***Introit (Psalm 31)***

P: The people came out of the time of much trouble.

**C: They washed their robes in the Lamb’s blood and made them white.**

P: Lord, You protect me. Don’t let me become shamed.

**C: Your righteousness saves me.**

P: You are my rock and my protection.

**C: For Your name’s honor, You lead me.**

P: Into Your hand I give my spirit.

**C: Lord, faithful God, You saved me.**

**All: Glory give to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, the same as it was in the beginning, is now, and will continue forever. Amen.**

***Prayer for God’s Word***

P: Almighty and eternal God, You bring together Your faithful people from all time and places. You unite them together in Your Son, Jesus Christ. Your holy people in the past lived the same-as You want. Let us follow their example. Then we will all live together in heaven in joy with You. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Jesus lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: (copy) Amen.

*You have two choices for the first lesson, a long reading from Revelation 7 and a short reading from Revelation 7. Choose one.*

*This is the long first reading.*

The first lesson is from Revelation chapter 7.

 JOHN wrote: God gave four angels power to hurt the earth and the sea. Then I saw another angel come from the East. He had God’s seal (stamp). The angel shouted with a loud voice to the four angels, “Don’t hurt the earth or sea or trees yet! First we must put God’s seal (stamp) on His servants, on their foreheads.” I heard how many people they sealed (stamped); 144,000, all from every family in Israel.

12,000 from family named JUDAH.

12,000 from family named REUBEN.

12,000 from family named GAD.

12,000 from family named ASHER.

12,000 from family named NAPHTALI.

12,000 from family named MANASSEH.

12,000 from family named SIMEON.

12,000 from family named LEVI.

12,000 from family named ISSACHAR.

12,000 from family named ZEBULUN.

12,000 from family named JOSEPH.

12,000 from family named BENJAMIN.

 Then I looked and saw many, many people. No one could count how many people. They were from every nation, family, and language. They all stood in front of the throne and the Lamb. They wore white robes and held PALM branches. They shouted in a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God. He sits on the throne. And salvation belongs to the Lamb.”

 All the angels stood around the throne, the ELDERS, and the four living beings\*. They bowed down in front of the throne. They worshiped God and said, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength belong to our God forever! Amen!”

 Then one ELDER asked me, “These people wearing white robes, who are they? Where are they from?”

 I answered, “I don’t know, but you know.”

 He said, “These people came out of the time of much trouble. They washed their robes in the Lamb’s blood and made their robes white. That is why they are in-front-of God’s throne and every day and night they serve Him in His temple. God, He sits on the throne, He Himself will protect them. They will never again hunger. They will never again thirst. The sun and heat will not hurt them. The Lamb is in the center of the throne, and He will be their Shepherd. He will lead His people to springs of living water. Every crying-tear God will wipe away.”

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

\* Sign, four living exalted person (B-handshape, not the P-handshape)

*This is the short first reading.*

The first lesson is from Revelation chapter 7.

 John wrote: Then I looked and saw many, many people. No one could count how many people. They were from every nation, family, and language. They all stood in front of the throne and the Lamb. They wore white robes and held PALM branches. They shouted in a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God. He sits on the throne. And salvation belongs to the Lamb.”

 All the angels stood around the throne, the ELDERS, and the four living beings\*. They bowed down in front of the throne. They worshiped God and said, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength belong to our God forever! Amen!”

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This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

\* Sign, four living exalted person (B-handshape, not the P-handshape)

The second lesson is from 1 John chapter 3.

 See God’s great love for us! He calls us children of God, and we are His children. That is why the world doesn’t know us, because the world didn’t know Him.

 Loved ones, now we are God’s children. We don’t yet see what we will be. We know that when God comes, we will be like Him, because we will see God Himself. Everyone who has this hope in God will make himself pure, the same-as God is pure.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

The Gospel lesson is from Matthew chapter 5.

C: (copy) Glory to You, O Lord.

 Jesus saw the large crowds of people. So He went up on a mountain and sat down. Jesus’ disciples came, and He began teaching them. He said,

 “People poor in spirit, God blesses them. The kingdom of heaven belongs to them.

 People who mourn, God blesses them. He will comfort them.

 People gentle and humble, God blesses them. They will inherit the earth.

 People who hunger and thirst for righteousness, God blesses them. God will satisfy them.

 People who show mercy, God blesses them. God will show mercy to them.

 People who have pure hearts, God blesses them. They will see God.

 People who make peace, God blesses them. They will be named sons of God.

 When people persecute a righteous person because that person is righteous, God blesses that righteous person. The kingdom of heaven belongs to them.

 When people insult you, persecute you, and wrongly say evil things against you because you believe in Me, God blesses you. You should rejoice and be happy, because your reward in heaven is great. People persecuted the prophets the same way.”

This is the gospel of the Lord.

C: (copy) Praise to You, O Christ.