

Lent Devotional April 13, 2019

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 149

- ¹ Praise the Lord!
Sing to the Lord a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the faithful.
- ² Let Israel be glad in its Maker;
let the children of Zion rejoice in their King.
- ³ Let them praise his name with dancing,
making melody to him with tambourine and lyre.
- ⁴ For the Lord takes pleasure in his people;
he adorns the humble with victory.
- ⁵ Let the faithful exult in glory;
let them sing for joy on their couches.
- ⁶ Let the high praises of God be in their throats
and two-edged swords in their hands,
⁷ to execute vengeance on the nations
and punishment on the peoples,
⁸ to bind their kings with fetters
and their nobles with chains of iron,
⁹ to execute on them the judgment decreed.
This is glory for all his faithful ones.
Praise the Lord!

DEVOTIONAL

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The poems in the Psalter reflect the gamut of human emotions in their expressions of crying out to God for forgiveness and mercy, lamenting pain and our own sinfulness, praising God's majestic nature and all his creation, and much more. Psalm 149, the compendium's penultimate song, invites us to praise the Lord in a "new song." Verse 3 tells us to "praise his name with dancing, making melody to him with tambourine and lyre"—in other words, to praise God with our whole body. Thus Psalm 149 acknowledges our humanity.

For many of us, Lent is a time when we think of our bodies often—particularly if we are practicing daily fasting from food. At such times, we become more aware of our body's limits and needs. Being human is part of how God created us. He made us in his image, yet human, and he declared us good. How often do we exist disconnected from and disappointed with our bodies? A friend and mentor of mine notes, "We don't just *have* bodies, we *are* bodies." The body is the primary and only vessel in which to live one's life. We are not "brains-on-a-stick." Could acknowledging our finite and limited existence be the point at which we find true freedom to "sing a new song"—sing it in just the same way the psalmist charges us to praise and thus please the Lord?

PRAYER

Lord, we are yours, and you are ours. Help us to sing a new song. Let us worship you with the entirety of our bodies, thus bearing witness to the Incarnated One. We pray in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.