

Advent Devotional December 10, 2019

Scripture

Psalm 85

*1 LORD, you were favorable to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
2 You forgave the iniquity of your people;
you pardoned all their sin.
3 You withdrew all your wrath;
you turned from your hot anger.
4 Restore us again, O God of our salvation,
and put away your indignation toward us.
5 Will you be angry with us forever?
Will you prolong your anger to all generations?
6 Will you not revive us again,
so that your people may rejoice in you?
7 Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,
and grant us your salvation.
8 Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.
9 Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.
10 Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
11 Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.
12 The LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.
13 Righteousness will go before him,
and will make a path for his steps.*

Devotional

The Rev. John T. Shaver '98

The psalmist reminds us that God throughout history continues to provide us with great gifts: “steadfast love,” “peace,” restoration—“The Lord will give what is good.”

Recently, I read a story about a missionary who was serving as a teacher in Africa. During one lesson, he took some time to share about the significance of Christmas. Later in the year, one of the students presented the missionary with an incredibly beautiful seashell before Christmas break. The missionary recognized that this shell could only be found a considerable distance from the school. When he was presented with the gift, he said, “What a beautiful shell. Thank you for traveling so far to get me such a lovely gift.” The student replied, “The long journey was part of the gift.”

As we walk through Advent, I hope you’ll join me by remembering and reflecting on God’s journey to us in Jesus Christ—the One who *brings* us “what is good.” For God’s journey in Jesus isn’t just an ordinary journey or an ordinary gift. Remember the message of the angels as they journeyed to the shepherds: “I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord” (Luke 2:10-11)—the epitome of “what is good.”

During our individual walks through Advent, may each one of us reflect on the ways in which we can share with others Christ's gifts of "steadfast love," "peace," restoration, and "great joy"—in this season and the seasons to come.

Prayer

O God, this journey of Advent stirs great excitement in us. In this season, we see anew all the good gifts you continue to bring to us through your journey to and abiding presence with us—gifts that remind us of your great love for each one of us. Please grant that in all we do and say, we will reflect your great gift of Christ our Lord to everyone we meet as we walk with you each day. Amen.