

Awaken to God's Presence: Body Prayer

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

stars, light, lenten journey, heart, soul, darkness, night sky, confession, celestial bodies, spiritual practice, body, words, God

SPEAKERS

Jane Gardner, Joelle Wight

Joelle Wight 00:00

A gift of peace in the midst of troubling times. Project Zion Podcast offers this series of guided practices to help you connect with the divine. No matter where you are, and what's going on around you. Take a deep breath and allow your Spirit to find calm in the storm of life

Jane Gardner 00:29

I will put my law within them and I will write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be My keeper. Jeremiah 31:33

In this Lenten season, what is written on your heart?

Take a cleansing breath. Consider the condition of your heart.
Is it open? Is it broken? Is it vulnerable? Is it at peace?

What does it mean to know something by heart? What do you know by heart?
Consider *how* was it written on your heart?

Here are a few lines of poetry by Sarah Williams, that are written on my heart entitled "The Stars."

Though my soul may set in darkness,
it will rise in perfect light.
I have loved the stars too fondly
To be fearful of the night.

These lines are comfort and encouragement for me. They have been written on my heart through repetition and reflection. The words are always with me.

Listen again.

Though my soul may set in darkness,

it will rise in perfect light.
I have loved the stars too fondly,
to be fearful of the night.

Stars have baffled and fascinated us throughout history. They are huge celestial bodies made mostly of hydrogen and helium that produce light and heat from the reactions taking place in their cores. Their light has traveled light years when we see them twinkling here on Earth. In our galaxy alone, there are estimated to be 300 billion stars.

In your imagination, conjure a night sky with massive numbers of stars. Consider the magnificence of these stars -- the magnitude, the clarity, the burning of light.

For some, the stars represent guidance. The night sky becomes a navigational map helping travelers find their way. As a symbol, stars have often represented divine guidance, enlightenment, or light in the darkness. Think of a time when your path was illuminated. When have you experienced light in your darkness?

It can be a struggle to see the stars amid the over-brightness of our cities. Even in this manmade brightness, we can be living in darkness. Consider the stars. Are they calling you forward or, perhaps they are signaling for you to stop and simply be present with God. This is a significant aspect of the Lenten journey to stop and turn toward God. Consider the stars.

Dwell in these words of confession:

We have forgotten that we belong in you and with each other, God.

We have prioritized our own well-being, over the well-being of the whole human family.

We have forgotten the truth of our connectedness.

We have become apathetic with our resources, allowing consumption to overcome generosity.

We have forgotten that each act, no matter how small, ripples through the whole creation.

We are busy and distracted, fragmented and fatigued, attempting too much and neglecting our own souls.

We have been tempted to believe that individualism is justified greed deserved and success a measure of our worth.

In the face of these confessions, forgive us, oh God. Reconcile your people.

Consider the stars. We will close with the spiritual practice of body prayer. I will read the lines of poetry again. This time, listen closely to the words and imagine actions or postures that might express the sentiments of the poem.

Though my soul may set in darkness,
it will rise in perfect light.
I have loved the stars too fondly
to be fearful of the night.

Finally, standing or sitting, actually place your body in positions that interpret or demonstrate your understanding of the words as the lines are read. You are also welcome to say them aloud with me. May your hearts find healing and strength for the Lenten journey ahead. Now with your actions:

Though my soul may set in darkness,
it will rise in perfect light.
I have loved the stars too fondly.
To be fearful of the night.
Amen.