

## Psalm 85

- <sup>1</sup> You, LORD, showed favor to your land;  
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
- <sup>2</sup> You forgave the iniquity of your people  
and covered all their sins.<sup>[a]</sup>
- <sup>3</sup> You set aside all your wrath  
and turned from your fierce anger.
- <sup>4</sup> Restore us again, God our Savior,  
and put away your displeasure toward us.
- <sup>5</sup> Will you be angry with us forever?  
Will you prolong your anger through all generations?
- <sup>6</sup> Will you not revive us again,  
that your people may rejoice in you?
- <sup>7</sup> Show us your unfailing love, LORD,  
and grant us your salvation.
- <sup>8</sup> I will listen to what God the LORD says;  
he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants—  
but let them not turn to folly.
- <sup>9</sup> Surely his salvation is near those who fear him,  
that his glory may dwell in our land.
- <sup>10</sup> Love and faithfulness meet together;  
righteousness and peace kiss each other.
- <sup>11</sup> Faithfulness springs forth from the earth,  
and righteousness looks down from heaven.
- <sup>12</sup> The LORD will indeed give what is good,  
and our land will yield its harvest.
- <sup>13</sup> Righteousness goes before him  
and prepares the way for his steps.

## Old Testament Reading – Zephaniah 3:14-20

- <sup>14</sup> Sing, Daughter Zion;  
shout aloud, Israel!  
Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,  
Daughter Jerusalem!
- <sup>15</sup> The LORD has taken away your punishment,  
he has turned back your enemy.  
The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you;  
never again will you fear any harm.
- <sup>16</sup> On that day  
they will say to Jerusalem,

"Do not fear, Zion;  
 do not let your hands hang limp.  
<sup>17</sup> The LORD your God is with you,  
 the Mighty Warrior who saves.  
 He will take great delight in you;  
 in his love he will no longer rebuke you,  
 but will rejoice over you with singing."  
<sup>18</sup> "I will remove from you  
 all who mourn over the loss of your appointed festivals,  
 which is a burden and reproach for you.  
<sup>19</sup> At that time I will deal  
 with all who oppressed you.  
 I will rescue the lame;  
 I will gather the exiles.  
 I will give them praise and honor  
 in every land where they have suffered shame.  
<sup>20</sup> At that time I will gather you;  
 at that time I will bring you home.  
 I will give you honor and praise  
 among all the peoples of the earth  
 when I restore your fortunes<sup>[a]</sup>  
 before your very eyes,"  
 says the LORD.

## Epistle Reading - Philippians 4:4-7

### Final Exhortations

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

## Gospel Reading - Luke 7:18-28

### Jesus and John the Baptist

<sup>18</sup> John's disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them, <sup>19</sup> he sent them to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?"  
<sup>20</sup> When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'"

<sup>21</sup> At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. <sup>22</sup> So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy<sup>[a]</sup> are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. <sup>23</sup> Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me."

<sup>24</sup> After John's messengers left, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? <sup>25</sup> If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear expensive clothes and indulge in luxury are in palaces. <sup>26</sup> But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>27</sup> This is the one about whom it is written:

"I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.'<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>28</sup> I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."