

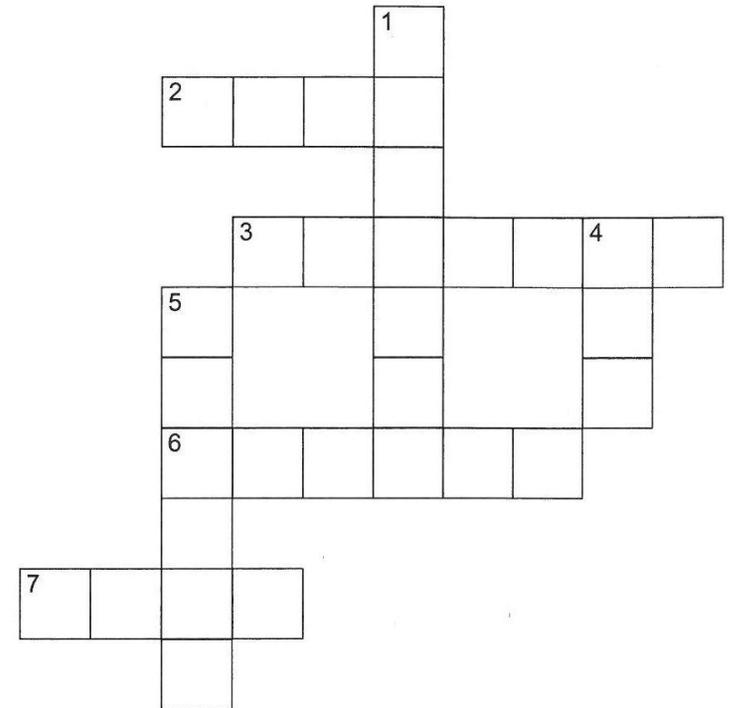
What's Happening in Sunday School?

Today's texts revolve around three major themes: messianic promise, messianic signs, and messianic deliverance. These three themes are apparent in three divisions of Isaiah's prophecy, which are then mirrored directly in the Gospel, and emphasized to a lesser extent in the Psalm and Epistle. The first division of Isaiah's prophecy, 35:1-3, sets up the *messianic promise*: God will come and save His people. The second division, 35:4-7, establishes the signs that accompany the coming of the promised Messiah (or Savior, or, from Greek, Christ); that is, the Christ performs signs of healing and restoration (of the blind, the lame, the deaf, etc.). Finally, in the third division, 35:8-10, Isaiah prophesies that God will restore His people back to a restored Jerusalem by means of the "Holy Way," a path He creates through all trial, safe from all tribulation, on which the redeemed travel. We see this pattern fulfilled in the Gospel text first with St. John's question ("are you the promised one?" (11:2-3)), then with our Lord's manifestation of the works of healing and restoration (11:4-6), and finally with Jesus' interpretation of St. John as the messenger sent to prepare the "Holy Way." (11:7-11). The Psalm repeats the same pattern - vs. 4-5 establish the promise, vs. 6-7 establish the signs, vs. 8-9 establish the theme of deliverance. As a last note, the Epistle today follows the final theme, that of messianic deliverance, and draws it into the post-resurrection Church. St. James' emphatic point is that the Christian, who has witnessed the first coming of the Messiah, is to wait with patience for the second and final coming when all of creation will be perfected and subjected to Christ. Until then, St. James' exhorts us, we are to suffer patiently, following the examples of the prophets - such as Isaiah, who was sawn in two, after all - who saw the coming of the Lord beforehand.

Digging Deeper

- *Why didn't Jesus answer John the Baptist's question directly?
- *How does Jesus' earthly ministry give us a glimpse into the kingdom of God?
- *How can we show others that we are followers of Christ?

Advent III – Year A Fun Page



ACROSS

- 2 Jesus made the deaf to ____
- 3 John the _____
- 6 The church season we are in.
- 7 Jesus raised the ____ to life.

DOWN

- 1 *John the Baptist was sent to ____ the way of the Lord.
- 4 Jesus made the blind to _____
- 5 The prophet who was read from today.