

Wednesday, December 17, 2014

Dawn Sherwood, Senior MDiv Student at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Scripture

Psalm 147:1-11

- ¹ Praise the Lord!
How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.
- ² The Lord builds up Jerusalem;
he gathers the outcasts of Israel.
- ³ He heals the brokenhearted,
and binds up their wounds.
- ⁴ He determines the number of the stars;
he gives to all of them their names.
- ⁵ Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;
his understanding is beyond measure.
- ⁶ The Lord lifts up the downtrodden;
he casts the wicked to the ground.
- ⁷ Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre.
- ⁸ He covers the heavens with clouds,
prepares rain for the earth,
makes grass grow on the hills.
- ⁹ He gives to the animals their food,
and to the young ravens when they cry.
- ¹⁰ His delight is not in the strength of the horse,
nor his pleasure in the speed of a runner;
- ¹¹ but the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him,
in those who hope in his steadfast love.

Devotional

“Let me thy inner presence feel; Thy grace and love in me reveal” (“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gate”, stanza 3, Georg Weissel, 1642; Trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1855).

When reflecting on this psalm in relation to this Advent season, I am struck by the hope that lies within the words of the Lord gathering the outcasts, healing the brokenhearted, and binding up their wounds. Although God is great and powerful without measure, the Lord continues to be present for us even when we are at our weakest. God has promised His steadfast love and is

delighted when we recognize this and are in awe of Him. We have the opportunity during this Advent season to share this hope to those who are at their weakest. For true HOPE rests in the faith of the Lord's abounding grace and never-ending love.

Prayer

Our Heavenly Father, thank you for this day and this season of hope. You promise your steadfast love to those who are weary, brokenhearted, and outcaste. We ask that your Holy Spirit guide us to people who feel this way, so that we reflect your love and grace to them, and thereby becoming instruments of the hope that lies in the faith in you. It is in the name of Jesus Christ that we pray. Amen.