> "Shout to the Lord, all the earth; break out in praise and sing for joy!" Psalms 98:4 NLT

[lectio] // PSALM 98

listen to the text by reading out loud slowly and repeat up to 3x if desired

David speaks to the earth, not that he owns the earth, but that he recognizes that it to is God's marvelous creation. He admonishes the planet to praise its creator. Don't think he is just speaking to the people of the earth, he is calling out to creation to return praise - "Let the sea and everything in it shout his praise! Let the earth and all living things join in. Let the rivers clap their hands in glee! Let the hills sing out their songs of joy." He asks the sea to shout, he implores the rivers to clap and the hills to sing! Have you ever listened to the sounds of the earth when it's windy or raining? Have you ever stood before the massive waves on the ocean shore and listened in awe of its thunderous applause? Have you sat by a stream or a river and actually listened to the rush of water flow by you in beautiful synchronized sounds? I stood among the tall eucalyptus trees in Nebraska as a windstorm roared through. It was like listening to a passing freight train! Those sounds are ominous and comforting. David spoke to those elements and listened in response - they were lifting great songs of praise to our creator God. The earth sings, shouts and claps every single day, all day long - can't we similarly lift our voice and praise him?

[oratio]

Dad,
I don't think the earth returns thanks or thunderous praise out of duty, forced, stodgy and stale - I think it spontaneously erupts and the sounds are like a magnificent symphony that covers the entire planet. Can I praise you with that same kind of consistency and enthusiasm? Can my life, my voice, my rhythm be a thunderous sound of praise to how good you are? Can my gratitude swell to overwhelming sounds of joy? Oh, how I want my voice, my life to be have a greater sound than the planet!

[contemplatio]

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root