



Starmount

2018 Advent

Daily Devotionals

Week 2: December 7th—13th

Hymn: “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

Reflections by Robert Overman

Devotion 1

*Lo, how a rose e'er blooming, from tender stem hath sprung,
of Jesse's lineage coming, by faithful prophets sung.
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night.*

This poetic translation of the original German “Es ist ein Ros entsprungen” (literally – “It Is a Rose Sprung Up”) has become a beloved hymn and carol sung in worship services and concerts everywhere during this season of Advent. Each verse has specific references to the birth of Christ.

Verse 1 speaks of a rose blooming in winter, a clear reference to Jesus' birth in harsh conditions during difficult times. His lineage can be traced to Jesse. (Tree of Jesse) His mother, Mary, is sometimes referred to as a rose which blooms, bringing forth the Christ Child – the Rose referenced here.

A most precious gift - a rose in the dead of winter when all seems desolate and bleak. What a perfect time and setting for the Savior to come! Against all odds, this Rose pierces the cold, radiating warmth and light through the darkness and bringing hope and joy for new beginnings. Let us celebrate this miracle that has founded our faith!

Prayer:

Lord, help us to look for You even in the darkest times.
Help us remember Your promise of salvation for all of us. Amen

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Devotion 2

*Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.*

To show God's love aright she bore for us a Savior, when half spent was the night.

This verse speaks of the prophecy of Isaiah (Isaiah 9:6 *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”*)

Together, with Mary, we behold this wondrous Child, born in a stable and resting in a manger. To show God's love, Mary brought forth a son according to the prophecies proclaiming God's will. This blessed event was no accident. Rather, it was the culmination of a plan set into motion by God Himself.

When the world is dark and dreary and human suffering is all too evident, look to the Rose, the Child who sows the seeds of goodwill and peace among peoples. This Advent season, let us experience the joy and wonder of the fulfillment of this promise made so long ago.

Prayer:

Lord, give us vision to see and understand your plan for us.
Grant us wisdom to believe in and follow the Christ Child
even when we think we know best. Amen

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Devotion 3

*This flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
dispels with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere.
Enfleshed, yet very God, from sin and death he saves us and lightens every load.*

Verse 3 tells of this Flower dispelling darkness and filling the air with fragrance. It also confirms that while born of flesh, Jesus is also a part of His Father, God. Because of this miraculous God-Man, we are saved from sin and death. Further, we are assured that Jesus is here with us to lighten our load throughout our lives on earth.

God's gift to us this and every Christmas season is grace, salvation, redemption and eternal life. Perhaps this is why we wait with great anticipation and why we feel such abundant joy and thanksgiving.

How unlikely, yet how welcome is a Rose in the dead of winter. The Rose blooms, not in our time, but in God's time. What a precious reminder that God is with us – even when we least expect it!

Prayer:

*Dear God, allow us to be constantly reminded that You are always with us.
When we have troubles and lose our way, You are always there -
if we will only open our eyes and see You. Amen*