

## Psalm 148

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD.<sup>[a]</sup>

Praise the LORD from the heavens;  
praise him in the heights above.

<sup>2</sup> Praise him, all his angels;  
praise him, all his heavenly hosts.

<sup>3</sup> Praise him, sun and moon;  
praise him, all you shining stars.

<sup>4</sup> Praise him, you highest heavens  
and you waters above the skies.

<sup>5</sup> Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
for at his command they were created,

<sup>6</sup> and he established them for ever and ever—  
he issued a decree that will never pass away.

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

<sup>8</sup> lightning and hail, snow and clouds,  
stormy winds that do his bidding,

<sup>9</sup> you mountains and all hills,  
fruit trees and all cedars,

<sup>10</sup> wild animals and all cattle,  
small creatures and flying birds,

<sup>11</sup> kings of the earth and all nations,  
you princes and all rulers on earth,

<sup>12</sup> young men and women,  
old men and children.

<sup>13</sup> Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
for his name alone is exalted;  
his splendor is above the earth and the heavens.

<sup>14</sup> And he has raised up for his people a horn,<sup>[b]</sup>  
the praise of all his faithful servants,  
of Israel, the people close to his heart.

Praise the LORD.

## **New Testament Reading - Acts 5:29-42**

<sup>29</sup> Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than human beings! <sup>30</sup> The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead—whom you killed by hanging him on a cross.

<sup>31</sup> God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. <sup>32</sup> We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.” <sup>33</sup> When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death. <sup>34</sup> But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. <sup>35</sup> Then he addressed the Sanhedrin: “Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. <sup>36</sup> Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. <sup>37</sup> After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. <sup>38</sup> Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. <sup>39</sup> But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.”

<sup>40</sup> His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

<sup>41</sup> The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. <sup>42</sup> Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

## Epistle Reading - 1 Peter 1:3-9

### Praise to God for a Living Hope

<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup> In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. <sup>7</sup> These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. <sup>8</sup> Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, <sup>9</sup> for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

## Gospel Reading - John 20:19-31

### Jesus Appears to His Disciples

<sup>19</sup> On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

<sup>21</sup> Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." <sup>22</sup> And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

### Jesus Appears to Thomas

<sup>24</sup> Now Thomas (also known as Didymus<sup>[a]</sup>), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them,

“Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

<sup>28</sup> Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

### **The Purpose of John’s Gospel**

<sup>30</sup> Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written that you may believe<sup>[b]</sup> that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.