

December 18, 2017

Psalm 122

- ¹ I was glad when they said to me,
 “Let us go to the house of the LORD!”
- ² Our feet are standing
 within your gates, O Jerusalem.
- ³ Jerusalem — built as a city
 that is bound firmly together.
- ⁴ To it the tribes go up,
 the tribes of the LORD,
 as was decreed for Israel,
 to give thanks to the name of the LORD.
- ⁵ For there the thrones for judgment were set up,
 the thrones of the house of David.
- ⁶ Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
 “May they prosper who love you.
- ⁷ Peace be within your walls,
 and security within your towers.”
- ⁸ For the sake of my relatives and friends
 I will say, “Peace be within you.”
- ⁹ For the sake of the house of the LORD our God,
 I will seek your good.

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“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the LORD!’”

These words resonate within me, for they are the words my Presbyterian pastor father-in-law often used as he began worship when our family would visit on vacation. Hearing these words signaled it was time to calm our inner conversations that we might be open to an encounter with God’s gracious and gratitude-inducing presence in our midst. It was a signal to be open to God’s peace.

Psalm 122 was originally sung by pilgrims on the way to celebrate one of Jerusalem’s major festivals. Thereafter, it was used as a song of praise for the city and a prayer for the city’s well-being. We could use a song like this one today....

As I write these devotional words, the news of late has been riddled with bad events. Shootings, hurricanes, nefarious behaviors by power players, racism, and sexism are often the lead stories on our news outlets. We could use a song of peace like Psalm 122 today...

Peace of the city...,
Peace within your walls...,
Peace within [us]....

What a blessing to remember during the Advent season that the one whom we prepare to meet is also the one in whom we rejoice, for this One is the very One who will “fill the whole world with heaven’s peace.” *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.*

Prayer

Ever-loving and ever-giving God, we thank you for your peace, which broke into this world in the cry of a tiny babe. We pray that your peace will be known once again, and as the song goes, “may it begin with us.” In the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, we pray. Amen.