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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

Each day I drive through the strawberry fields on my way to work. Working in the fields is dangerous, backbreaking, and demoralizing work. An expensive sports car briefly parts the haze of dust, manure, and pesticides whizzing toward a coastal vacation home. And the agriculture workers continue for hours either full bent over picking strawberries or being made to take their heavy loads at a run to the trucks that keep us fed. Psalm 147 reminds us of the tension between God's intension for the created order and the current reality in which we live. It presents a model for how the world ought to be in stark contrast to the reality in which we live. It gives us hope in this Advent season of waiting that the injustices and separations that plague us today will not last.

Prayer

Lord of all, help me to see those I would rather ignore. Help me to listen in a tongue I did not originally speak. Grant me the compassion and love to see all in my community as my neighbor and friend. Amen.