



Lent reflection for March 18, 2025

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Psalm 28:1-9

*To you, O Lord, I call;
my rock, do not refuse to hear me,
for if you are silent to me,
I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.
Hear the voice of my supplication,
as I cry to you for help,
as I lift up my hands
towards your most holy sanctuary.*

*Do not drag me away with the wicked,
with those who are workers of evil,
who speak peace with their neighbours,
while mischief is in their hearts.
Repay them according to their work,
and according to the evil of their deeds;
repay them according to the work of their hands;
render them their due reward.
Because they do not regard the works of the Lord,
or the work of his hands,
he will break them down and build them up no more.*

*Blessed be the Lord,
for he has heard the sound of my pleadings.
The Lord is my strength and my shield;
in him my heart trusts;
so I am helped, and my heart exults,
and with my song I give thanks to him.
The Lord is the strength of his people;
he is the saving refuge of his anointed.
O save your people, and bless your heritage;
be their shepherd, and carry them for ever.*

Today's reflection if from Jacob Arnold:

I have been thinking a lot about cynicism lately, looking at where it lives within me, and also witnessing its tragic effects on political discourse throughout the world. When I was younger, I delighted in tossing sarcastic comments into almost any situation (to the consternation of my high school English teachers). I loved that these comments could make people laugh, and I also think that using a mocking tone during serious discussions was a shield against taking a true and honest stance on any controversial issues. Cynicism sees what is wrong, but it doesn't put forth whole-hearted solutions.

Today, I can't look at decisions that are being made by the political leaders in our country without becoming entrenched in a cynical mindset. From callous mass layoffs, to a complete reversal on our country's international relationships, to a dismantling of so many programs that were created from a sincere hope to help others, it is difficult to look at their choices and find good in them. It seems like these actions could only be made with exclusive concern for the decision makers' self-interests. Oscar Wilde said, "A cynic knows the price of everything, and the value of nothing." A quote that captures these supposed cost cutting measures well. As I watch this parade of unjust decisions march past each week, I keep asking, how can I stop myself from a hardening of my own heart?

I think these verses touch on some of the negative thoughts swirling around in my head. The opening section suggests to me those instances that we feel God isn't hearing us - "do not refuse to hear me" - Those times we have prayers that have gone unanswered, or those moments of disillusionment that leave us feeling betrayed. Then the Psalmist gets right to it, "Do not drag me away with the wicked, with those who are workers of evil, who speak peace with their neighbors while mischief is in their hearts." I hear a reminder to search for sincerity in the world to put my heart behind. Instead of allowing my thoughts to be dragged down by these heartless choices made by our leaders; since "the Lord is my strength and my shield" then looking for people who are continuing to do good in their communities, and finding ways that God is at work in our world are where I am trying to focus my attentions.



Jacob lives around the corner from Holy Apostles with his wife Megan, their daughters Olivia and Riley Kate, and some mischievous feline friends. He loves music, enjoys running and tries to spend most of his free time outside.