

## **Lent Devotional March 15, 2019**

### **SCRIPTURE**

#### **Deuteronomy 10:12-22**

<sup>12</sup> So now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you? Only to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>13</sup> and to keep the commandments of the LORD your God and his decrees that I am commanding you today, for your own well-being. <sup>14</sup> Although heaven and the heaven of heavens belong to the LORD your God, the earth with all that is in it, <sup>15</sup> yet the LORD set his heart in love on your ancestors alone and chose you, their descendants after them, out of all the peoples, as it is today. <sup>16</sup> Circumcise, then, the foreskin of your heart, and do not be stubborn any longer. <sup>17</sup> For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, <sup>18</sup> who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them with food and clothing. <sup>19</sup> You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. <sup>20</sup> You shall fear the LORD your God; him alone you shall worship; to him you shall hold fast, and by his name you shall swear. <sup>21</sup> He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things that your own eyes have seen. <sup>22</sup> Your ancestors went down to Egypt seventy persons; and now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars in heaven.

### **DEVOTIONAL**

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When from my backyard I look up at the sky at night, I see tall trees and a few tall buildings with neon signs. Sometimes, when the lights are off, I can see a few stars. This is city living. When I am on retreat in the desert, it is the night sky, glimmering and moving with light and color against a dark background, where I feel a different kind of awe. All those stars—they are images of God's promises fulfilled. And they remind me that God's promises involve enacting justice and service to the weak and powerless—and require the same by me.

God places God's very heart "in love on [Israel's] ancestors." In love, God is with creation, with God's people, with the world. As partakers in God's nature, we are called to follow God—not in fear, but for our own "well-being." We are commanded to serve God, heart and soul, for well-being that pursues the well-being of others also. While we may not see the stars each night, we can and do trust the divine promises they remind us of, and we take care to seek out the light in the darkness. Let us take care to see with our own eyes the beauty of serving and worshiping God alone.

### **PRAYER**

Holy God, we are to worship you alone. In doing so, help us to serve the "least of these" and take care to listen to those who seek out your light in their lives. As people who wander bright city streets, minister to others during quiet retreats, or sit with those who grieve, inspire in us awe and wonder at the ways we are privileged to join in your work, in good and faithful company with you. Amen.