

Lenten Devotional April 13, 2022

Scripture

Psalm 27

1 The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

The LORD is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When evildoers assail me
to devour my flesh —
my adversaries and foes —
they shall stumble and fall.

3 Though an army encamp against me,
my heart shall not fear;
though war rise up against me,
yet I will be confident.

4 One thing I asked of the LORD,
that will I seek after:
to live in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the LORD,
and to inquire in his temple.

5 For he will hide me in his shelter
in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent;
he will set me high on a rock.

6 Now my head is lifted up
above my enemies all around me,
and I will offer in his tent
sacrifices with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

7 Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud,
be gracious to me and answer me!
8 “Come,” my heart says, “seek his face!”
Your face, LORD, do I seek.
9 Do not hide your face from me.

Do not turn your servant away in anger,
you who have been my help.
Do not cast me off, do not forsake me,

O God of my salvation!
10 If my father and mother forsake me,
the LORD will take me up.

11 Teach me your way, O LORD,
and lead me on a level path
because of my enemies.
12 Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries,
for false witnesses have risen against me,
and they are breathing out violence.

13 I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.
14 Wait for the LORD;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the LORD!

Devotional

The Rev. Tara Woodard-Lehman '03

“Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me!”

We see the full, messy breadth of human emotion throughout the book of Psalms. In it are songs of hope and despair, gratitude and grief, praise and protest. More than a third of the Psalms are songs of lament that boldly express anguish and feelings of abandonment.

We see this in Psalm 27 as the psalmist cries out, “Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help. Do not cast me off, do not forsake me, O God of my salvation!”

The psalmist knew isolation and suffering. And so did Jesus. He still does. Jesus is, at the very same time, God with Us, and the God-Forsaken. He is both the source of Joy and the Man of Sorrows.

I don't know about you, but that gives me hope. Because this hurting world doesn't need a God of inspirational quotes or motivational speeches. Our world needs the God of the Psalmist, who is close to the brokenhearted and stands in solidarity with all who suffer.

I don't know what you're going through right now. I don't know what you may need to lament. You may not even know yourself. But I do know this: all of us are invited to join the psalmist and come, just as we are, offering up our whole selves to God.

Prayer

God of the Lenten journey,
Teach us to faithfully lament,
That we may freely express
Protest as praise,

And weeping as worship.
Amen.