

SERIES B TEXTS

First Sunday of Christmas

Isaiah 61:10--62:3

^{61:10} I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

^{62:1} For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. ² The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. ³ You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Psalms 148

¹ Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights! ² Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host! ³ Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars! ⁴ Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens! ⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created. ⁶ He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed. ⁷ Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, ⁸ fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command! ⁹ Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! ¹⁰ Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds! ¹¹ Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! ¹² Young men and women alike, old and young together! ¹³ Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven. ¹⁴ He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the LORD!

Galatians 4:4-7

⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶ And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷ So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Luke 2:22-40

²² When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴ and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." ²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶ It had been

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revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹ "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." ³³ And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed-- and a sword will pierce your own soul too." ³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. ³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.