

# FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY

DECEMBER 31, 2017



## *THE LESSON* Isaiah 61:10–62:3

<sup>10</sup>I surely rejoice in the LORD; my heart is joyful because of my God, because he has clothed me with clothes of victory, wrapped me in a robe of righteousness like a bridegroom in a priestly crown, and like a bride adorned in jewelry. <sup>11</sup>As the earth puts out its growth, and as a garden grows its seeds, so the LORD God will grow righteousness and praise before all the nations.

<sup>62</sup>For Zion's sake I won't keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I won't sit still until her righteousness shines out like a light, and her salvation blazes like a torch. <sup>2</sup>Nations will see your righteousness, all kings your glory. You will be called by a new name, which the LORD's own mouth will determine. <sup>3</sup>You will be a splendid garland in the LORD's hand, a royal turban in the palm of God's hand.

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## *THE RESPONSE* Psalm 148

<sup>1</sup>Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from heaven! Praise God on the heights!

<sup>2</sup>**Praise God, all of you who are his messengers! Praise God, all of you who comprise his heavenly forces!**

<sup>3</sup>Sun and moon, praise God! All of you bright stars, praise God!

<sup>4</sup>**You highest heaven, praise God! Do the same, you waters that are above the sky!**

<sup>5</sup>Let all of these praise the LORD's name because God gave the command and they were created!

<sup>6</sup>**God set them in place always and forever. God made a law that will not be broken.**

<sup>7</sup>Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all you ocean depths!

<sup>8</sup>**Do the same, fire and hail, snow and smoke, stormy wind that does what God says!**

<sup>9</sup>Do the same, you mountains, every single hill, fruit trees, and every single cedar!

<sup>10</sup>**Do the same, you animals—wild or tame—you creatures that creep along and you birds that fly!**

<sup>11</sup>Do the same, you kings of the earth and every single person, you princes and every single ruler on earth!

<sup>12</sup>Do the same, you young men—young women too!—you who are old together with you who are young!

<sup>13</sup>Let all of these praise the LORD's name because only God's name is high over all. Only God's majesty is over earth and heaven.

<sup>14</sup>God raised the strength of his people, the praise of all his faithful ones—that's the Israelites, the people who are close to him. Praise the LORD!

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**THE EPISTLE Galatians 4:4-7**

<sup>4</sup>But when the fulfillment of the time came, God sent his Son, born through a woman, and born under the Law. <sup>5</sup>This was so he could redeem those under the Law so that we could be adopted. <sup>6</sup>Because you

are sons and daughters, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father!" <sup>7</sup>Therefore, you are no longer a slave but a son or daughter, and if you are his child, then you are also an heir through God.

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**THE GOSPEL Luke 2:22-40**

<sup>22</sup>When the time came for their ritual cleansing, in accordance with the Law from Moses, they brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. (<sup>23</sup>It's written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male will be dedicated to the Lord.") <sup>24</sup>They offered a sacrifice in keeping with what's stated in the Law of the Lord, *A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.*

<sup>25</sup>A man named Simeon was in Jerusalem. He was righteous and devout. He eagerly anticipated the restoration of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup>The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he wouldn't die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. <sup>27</sup>Led by the Spirit, he went into the temple area. Meanwhile, Jesus' parents brought the child to the temple so that they could do what was customary under the Law. <sup>28</sup>Simeon took Jesus in his arms and praised God. He said,

<sup>29</sup>"Now, master, let your servant go in peace according to your word,

<sup>30</sup>because my eyes have seen your salvation.

<sup>31</sup>You prepared this salvation in the presence of all peoples.

<sup>32</sup>It's a light for revelation to the Gentiles and a glory for your people Israel."

<sup>33</sup>His father and mother were amazed by what was said about him.

<sup>34</sup>Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "This boy is assigned to be the cause of the falling and rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that generates opposition <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your innermost being too."

<sup>36</sup>There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, who belonged to the tribe of Asher. She was very old. After she married, she lived with her husband for seven years. <sup>37</sup>She was now an 84-year-old widow. She never left the temple area but worshipped God with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>She approached at that very moment

and began to praise God and to speak about Jesus to everyone who was looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup>When Mary and Joseph had completed everything required by

the Law of the Lord, they returned to their hometown, Nazareth in Galilee. <sup>40</sup>The child grew up and became strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favor was on him.