

December 29th – Wednesday – 5th Day of Christmas

Centering Breath Prayer: Child of light...I praise your name.

Opening Prayer:

Awesome God, how excellent is your name in all the earth! As I come before you today, I bring praises along with all of creation just because you are! I just want to stop for a little while and acknowledge your majesty and power as the sovereign Lord of everything. Thank you for creating me and this beautiful world in which you have placed me. In all your lovely names, I pray. Amen.

Scripture: Psalm 148

Key Verses: Psalm 148:13-14: (13) “Praise the Lord, because he alone is great. He is more wonderful than heaven and earth. (14) God has given his people a king. He should be praised by all who belong to him; he should be praised by the Israelites, the people closest to his heart. Praise the Lord!” (NCV).

After the disturbing scripture passage from yesterday, it is good to come back to a joyous acclamation of praise and adoration. Sometimes we need reminding of the less pleasant aspects of the world in which we live, as we were yesterday. But, it is good to return to your loving and creative nature, the one all the earth, the heavens above and the seas below praise. When we have been jolted by the darkness of evil in the world, it is good to have the solid strength of God’s presence brought back into focus. No matter how dark it gets, the Child of light, the King given to his people by God’s own self, still reigns and the darkness will be overcome by his light. It is fitting and proper to give voice to our praises. We can shout hallelujah and sing songs of praise; raise our hands, heads and hearts, dance; create artistic banners of praise; write psalms and joyous verse all to join with creation in praise of the Child of light and the Father God who sent him to us. For me, one of the ways I bring praise to the Lord is in writing these devotionals. As I sit and meditate upon the scripture passages and open myself to the creative energy of the Holy Spirit, I am filled with awe and praise for a God who can use a vessel such as myself to speak to God’s children. I sit and write and often when I reread what has come out I say, “Where did that come from?” I feel as though someone other than myself has written the words before me and I am filled with praise. Even when the words come slowly and hesitantly, there is a feeling that they are coming from somewhere other than just my own thoughts. There are times when I write a sentence or two, then I move away and when I come back the new words seem to connect with what went before. When I don’t seem to be able to write for a time I sense that the reason for this is not that God is not with me, but, rather that I am not listening. There is a sense of great joy and praise and thanksgiving every time I finish a message.

Another way I praise my Lord is through singing. God has blessed me with a singing voice which others praise. It is sometimes difficult to keep from getting a swelled head from the compliments, but I try to point to the God who gave me the voice instead of my use of it. I try to use my voice to lift God’s name in praise and even when

the songs I sing are not “religious” I try to remember whose gift it is and honor God with it. I have known people who wrote beautiful poetry in honor and praise of God and others, who are able to paint, sculpt or do wonderful charcoal drawings to bring honor and glory to the majesty of the one who has created all of heaven, earth, moon, stars, galaxies and universes. That same God rejoices with us when we use the gifts given to bring beauty and thoughtfulness to others. So, on this day, let us praise the name of the Lord using every part of ourselves. Let us join with the angels and all the heavenly host, the stars and the earth and all of creation to praise the Father, the Child of light and the Holy Spirit which dwells within us as we go along the way. Not forgetting the darkness which stills needs to be illuminated, let us offer praise and honor to the one who gives us light to overcome it. Hallelujah! Christ is born! The Child of light has arrived and the darkness will be overcome! Praise the name of the Lord!

Questions for reflection and/or journaling:

1. What are some ways I praise the Lord?
2. Do I praise God enough for the wonderful things God does for me?
3. Are there new ways I might think of in which I might praise God?

Suggestions for action:

1. Phrase for your tree: **PRAISE THE LORD**
2. Try something new to praise God today.
3. When darkness tries to get the upper hand today, stop and praise God for the light.
4. Listen to some of your favorite praise music, whether they are hymns, Christmas carols, praise and worship songs or old gospel favorites.

Closing Prayer:

Holy God, who sent the Child of light into my life, I praise your wondrous name! I lift my heart in worship and I send my prayers of praise and adoration your way. Though darkness may try to overtake me, I will return to your name in praise, letting your light shine through me. Walk with me today on the journey of love and illumine the pathway and I will bless your name each step of the way. In all your shining names, I pray. Amen.