



Lent reflection for March 7, 2025

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Psalm 5: 1-12

*Give ear to my words, O Lord;
give heed to my sighing.*

*Listen to the sound of my cry,
my King and my God,
for to you I pray.*

*O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice;
in the morning I plead my case to you, and watch.*

*For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;
evil will not sojourn with you.*

*The boastful will not stand before your eyes;
you hate all evildoers.*

*You destroy those who speak lies;
the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful.*

*But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love,
will enter your house,
I will bow down towards your holy temple
in awe of you.*

*Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness
because of my enemies;
make your way straight before me.*

*For there is no truth in their mouths;
their hearts are destruction;
their throats are open graves;
they flatter with their tongues.*

*Make them bear their guilt, O God;
let them fall by their own counsels;
because of their many transgressions cast them out,
for they have rebelled against you.*

*But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;
let them ever sing for joy.
Spread your protection over them,
so that those who love your name may exult in you.*

*For you bless the righteous, O Lord;
you cover them with favour as with a shield.*

Today's Reflection is from Laura Tyszka:

In this Psalm right away I noticed a strong contrast between good and evil, darkness and light, harsh judgement and delight/blessing. The writer sets it up by saying "in the morning I plead my case to you, and watch" declaring that the God he is praying to is above all good. Then he lists all the destructive and evil attributes he sees all around him. I can imagine there were some pretty bad things happening to David back then. But even today I know I recognize these attributes in our current leader and the way the people in power are trouncing on the vulnerable and "least among us". Some of the descriptions used in the Psalm describe those who speak lies, are boastful, are blood thirsty and deceitful, whose hearts are destruction, whose throats are open graves and who have many transgressions. What a list! And sadly sounding very familiar to what I'm sure many of us are witnessing now. Everyday the news brings new depths of our despair. Those in power trampling on the weak, lining their own pockets and with no regard for how these things hurt real people, showing a lack of decency and mercy.

But, and there is a but, that is not the end of the story or this Psalm. Listen to the contrasting descriptions on the other side. Words like abundance, steadfast love, refuge, rejoicing, protection, love, bless the righteous, cover them in favor, and shield. God is clearly on the side of the good and David is finding hope and joy in that, even if the evil is surrounding him on all sides. So maybe there is hope for us too. Reading this I was reminded of a quote from Anne Lamott about grace batting last, she wrote, "There is no healing in pretending this bizarre violent stuff is not going on, and that there is some cute bumper sticker silver lining...What is true is that the world has always been this way, people have always been this way, grace always bats last, it just does--and finally, when all is said and done, and the dust settles, which it does, Love is sovereign here."

Accessing this hope and joy is not easy or for the faint of heart. For David it seems to be connected to entering God's house, bowing down toward the holy temple and praying for guidance and protection. I think that realizing that there is a God who is bigger than our current

circumstance is freeing in a way. May we access the “abundance of your steadfast love” so that we will not give up wanting this world to do better.



Laura lives nearby the church with her husband Ben and 3 boys, Leo, Jesse and Gus. She is an artist and craftsperson with a small business called Wren Handmade. She's also very happy to contribute to Holy Apostles in bringing people together for crafting and creative visual arts.