

March 29, 2024

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Lent



Center for Spiritual Development

WHAT NOW?

By Julie Mussché

An Excerpt from Today's First Reading

*See, my servant shall prosper,
he shall be raised high and greatly exalted.
Even as many were amazed at him--
so marred was his look beyond human semblance
and his appearance beyond that of the sons of man--
so shall he startle many nations,
because of him kings shall stand speechless;
for those who have not been told shall see,
those who have not heard shall ponder it.*

ISAIAH 52:13-15

Reflection

Late Evening in the Courtyard of the High Priest

“What have I done, what have I done, what have I done?” Simon moaned repeatedly. Leaving the High Priest’s courtyard in haste, he stumbled, blinded by tears, as he quickly made his way down Mount Zion toward the Kidron Valley. Exhausted from crying and running, he stopped to catch his breath. He thought to himself, “Where am I going?” He found a rock to sit on and as he looked down, he saw his hands shaking. Jesus had named him Peter -- “Rock, what a joke,” he exclaimed out loud. Intellections moved through his psyche: Gethsemane, Judas kissing Jesus’s cheek in betrayal, pulling his sword -- protectively impulsive -- and cutting a man’s ear, his denial of Jesus as foretold, the cock crowing. He heaved with sobs, gulping air in between.

Once he quieted, alone and groveled by shame, he thought of Jesus and knew his suffering would far outweigh Simon’s. Simon Peter then began to pray, contritely asking Hashem for forgiveness and strength, to be the “rock” that Jesus had proclaimed. He started intoning the Psalms that he had prayed since childhood and found himself growing surer and more focused. One thing he knew in his heart of hearts: God and Jesus loved him and offered forgiveness. Simon Peter, energized by this knowing, headed toward the city to find the others. They would need for him to be strong, to help bear the weight of the sorrow and fear that they all would be sharing. He continued singing his favorite Psalm as he made his way south toward the city gates.



"The Denial of Saint Peter, about 1648, Mathieu Le Nain" by Ibex73 is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.
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A very simple but powerful prayer invitation for today: in the spirit of Jesus's example on the cross, extend forgiveness to those who have done you harm. Perhaps that might include yourself.

Companioning Psalm from Today's Readings

*Let your face shine upon your servant;
save me in your kindness.*

PSALM 31:16

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