



**DAILY BREAD  
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS  
EPIPHANY 3 —YEAR A**

**INVOCATION**

L: In the name of the Father  
and of the Son +  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**G: Amen**

**PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 27**

**A: The Lord is my light and my salvation --  
of whom shall I be afraid,  
of whom shall I be afraid?**

L: Hear my voice when I call, O LORD;

**G: be merciful to me and answer me.**

L: Do not hide your face from me,

**G: do not turn your servant away in anger;  
you have been my helper.**

L: Do not reject me or forsake me,

**G: O God my Savior.**

L: Though my father and mother forsake me,

**G: the LORD will receive me.**

L: I am still confident of this:

**G: I will see the goodness of the LORD in the  
land of the living.**

L: Wait for the LORD;

**G: be strong and take heart and wait for the  
LORD.**

**A: The Lord is my light and my salvation --  
of whom shall I be afraid,  
of whom shall I be afraid?**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

L: Almighty God, you sent your Son to proclaim your kingdom and to teach with authority. Anoint us with the power of your Spirit that we, too, may bring good news to the afflicted, bind up the brokenhearted, and proclaim liberty to the captive; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**READING & MEDITATION** *see next page*

**PRAYER**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**A: Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.**

**VERSE OF THE DAY**

**A: Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching,  
preaching, and healing every disease.  
(Matthew 4:23 cf. NIV)**

**BENEDICTION**

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ  
and the love of God  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.

**A: Amen**

## READING AND MEDITATION:

**Third Sunday after the Epiphany:** Jesus appears as the light that shines in the darkness. Dark places remain covered in the shadow of sin and unbelief. Now there are, however, bright places, too, and there you find God's children. Jesus shines his light by preaching repentance and the good news of the nearing kingdom, and he invites us to follow him to a life illumined by him. Following him means living in the joy of freedom (First Lesson) and walking in the light of love for God and brother (Second Lesson).

### THE GOSPEL: MATTHEW 4:12-23

The light of the world appeared and began to cast its beams. Fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy, the bulk of Christ's ministry took place in Galilee of the Gentiles which had been so oppressed. Galileans were the first to see the light of God's day breaking over the world. From that time on, Jesus began to preach, and we hear the first public words of Jesus Christ: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near. With those words the Holy Spirit describes Jesus shining his light into the shadowed nooks and crannies of the world. From fishing boats to synagogues, from workmen to lame men, Christ cast a beacon of light into the darkened world around him with his three-fold ministry of teaching, preaching, and healing. The kingdom of heaven drew near and called God's children to follow the light and live in the light.

*My takeaways:*

### FIRST LESSON: ISAIAH 9:1-4

The story of Zebulon and Naphtali was one of suffering. These northern tribes bore the brunt of foreign attacks, most notably by Assyria. Adding insult to injury, the land had become Galilee of the Gentiles, a melting pot of resettled peoples and a hot bed of crass syncretism. It was a land covered by the darkness of gloom and unbelief. Though the people's punishment was well deserved, it was not an end to itself, but a means to God's end. God's plan broke upon them as suddenly as light shining into the darkness when Jesus appeared and began to preach and teach. He fulfilled every one of Isaiah's prophecies: he honored them with his presence; he gladdened them with his gifts; he freed them with his sacrifice for sin.

*My takeaways:*

## SECOND LESSON: 1 CORINTHIANS 1:10-17

In the second of a seven-week series of readings, Paul appeals to the church that there be no divisions among the body of Christ. There is only *one* Light—Jesus. All other ministers are merely servants of the Light. Following the light that shines in the darkness means fostering a unity of mind and thought among Christian brothers and sisters. No room remains for selfish pride or sinful divisions in the congregation. So strongly does Paul emphasize this that he is thankful he did not baptize many among them—lest anyone think that Paul was more important than the gospel he preached and thus empty the cross of its power to save.

*My takeaways:*

### SUPPLEMENTAL FIRST LESSON: ISAIAH 8:19—9:2

The supplemental selection focuses more tightly on this Sunday's theme. Man cannot find his way through the darkness of the world except by inquiring of God. No spirit, no man, no other message brings light to those living in darkness. To the law and to the testimony! There you find the Word, the great light for those living in darkness.

*My takeaways:*

### SUPPLEMENTAL SECOND LESSON: 1 JOHN 2:3-11

How can we be certain that we know God? John says, "Obey his commands." The gnostic heretics that John combatted had little regard for laws and sin and the commands of God. They felt they knew God well enough without worrying about acts of obedience. How similar to modern unbelievers and even to many Christians today! They think they know God, but they have little time for talk of sin, guilt, and obedience. John tells us that contrary to their opinion, they do not know God. Jesus, our Morning Star, has already come, and the light of his dawn is beginning to break over the world, and the time for deeds of darkness is fading fast. There are still places of deep darkness, but that is not the place to find God's children. They will be found walking in the light and shedding their own light on the darkness around them by living in love for God and brother.

*My takeaways:*

***What major theme(s) connect(s) all the lessons?***