This is a rubric from page 426 of the *Book of Common Prayer*, within “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage:” “Between the Readings, a Psalm, hymn, or anthem may be sung or said. Appropriate Psalms are 67, 127, and 128.”

So, as I’ve mentioned to you before, today’s psalm is one of only three explicitly deemed appropriate for reading at a wedding.

Today we read it in this Easter season, between readings about Paul’s dream of planting the Church in Macedonia and John’s vision of the heavenly Jerusalem. The themes are big—cosmic, in places—and earthly at the same time.

There’s such expansiveness in the language of the collect and readings, frequently mentioning nations and peoples. The collect also sets the tone for this with allusions to good things *surpassing* our understanding, loving God in and *above* all things, of God’s promises that *exceed* all that we can desire.

The psalm itself—this wedding psalm—speaks in these same sweeping terms, even though it is directed primarily to an audience of two, the soon-to-be married couple. The psalmist asks for God to be merciful and to bless, well, in that case, especially the couple. Then, immediately, the focus shifts from God’s action in regard to two people in love to God’s ways being made known upon earth, “among *all nations*.” Perhaps this is to remind the couple that they do not live in a vacuum, that as they form this bond between themselves and with God they are part of a larger picture, that they are meant to participate in making God’s mercy and blessings known upon earth.

And, sure enough, the next lines speak of *all peoples* praising God, *nations* singing for joy, of all the *earth* bringing forth her increase. Then, in the last verse and a half, the focus seemingly returns to that of the first: “May God give us his blessing, and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of him.”

It seems to me that we see here the constant zooming (if you’ll excuse the term) in and out of our faith, the shift of focus from the individual to the entire cosmos.

It’s beyond our imagining, as we pray in the collect. This cosmic God who created all that ever was and ever will be—*that* God, is concerned with us and our relationships, loving us as we take our place in the epic sweep of space and time.

This love is as individual and intimate as Paul’s having a dream or Joh experiencing a vision. And it’s so grand and powerful that it—that God—affects all the nations of earth (and beyond).

This presence and power and love of God—for us Christians—is literally embodied in the Incarnation. It is the cosmic power of God born into the world as every one of us has been—as a tiny, helpless human being utterly dependent on a mother’s care. All that creative force is entrusted into the care of loving parents. It is all the universe found nursing at his mother’s breast.

Jesus tells his disciples (that’s us) that he and his Father—both part of the One God—come to us and makes their home with us. In fact, this passage from John must have been part of the inspiration for the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, that great mystery whose feast day fast approaches. In his next breath Jesus tells the disciples, “the Holy Spirit . . . will teach you everything.”

In this continuation of last Sunday’s discourse, those final words he shared on the night before his crucifixion, Jesus reassures those who have been with him from the beginning of his ministry. He says, *we* (whom we now call the Holy Trinity) will be with you. *We*, the God in all things and above all things—*we* who have been from before the beginning of all things—will make our home with you. I have been in your midst—I am one of you—and when I leave you physically, this Holy Spirit will teach you, will reinforce that which I have already taught you.

This world can be a scary place, we can almost hear him say, and the imminent events of my torture and death will be a horrific example of how true that is. You will be afraid from time to time, and understandably so, but you need not be overcome by your fears. We—this far away, distant, God—will be with you always. The Holy Spirit will calm your hearts and minds and bodies, if you will have faith and accept our loving presence in our midst and within your hearts.

Those faithful Jews, followers of their wise and loving rabbi and friend, might have heard in those words echoes of the psalm they surely knew by heart: “May God be merciful to us and bless us, show us the light of his countenance and come to us, making his “ways be known upon earth.”

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