



Lent reflection for March 10, 2025

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Psalm 7: 1-11

*O Lord my God, in you I take refuge;
save me from all my pursuers, and deliver me,*

*or like a lion they will tear me apart;
they will drag me away, with no one to rescue.*

*O Lord my God, if I have done this,
if there is wrong in my hands,*

*if I have repaid my ally with harm
or plundered my foe without cause,*

*then let the enemy pursue and overtake me,
trample my life to the ground,
and lay my soul in the dust. Selah*

*Rise up, O Lord, in your anger;
lift yourself up against the fury of my enemies;
awake, O my God; [\[a\]](#) you have appointed a judgement.*

*Let the assembly of the peoples be gathered around you,
and over it take your seat [\[b\]](#) on high.*

*The Lord judges the peoples;
judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness
and according to the integrity that is in me.*

*O let the evil of the wicked come to an end,
but establish the righteous,
you who test the minds and hearts,
O righteous God.*

*God is my shield,
who saves the upright in heart.*

*God is a righteous judge,
and a God who has indignation every day.*

Today's Reflection is from Tom Rigney:

The first verse reminds me of my own prayer journey. I mostly remembered to pray only when I was extremely fearful and had my back to the wall and was sure I couldn't make my dangers and problems go away. This type of foxhole prayer is not conducive to much deep spirituality; often when our prayers have been answered we un-surrender and take back our own will and forget how much we needed God's help a short time earlier. And there is something thrilling about feeling absolute abject fear; it sort of strips us of the optional.

The voice of the character in the psalm does not pray with any consistency. They act differently in each verse, veering from humble supplication to confidence and on to arrogance. In the next verse they use the linguistic convention in which they practically dare God to uncover their faults, and if there are any, to allow their enemies to punish them.

Then in the third verse they confidently call on God, directing God to deal with their enemies on their behalf. After that they appear to be asking God to recognize their winning qualities and reward them appropriately. In the closing verse they appear to recognize God's great qualities somewhat prayerfully, then make note of God's chronic indignation. Are they warning others not to disregard God?

I recognize some of my own qualities in the actions of the psalm's character. I can frequently forget God when things are going well, seeing myself as the architect of my own fortunes and accomplishments. The psalmist employs violent militaristic language to describe the universe wide conflict between good and evil. William Blake used the contrast between innocence and experience in his poetic effort to describe contrary states of the soul. For Blake, the loss of innocence was brought on by experience rather than by wrong or evil. The psalmist here clearly talks about God's dealing with evil-doing. It is tempting to chalk our wrongdoing up to mere experience, when actually our error needs to be understood through a different lens. The need and the ability to understand that our loss of innocence often leads to wrongdoing and evil is essential.



Tom Rigney came in from the chill on Maundy Thursday evening five years ago, apparently seeking and finding in our church the sense of safety he had found on Holy Thursday evenings as a kid. Nothing has made him wish to leave.

Tom and his wife Robin Bady live nearby in Kensington.