

still waters

home church studies

Psalm 148

[Worship]

1 Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights! 2 Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host! 3 Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars! 4 Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens! 5 Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created. 6 He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed. 7 Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, 8 fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command! 9 Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! 10 Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds! 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! 12 Young men and women alike, old and young together! 13 Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven. 14 He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the LORD!"

Consider:

by Peter B. Price

Two old people greet the child Jesus in the temple. The first is the radical Simeon who, prompted by the Spirit, came to the temple (Luke 2:27). Like a sentry on guard, he has "looked forward to the restoration of Israel" (2:25). But he is under no illusions about how difficult the task will be, for as he holds the babe he says to Mary, "He is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is opposed" (2:34).

The second oldie in the temple is Anna, who "came up just at that moment and spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Israel" (2:38). Both of these oldies demonstrate true radicalism.

[Think & Pray...]

First, they expect God to act; second, they are open to a vision of God acting in history—they anticipated the restoration of Israel and the deliverance of Jerusalem. Third, they looked for the signs, however simple and ordinary—like a baby being dedicated, parents giving thanks. Fourth, they recognized the nature of the opposition, and the devastating impact of prophetic living upon loved ones—"a sword will pierce your soul too" (2:35).

The season of Advent began in hope, and with Christmas comes the promise of deliverance. But now the cost is revealed and the "secret thoughts of many laid bare" (2:35), including our own.

Reflection and Action

What secret thoughts are exposed in you as you plan to follow Jesus into the new year? Who will help you face the future?

[Scripture]

Isaiah 61.10-62.3



61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. 11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. 62:1 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. 2 The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. 3 You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.