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# Heart and Soul ... A Weekly Meditation

December 24, 2014

“Christ, Our Home for the Holidays”

*“Look! Your deliverer arrives, bringing reward and payment!”  
They will be called The Holy People, Redeemed By the Lord,  
and you will be called Sought After – A City That Is Not Abandoned.”*  
Isaiah 62:11b-12 (Common English Bible)

The last regular season game at Veterans Stadium, Philadelphia in 2002 was difficult for many, made more palatable by a win over the Washington Redskins. According to *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, there were those who just could not walk away without taking something – however bizarre – to remember Veterans Stadium by. After 32 seasons of play, the stadium, affectionately known as “The Vet” became something of an icon for Philadelphia; a desirable place filled with memories.

The holy city of Jerusalem was once a desirable place, brought to ruin by Israel’s enemies and forsaken. The people who once lived secure within its walls have been carried off and made slaves. They have little to remember Jerusalem by and even less reason for hope. Nearly all that is left are memories.

It is into this despair that Isaiah calls for the people to lift their heads and look, to see that their Savior is coming. God has not forgotten His people and is coming to release them from their slavery and return them to their home. God comes, and according to Isaiah, God comes to give Israel a new name, *City That Is Not Abandoned*, for the Lord delights in them and claims them as his own.

Whatever despair has enslaved you this Christmas Eve, Isaiah has a word for you: “Look, your Savior is coming.” Perhaps this year has brought financial hardship or illness has diminished the quality of life. Isaiah’s words are for you. A Savior comes and because he comes we discover that we are in a desirable place. That is because, whatever the difficulty, we belong to God.

At someone’s suggestion, fans began to choke down small pieces of the decorative cabbage outside of Vet Stadium following the Redskins game. “Then the Vet will become part of all of us”, commented one. In the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, Jesus invites us to eat bread and drink from the cup so that He, our Savior, may become part of all of us. It is then, Christ in us, that we will dwell secure.

*Prayer: Wonderful Counselor, as Christmas Eve draws to an end, remind me by nudges of the Holy Spirit that I belong to You and that nothing can ever separate me from Your love. Amen.*

Doug Hood

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