

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

16TH DECEMBER 2018

First Reading

Zephaniah 3:14–20

Prophecy of Zephaniah

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷ The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing

¹⁸ as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹ I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.

And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰ At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the LORD.

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Psalm - Isaiah 12:2–6

² Surely God is my salvation:

I will trust, and will not be afraid,

for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might:

he has become my salvation.

³ With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. ⁴ And you will say in that day:

Give thanks to the LORD,

call on his name;

make known his deeds among the nations;

proclaim that his name is exalted.

⁵ Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously:

let this be known in all the earth.

⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion:

for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Second Reading

Philippians 4:4–7

The Letter Of Paul To The Philippians

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Gospel

Luke 3:7–18

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the axe is lying at the root of the

trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹ In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?”

¹³ He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.”

¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Sentence

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, ‘Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God.’.

Isaiah 35.3-4

Prayer of the day

Sustain us, O God, with the power of your love on our journey to meet the One who is coming: strengthen our weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees, and open blind eyes to the dawning of your kingdom, so that our hearts may rejoice

as we behold the majesty of our God.

We ask this through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Supplementary Readings

Isaiah 35.1-10

Psalm 76.1-9

Matthew 11.11-24

Prayer Response

Lord, you are our deliverer.

You are our refuge and our strength.

The Spirit of Christmas

John answered, "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same." Luke 3:11 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 3:7-18



O U B V W H I S H O L P E F H
M L I B J Q T Y R Q J I O U Y
I V N I B R N P K R B W V J K
E W Z J I W I D Y S H A R E M
J B W H A Z Z J X L M B X Z N
U G S O B A P T I S M R Q X V
G J L S Y T L C R H H M G Q Z
V O L M M R B O P U A T Q J I
M E O I F E D I R N M B R A P
E B N D X E R Q Z G I V E G K
Y E B H T M C A W R B T C K M
H T M D D P D Y D Y D L X I A
B R E P E N T O S F R U I T J
D R D X O Z O G Y J V O M E P
H M U O F F D F P O O R M V Q

FRUIT
SHARE
HUNGRY

SHIRTS
BAPTISM
GOOD

LIVE
TREE
FOOD

POOR
GIVE
REPENT