

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

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ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 15, 2023

SCRIPTURE

PSALM 148

1 Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

2 Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!

3 Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars!

4 Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!

5 Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for he commanded and they were created.

6 He established them forever and ever;
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

7 Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps,
8 fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy wind fulfilling his command!

9 Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!
10 Wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!

11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!

12 Young men and women alike,
old and young together!

13 Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.

14 He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the Lord!

DEVOTION

The Rev. Darren Rogers '17, Board Member

Jesus taught his disciples to pray, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Psalms 148 is a beautiful illustration of all creation being encouraged to “Praise the Lord!” For all creation was created to reflect and magnify the creator’s glory. Humanity was created in the image of the Almighty to praise the Lord: “Let everything that has breath, praise the Lord” (Ps 50:6). Isaiah described mountains and hills breaking out in song while trees would clap their hands in adoration to God (Isa 55:12).

However, as our world deteriorates, and humanity marginalizes the pain of those who do not look like them, how is it even possible to come alongside the psalmist, amidst such intense suffering, and still praise the Lord?! Human nature might suggest that it is much too hard to praise the Lord when life is challenging beyond measure and that the life is too painful to voice our praise. Yet, the psalmist resolutely exhorts us to “Praise the Lord.”

Psalms 148 begins with God being praised in the highest corners of heaven by the angels and all his host. That praise flows and filters from heaven down through the rain clouds, over mountains, through fire, hail, snow, frost, and wind. It is expressed in every living creature on land, sea, and air. But the question to be answered is, will humanity come alongside of creation to glorify of the Lord through praise? The fulfillment of the Lord’s Prayer is realized when humanity joins creation to praise God. If the Lord is praised on earth as he is in heaven, then his kingdom will come, his will be done, and God’s presence will inhabit the praises of God’s people on earth as God is in heaven. Yes, we can, and must praise God in this world of pain and suffering because praising God brings the kingdom of heaven into our broken world.

PRAYER

Lord! You are worthy to be praised! Let all of heaven and earth bow before you and offer a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. You inhabit every utterance of praise that we offer to you. Help us to look beyond our present circumstances and praise you until your kingdom comes and your will is done on earth as in heaven! Amen!

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