

Psalms

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills, from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.
The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd: therefore, can I lack nothing.
He makes me lie down in green pastures: and leads me beside still waters.
He shall refresh my soul: and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me: you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.
Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 139

Lord, you have searched me, and you know me.
You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.
You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.
Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely.
You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.
Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.
If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"
even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you.

Readings from Scripture

Jesus Stills a Storm

Mark 4:35-41

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Do not worry

Paul's Letter to the Philippians' 4: 4-9

Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Poem – Lent by Ann Lewin

Lent is a time to learn to travel light, to clear the clutter
from our crowded lives, and find a space, a desert.
Deserts are bleak: no creature comforts, only a vast expanse of
stillness, sharpening awareness of ourselves and God.

Uncomfortable places are deserts.

Most of the time we're tempted to avoid them,
finding good reasons to live lives of ease;
cushioned by noise from self-discovery,
clutching at worlds success to stave off fear.

But if we dare to trust the silence
to strip away our false security,
God can begin to grow his wholeness in us,
fill up our emptiness, destroy our fears,
give us new vision, courage for the journey,
and make our desert blossom like a rose.