

Advent Devotional December 12, 2021

Scripture

Psalm 150

- 1 *Praise the Lord!*
Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty firmament!
- 2 *Praise him for his mighty deeds;*
praise him according to his surpassing greatness!

- 3 *Praise him with trumpet sound;*
praise him with lute and harp!
- 4 *Praise him with tambourine and dance;*
praise him with strings and pipe!
- 5 *Praise him with clanging cymbals;*
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
- 6 *Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!*
Praise the Lord!

Devotional

The Rev. Ben Phipps '15

“Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!” It’s a refrain that’s only fitting to conclude the great prayer book of God’s people. But it may also serve another purpose—to remind us that we must choose to praise God. The psalm urges and compels us to praise the God of surpassing greatness, the God who is great and mighty, the God whose deeds are known throughout the cosmos. Yet isn’t it too often the case that instead of choosing to praise this glorious God, many of us spend our waking hours finding an excuse not to praise? Deadlines. Distractions. Disagreements. The brokenness of this world and the weight of our sin tend to smother us into a “praise-less” routine. Praising God with passion seems impossible, and we long for something to remind us of God’s greatness and power, something to compel us to praise.

Perhaps the Psalms’ final verse is the clue: “Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!” Sometimes we just need to slow down and take a breath. When we feel the air rushing into our lungs, we are reminded that we have life, and it just might compel us to praise. To praise the God who not only breathed life into humanity, but also took the form of a newborn baby in Bethlehem so many years ago, gasping for air to fill his tiny lungs for the first time. The God of surpassing greatness learning how to breathe in our midst, the God who would one day give up that breath on a hill far away.

That seems reason enough to praise. The God who gives us life came so that we too might have it! So do not delay. “Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty firmament! Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!”

Prayer

Mighty God, fill me with a longing to praise you! May I praise you with every breath I take. Thank you for coming to earth and showing us the way to your kingdom. Show me how I can choose to praise you every day of my life. Amen.

