

Advent 2017

Week One

Monday, December 4

Prayers for candle-lighting

Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved. [*Light the candle*]

You meet those who gladly do right,

those who remember you in your ways.

Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Isaiah 64:1-3

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,

so that the mountains would quake at your presence—

as when fire kindles brushwood

and the fire causes water to boil—

to make your name known to your adversaries,

so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,

you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

When Cyrus of Persia conquers the Babylonians and the exiled Judeans are allowed to return to their own land, the people of Judah pray that God will make it clear that it was by God's power alone that they were enabled to return and to rebuild God's holy

Temple in Jerusalem. May all who are opposed to the justice of God tremble at Gods approach! To us, they bequeath a prayer that we may pray in our own time: “Tear open the heavens and come down!” “As fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil,” may we likewise be activated by God’s love.

If you want to follow up on some places where this passage reappears in the New Testament, turn to Mark 1:10, where Jesus sees the heavens torn open at his baptism, and Luke 3:16, where John the Baptist speaks of Jesus’ baptism of his followers with fire. Jesus’ disciples saw a fulfillment of Isaiah’s vision in the mission of Jesus.

For Reflection

What kinds of practices or experiences help you to catch fire spiritually?

Has God done some “awesome deeds” in your life that you did not expect?