

Daily Prayer

Feria

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

We enter into a time of quiet. We offer to God our selves and in the silence know that God embraces us as God's very own. We offer our hopes and our concerns through our prayers and in the silence listen for God. Today we hold in our prayers the ordinary moments in life—the trials and the joys.

We begin by saying

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry;

hold not your peace at my tears.

The First Reading

Thus says the LORD:

In a time of favour I have answered you,
on a day of salvation I have helped you;

I have kept you and given you
as a covenant to the people,

to establish the land,

to apportion the desolate heritages;
saying to the prisoners, 'Come out',
to those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves.'

They shall feed along the ways,

on all the bare heights shall be their pasture;
they shall not hunger or thirst,

neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them down,
for he who has pity on them will lead them,
and by springs of water will guide them.

And I will turn all my mountains into a road,
and my highways shall be raised up.
Lo, these shall come from far away,
and lo, these from the north and from the west,
and these from the land of Syene.

Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;
break forth, O mountains, into singing!
For the LORD has comforted his people,
and will have compassion on his suffering ones.

But Zion said, 'The LORD has forsaken me,
my Lord has forgotten me.'
Can a woman forget her nursing-child,
or show no compassion for the child of her womb?
Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you.

Isaiah 49.8-15

The Psalm

The Lord is gracious and merciful, ♦
long-suffering and of great goodness.

The Lord is loving to everyone ♦
and his mercy is over all his creatures.

All your works praise you, O Lord, ♦
and your faithful servants bless you.

They tell of the glory of your kingdom ♦
and speak of your mighty power,

To make known to all peoples your mighty acts ♦
and the glorious splendour of your kingdom.

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; ♦
your dominion endures throughout all ages.

The Lord is sure in all his words ♦
and faithful in all his deeds.

The Lord upholds all those who fall ♦
and lifts up all those who are bowed down.

The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord, ♦
and you give them their food in due season.

Psalm 145.8-15

The Gospel Reading

Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise. The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing; and he will show him greater works than these, so that you will be astonished. Indeed, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomsoever he wishes. The Father judges no one but has given all judgement to the Son, so that all may honour the Son just as they honour the Father. Anyone who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent him. Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgement, but has passed from death to life.

'Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; and he has given him authority to execute judgement, because he is the Son of Man. Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and will come out—those who have done

good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

'I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge; and my judgement is just, because I seek to do not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

John 5.19-30

We continue with the reflection that follows. In silence, we ask what the reading has to say to us today. Is there something in the reflection that draws us more deeply into the reading? What does God have to say to us? What do we have to ask God?

The Reflection

The Rev'd Andrew Kuhl

In times of crisis, it can be hard to see the way that God is at work. It can feel painfully slow, or it can even seem like Zion, like the people of Israel puts it, "The Lord has forsaken me, my Lord has forgotten me.". Wars rage, injustice happens in laws, and bills, news of misconduct and misdeeds abound. The question hangs, 'Where is God in all of this?'

The exiles that the Prophet Isaiah was writing to also felt that way. They had been carted off to live in exile, taken to a far away land. Far from the place they knew as home. And many years had passed, I could imagine them receiving news that God was about to act to bring them home, and like the prophet puts it they scoff and say, "The Lord has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me."

In response to this imagined reaction, the prophet Isaiah offers a stunning image of God, asking a rhetorical question to highlight how God is like a mother, underscoring God's promise to this people.

"Can a woman forget her nursing-child,
or show no compassion for the child of her womb?"

Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you."

God is a mother, who hears the cry of her children and will remember them.

Isaiah uses this language despite the ways that parents can forget, or neglect or show no compassion, because God is so completely other in God's persistence of love. God is mother drawing near to the pain, the needs, and lovingly and caringly taking care of us. God is a mother.

And while that can be hard to see, in days like ours, it is an invitation to dare to hope, that God has not forgotten, God has not lost sight of us.

Though to know hope that requires courage, to go to the place that parents go, which is to go close to the needs, the compassion, the love, to be vulnerable enough to be wounded. To find ourselves in union with Jesus who shows us that path. The path that lead him to become human, to suffer death on the cross, and gives us the hope and promise of resurrection and life abundant. And in the season of lent we are invited to intentionally turn our lives and change the path we are on to join with Jesus in that journey, and encounter that abundant love of God.

When the time is right, we conclude our time of silence with the canticle

The Canticle ~ A Song of Peace

*Spirit of God, teach us your ways,
that we may walk in the paths of peace.*

Come, let us go up to the mountain of God, ♦
to the house of the God of Jacob;

That God may teach us his ways, ♦
and that we may walk in his paths.

For the law shall go out from Zion, ♦
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

God shall judge between the nations, ♦
and shall mediate for many peoples.

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, ♦
and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, ♦
neither shall they learn war any more.

O people of Jacob, come: ♦
let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.

*Spirit of God, teach us your ways,
that we may walk in the paths of peace.*

Isaiah 2.3-5

*We continue in prayer for those people and situations that we hold up before God (The Intercessions)
and continue with the concluding collect, the Lord's prayer and the closing sentences.*

The Intercessions

For the one holy catholic and apostolic Church throughout the world, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the mission of the Church, that in faithful witness it may preach the gospel to the ends of the earth, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those preparing for baptism, for our catechumens and for their teachers and sponsors, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For peace in the world, that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow among nations and peoples, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer; for refugees, prisoners, and all in danger; that they may be relieved and protected, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all whom we have injured or offended, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For grace to amend our lives and to further the reign of God, we pray to you, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Our prayers conclude

God our guide,
in the wilderness we hear your voice,
and when we are lost you come to call us home.
Direct our steps on this journey of life,
take from us the lies of self-deception
and the apathy that enables us to turn aside from others' pain,
and bring us to a knowledge of your love
so deep that we can dwell there with both honesty and peace,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[let us pray as our Saviour taught us,]

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen

We conclude

This is love, not that we loved God.
But that he loved us and sent his Son.
He is the sacrifice for our sins,
that we might live through him.
If God loves us so much
we ought to love one another.
If we love one another
God lives in us.

Credits:

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The Intercessions: Book of Alternative Services © 1985, The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada

The Collect: The Canterbury Book of New Parish Prayers © 2021, M J Kramer, Canterbury Press

The Concluding Sentence: Common Worship: Lent © The Archbishops' Council 2005 and published by Church House Publishing.

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