

DEVOTIONS FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2020

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Psalm 9:1-14

¹I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.

²I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

³When my enemies turned back, they stumbled and perished before you.

⁴For you have maintained my just cause; you have sat on the throne giving righteous judgment.

⁵You have rebuked the nations, you have destroyed the wicked; you have blotted out their name forever and ever.

⁶The enemies have vanished in everlasting ruins; their cities you have rooted out; the very memory of them has perished.

⁷But the Lord sits enthroned forever, he has established his throne for judgment.

⁸He judges the world with righteousness; he judges the peoples with equity.

⁹The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.

¹⁰And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you.

¹¹Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion. Declare his deeds among the peoples.

¹²For he who avenges blood is mindful of them; he does not forget the cry of the afflicted.

¹³Be gracious to me, O Lord. See what I suffer from those who hate me; you are the one who lifts me up from the gates of death,

¹⁴so that I may recount all your praises, and, in the gates of daughter Zion, rejoice in your deliverance.

Here's a link to the hymn "Marching to Zion" for verse 14.

<https://youtu.be/mzmYuOFsYtU>

I'm not sure why the lectionary planners cut off the final six verses of the psalm. The mood changes a bit but I invite you to go look up the rest of the psalm. That said, there is plenty to reflect on without them.

Today I invite us to consider verse 1: ¹I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds. Our country's Thanksgiving Day is less than two weeks away and we might all be wondering for what can we give thanks in 2020? How can we give thanks in 2020? Even more, what wonderful deeds has God performed?

I think that final question is our starting point. Wonderful deeds can entail so many different things: wondrous works, miracles, marvels, and great wonders are other translations here. We might be inclined to look for BIG and awesome events. But what wonderful deeds of God do we experience every day?

God is always creating, providing food, and delivering us from evil. God pours out God's love upon us all, around the globe, on every people, in every land. And then, because we are called to reveal this love to others, we participate with God. We serve as stewards of creation. We work to distribute food to those who are hungry. We strive to avoid evil behaviors and seek to proclaim God's presence.

So, for what can we give thanks? For whatever ways you have seen God at work in your life and the lives of your loved ones. How can we give thanks in 2020? Well, probably not with the usual large family gathering. Instead, we might see this year as an opportunity to thank God by caring for those around us. And by allowing others to care for us in a godly fashion.

The good news is that because of Jesus' death and resurrection we are assured that God is with us. And that is a great reason to give thanks!