

Advent Devotional December 16, 2019

Scripture

Psalm 145

- 1 I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.*
- 2 Every day I will bless you,
and praise your name forever and ever.*
- 3 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
his greatness is unsearchable.*
- 4 One generation shall laud your works to another,
and shall declare your mighty acts.*
- 5 On the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.*
- 6 The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed,
and I will declare your greatness.*
- 7 They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness,
and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.*
- 8 The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*
- 9 The Lord is good to all,
and his compassion is over all that he has made.*
- 10 All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord,
and all your faithful shall bless you.*
- 11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom,
and tell of your power,*
- 12 to make known to all people your mighty deeds,
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.*
- 13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.
The Lord is faithful in all his words,
and gracious in all his deeds.*
- 14 The Lord upholds all who are falling,
and raises up all who are bowed down.*
- 15 The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.*
- 16 You open your hand,
satisfying the desire of every living thing.*
- 17 The Lord is just in all his ways,
and kind in all his doings.*
- 18 The Lord is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.*
- 19 He fulfills the desire of all who fear him;
he also hears their cry, and saves them.*
- 20 The Lord watches over all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.*
- 21 My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord,
and all flesh will bless his holy name forever and ever.*

Devotional

The Rev. Joan S. Hogge '04 and Dr. W. Allen Hogge '08

“God is good, God is great.” How many times did you pray that prayer as a child? Did you ever ponder what it means to say that God is both good and great? Or, like most of us, did you just repeat it as part of table grace, never really thinking about what the words meant? These simple six words in a childhood prayer tell us a great deal about the nature of the God who came to dwell among us as Jesus of Nazareth.

The writer of Psalm 145 paints a picture of both the greatness and goodness of God. God has done mighty acts and awesome works. God’s mighty deeds are known to all people. But for some of us the image of a mighty and powerful God instills fear—fear of a vengeful and judging God. The psalmist, however, sees a God whose greatness and goodness are completely intertwined. This God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in love. God is good to all God’s creation, and “his compassion is over all he has made.” This powerful God who created the universe manifests that power in gracious and compassionate love toward that creation. The psalmist reminds us that God gives us our food, satisfies our desires, and is just in all his ways. God is near to all who call on him.

God is great and God is good! God’s very nature is love. In that knowledge we can have no greater joy. “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.”

Prayer

Holy God, like the psalmist, we too praise your name for your greatness, goodness, and mercy to each one of us. We give you thanks for your abundant blessings, which come to us each day. Your mercy is there to greet us and to guide our steps throughout the day. Most of all we thank you for your great love given to each one of us in Jesus Christ. Amen.