



## LENT DEVOTIONAL MARCH 5, 2014

# ASH WEDNESDAY

## SCRIPTURE

Psalm 147:1-11

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

As we journey through Lent together, we're going to focus primarily on the Psalms and Gospels. The lectionary cycles through the same psalms each week, so we'll read a few of them as we begin, and then switch to the Gospel of Mark when it begins on Monday. Today, we'll look at Psalm 147:1-11.

"The Lord builds up Jerusalem, he gathers the outcasts of Israel." You can't gather what is not scattered. This means the people are far from home. You don't "build up" unless something is torn down. This means Jerusalem is just a shadow of what it once was. We see this kind of action over and over in this psalm. The Lord lifts, heals, and binds, but only what is downtrodden, broken, and wounded. This psalm was written either in or after tragedy, yet notice the tone. Joy, thanksgiving, and the final word is hope. As we journey through Lent together, the tone of this psalm provides a perfect guide—one of serious reflection, but filled with hope.

*Message provided by the **Miller Summer Youth Institute**.*

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