

Lent Devotional March 7, 2025

Scripture

Psalms 22; 130

Psalm 22

1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?
2 O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;
and by night, but find no rest.
3 Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
4 In you our ancestors trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
5 To you they cried, and were saved;
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.
6 But I am a worm, and not human;
scorned by others, and despised by the people.
7 All who see me mock at me;
they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;
8 "Commit your cause to the Lord; let him deliver—
let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"
9 Yet it was you who took me from the womb;
you kept me safe on my mother's breast.
10 On you I was cast from my birth,
and since my mother bore me you have been my God.
11 Do not be far from me,
for trouble is near
and there is no one to help.
12 Many bulls encircle me,
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
13 they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.
14 I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
15 my mouth is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.
16 For dogs are all around me;
a company of evildoers encircles me.
My hands and feet have shriveled;
17 I can count all my bones.
They stare and gloat over me;
18 they divide my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.

19 *But you, O Lord, do not be far away!
O my help, come quickly to my aid!*
20 *Deliver my soul from the sword,
my life from the power of the dog!*
21 *Save me from the mouth of the lion!
From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.*
22 *I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:*
23 *You who fear the Lord, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!*
24 *For he did not despise or abhor
the affliction of the afflicted;
he did not hide his face from me,
but heard when I cried to him.*
25 *From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.*
26 *The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the Lord.
May your hearts live forever!*
27 *All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the Lord;
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.*
28 *For dominion belongs to the Lord,
and he rules over the nations.*
29 *To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.*
30 *Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,*
31 *and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.*

Psalm 130

1 *Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.*
2 *Lord, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!*
3 *If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?*
4 *But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.*
5 *I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;*
6 *my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.*

*7 O Israel, hope in the Lord!
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is great power to redeem.
8 It is he who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.*

Devotion

The Rev. Rebecca D. Reeder '19

Psalm 22 begins with the raw and familiar cry, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” These words, echoed by Jesus on the cross, speak to the dark nights of the soul we all experience. When I faced the devastation of a major loss recently, my prayer was raw: “Please, God, not this, not this death.” Although I didn’t feel forsaken, the silence was heavy. Still, the psalmist declares, “you [God] are holy.” Even in the pain I felt, I saw glimpses of God—like a stranger in an airport bathroom saying, “It’s gonna get worse, but you’ll get through it.”

The psalm’s further lament, “But I am a worm, and not human,” reflects the deep pain of feeling unseen and rejected. Yet even amid those feelings, the psalmist remembers: “You [God] kept me safe on my mother’s breast.” This duality of despair and trust resonates deeply. God’s past faithfulness reminds me that even in my hardest moments, I am not abandoned.

Psalm 130 offers a similar hope. It meets us in the depths of our sorrow, where we cry out to God, not as perfect people, but as those upheld by mercy. “If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, who could stand?” These words assure us that God’s love is unending and unconditional. In this season of grief and waiting—waiting for healing, clarity, and renewal—my soul longs for God. God’s steadfast love is constant, and in God’s presence, I know we find hope.

These psalms remind us that God is present in our deepest struggles. They show us that our pain is not the end of the story. As Psalm 22 concludes, “All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord.” Even (and maybe especially) through suffering, our lives can proclaim God’s faithfulness and deliverance to future generations.

Prayer

God of steadfast love, meet us in the depths of our sorrow. When silence feels heavy and hope seems distant, remind us of your faithfulness. Sustain us through the pain, and help us trust that you are present, redeeming our struggles for your glory and our renewal. Amen.