

Advent Devotional December 6, 2023

Scripture

Psalm 50

1 *The mighty one, God the LORD,
speaks and summons the earth
from the rising of the sun to its setting.*

2 *Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God shines forth.*

3 *Our God comes and does not keep silence,
before him is a devouring fire,
and a mighty tempest all around him.*

4 *He calls to the heavens above
and to the earth, that he may judge his people:*

5 *"Gather to me my faithful ones,
who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!"*

6 *The heavens declare his righteousness,
for God himself is judge. Selah*

7 *"Hear, O my people, and I will speak,
O Israel, I will testify against you.
I am God, your God.*

8 *Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you;
your burnt offerings are continually before me.*

9 *I will not accept a bull from your house,
or goats from your folds.*

10 *For every wild animal of the forest is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.*

11 *I know all the birds of the air,
and all that moves in the field is mine.*

12 *"If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
for the world and all that is in it is mine.*

13 *Do I eat the flesh of bulls,
or drink the blood of goats?*

14 *Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and pay your vows to the Most High.*

15 *Call on me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."*

16 *But to the wicked God says:
"What right have you to recite my statutes,
or take my covenant on your lips?*

17 *For you hate discipline,
and you cast my words behind you.*

18 *You make friends with a thief when you see one,*

and you keep company with adulterers.

*19 "You give your mouth free rein for evil,
and your tongue frames deceit.*

*20 You sit and speak against your kin;
you slander your own mother's child.*

*21 These things you have done and I have been silent;
you thought that I was one just like yourself.
But now I rebuke you, and lay the charge before you.*

*22 "Mark this, then, you who forget God,
or I will tear you apart, and there will be no one to deliver.*

*23 Those who bring thanksgiving as their sacrifice honor me;
to those who go the right way
I will show the salvation of God."*

Devotion

The Rev. Charles L. Fischer III, Vice President for Seminary Advancement

*"The mighty one, God the Lord, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.
Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth." (Ps 50:1-2)*

As a child, I knew when I heard my mother or father calling out to me in the yard to come back home. Depending on what they were calling for, I could tell by their cadence and the octave as to what I should be expecting when I reached the door of the house. It was a comforting sound which assured me that awaiting my return home, even in the worst of times, a loved one was calling out to me.

This was a blessing that others may not have experienced—the voice of a loved one that brings comfort at all times.

I long to hear the voice of the mighty one. I have imagined what the voice of God the Lord might sound like, only to accept that it would be a voice that I desired and would bring comfort and assurance to me alone. Yet, I understand that to hear the voice of the Lord and to comprehend that it is good, it must be a voice that resonates with all, a soothing sound versus a clanging cymbal.

In the season of Advent, we await for the birth of the Christ child and his second coming. When Jesus was first born and laid in the feeding trough, the cry of the Lord sounded like the wails of a baby who was able to gain the attention of the angels. And who might hear his voice when he comes again? We will surely know when all the earth responds.

Prayer (Collect for the Second Sunday of Advent, *Book of Common Prayer*, 211)

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.