law. We remember that he comes to “fulfill the law,” but it is often hard to hear how that can be when we have been schooled in supersessionism, that says Jesus erased what came before (ie, that God's chosen people are no longer the Jewish people, but rather the Christian church). Wisdom may be the image that brings law and grace together.