

From the Storm to Thanksgiving

Good day. Thank you for stopping by today for reflection on prayer. I am Bancroft Williams. A reading from Psalms 107: =25- 31, NIV.

Some went out on the sea in ships;

they were merchants on the mighty waters.

They saw the works of the LORD,

his wonderful deeds in the deep.

For he spoke and stirred up a tempest

that lifted high the waves.

They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths;

in their peril their courage melted away.

They reeled and staggered like drunkards;

they were at their wits' end.

Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble,

and he brought them out of their distress.

He stilled the storm to a whisper;

the waves of the sea were hushed.

They were glad when it grew calm,

and he guided them to their desired haven.

Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love

and his wonderful deeds for mankind.

Psalm 107 starts book 5 of the compilation of the prayer book in the bible. The author(s) look at the experience of being covenant people in journey with Yahweh and then leans forward, with praise. "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever (verse 1) echoes for every generation in the journey of life.

The verses read today connects commerce, risk, faith and storms. In the varied emotions of uncertainty, in face of the reality of danger, and some able to survive becoming lost in space and time, safety arrives. The certain response in building commerce and community is to acknowledge the mysterious presence of the Lord: "For God's steadfast love lasts forever."

With the landing of Hurricane Melissa with its catastrophic path of destruction of winds of over 160 miles per hour and almost a week of rainfall of about 15 inches reminds me of this text. For many of many members of the Jamaican community with family on the island are hoping all preparations will help save lives. There are some persons who have high anxiety, not leaving their vulnerable places to protect property, or have depleted emergency supplies because of the very slow movement of the hurricane, and adding to the mental stress. This is the moment of uncertainty for many.

For the one who trusts in the consistent love of God, the reality of human frailty connects the human priority of shared life. All living beings, things seen or unseen are affected by the operations of shared experience. It is in shared human experiences in the face of trouble or danger that we are humbled to trust in divine providence. After Hurricane Melissa rage, there is an end then comes the strange calm. For the people of Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, the rebuilding and regrouping is the getting back to life.

Like the Psalmist take courage to have confidence in the days to come, knowing that within the needs that will arise, as we work together for good, we are declaring:

"Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love
and his wonderful deeds for mankind."

Let us pray:

God of all creation, you place all things in motion and allow all living to recognize the extent of your love. Be with all those experiencing the terror, destruction and the aftermath of the Hurricane Melissa. Comfort, restore, and make better communities surrounded by your love for life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.