



Daily readings, reflections and prayers

Monday 17th – Sunday 23rd August 2020

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Readings – Psalms 98:1-9; 1Corinthians 11:2-34

Reflection – Psalms 98:1-9

- The Psalmist calls people to worship God in song and music. Read Verses 4 to 5 where he begins with the words, “make a joyful noise unto the Lord...”
- And yet, I find myself asking, how can I praise God? Where do I even begin from. When we look at the tragedy in Lebanon and other parts of the world suffering, people dying in the sea trying to cross the English Channel and a few making it. **How do I even praise the Lord?** What is there to praise?
- And yet, I find comfort in the words of this Psalm. It is a Psalm of hope. God is with us. For in our sinfulness and selfishness we have ruined creation beauty and destroyed the environments around us. Where do we turn to? Except to God.
- This Psalm is a call for us to turn to God and praise the Lord. This is a call to sing, shout for joy, play instruments, and even applaud in our celebration of God for we need God (Read verses 4 to 7).
- We are called to worship the Lord who is our Saviour (V1-3), King V4-6 and our Judge V7-9.

- As we read this through the lens of Jesus, we can see this as a prophetic psalm. Jesus is the one at God’s right hand who has worked salvation V1. Christ has made God’s salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations V2.
- My encouragement to us all is that during all these tragedies our world is facing today, we can hope and keep putting our trust in God. For these things are recorded in scripture.
- We should have a joyful anticipation of the universal restoration of all things when the Saviour will come to judge the earth (Psalms 98:9). All creation will be restored again (V7-8). As St Paul put it, ‘creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.
- God’s creation will be set free from bondage when Christ returns, and will be brought into glorious freedom of the children of God (Romans 8:19-21)
- Despite what you/we may be going through now, whether sickness, loss, unemployment, mortgage worries, be rest assured that God is with you. I pray that you will be restored in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.
- This Psalm is a growing music of praise – from the worshipping community of the people of God (98:1-3), to all people (V4-6), and finally to all creation (V7-9)

Prayer:

Lord, I worship you. Thank you for saving me. Thank you that I can worship you with joy, jubilant songs, music, and shouting. Thank you that I can be confident in the fairness of your judgement – you will judge the world in righteousness and the people with equity. And bring everything back to order. Amen.

Readings – Psalms 99:1-9; 1Corinthians 12:1-29

Reflection – Psalms 99:1-9

- We have been created to have a close relationship with God (intimacy). It is personal. This intimacy with God is not to be taken for granted. God is mighty, holy, and just (V9)
- In verse 1, the Psalm says, “the Lord is King...He sits on the cherubim...let the earth, quake! The Cherubim are the symbol of God’s holiness (Gen 3:24; Ezekiel 1:4). This is the place from which God speaks
- This Psalm brings to light, the holiness of God. The word Holy here (Psalm 99:3) emphasises the distance between God and human beings. God is not only mighty and holy; he is also just: ‘he loves justice (V.4). The appropriate response is to worship at his footstool’ (V.5).
- But we must thank God that now, the coming of Christ and for what he did for us at the cross of Calvary, changed everything for God. There is no bridge anymore. We can come to God anytime.
- This Psalm, therefore, anticipates the intimacy with this God of power, holiness and justice made possible through Christ
- This same God who spoke to Moses, Aaron, and Samuel individually (v.6), can speak to us as well. We just need to have a relationship with God. Talk to God about your situation, thank God for the things God does for you.
- Moses and the others prayed to God and God answered their prayers. Today, may the Lord answer your/our prayers. Amen.
- Not only is God the God of justice. God is a God of mercy and forgiveness – a forgiving God’ (V.8). This God is our God (V.8-9)
- God’s majesty is undiminished. But the last word is now given to intimacy.

Prayer:

Lord, it is amazing that you are all-powerful, holy, and just, yet you call us into an intimate, personal relationship with you. Thank you that you are my God.

Readings – Psalm 100:1-5; Song of Songs 5:1-8:14

Reflection – Psalms 100:1-5

- This Psalm encourages us to ‘shout for joy to the Lord...to worship the Lord with gladness (V.1-2)
- We are encouraged to enter the presence of the Lord with thanksgiving and praise (V.4)
- Why should we give thanks to the Lord?
- V.5 – the answer is, ‘for the Lord is good and his love endures forever. God’s faithfulness continues through all generations.’
- God is good and he loves us. This sums up the message of the entire Bible.
- It is God’s love that is the source of our love: ‘we love because God first loved us’
- 1John 4:19, we need to understand, believe, and accept that God loves you and I. Today, let us begin to enjoy God’s love for us.

Prayer:

Lord, I thank and praise you for your amazing love for me. Thank you that your love endures for ever. Help me to enjoy your love today and to love others the way you love me.

Readings – Proverbs 20:15-24; 1Corinthians 14:1-19

Reflection – Proverbs 20:15-24
Listen to wisdom & knowledge

- One of the ways in which we can hear the voice of the Holy Spirit is through the wise advice of others.
- Wise and knowledgeable people are invaluable (Read verse 15)
- Seek help when making important decisions: 'make plans by seeking advice' (V.18). You will still be responsible for your actions though (read V.18)
- The book of proverbs is itself full of wise advice. It teaches you to be careful of gossips who betray confidence, and to avoid people who talk too much scandalising other people to bring them down, (Verse 19).
- Nick Gumbel advises that, 'if you haven't got anything good to say about anyone come and sit by me.'
- Another advise, do not revenge, let the Lord fight the battle for you (V.22)
- Listening to the Holy Spirit means listening to the word of the Lord. 'A person's steps are directed by the Lord. How then can any understand their own way?' V.24.
- We need to take time to listen to the Holy Spirit as he speaks to us through the scriptures.

Prayer:

Lord, thank you that your Holy Spirit speaks to me through the scriptures. Help me to hear and obey your voice. Amen.

Readings – Psalm 101:1-8; 2Chronicles 13:1-15:19

Reflection – Psalms 101:1-8

- David sings of God's love and justice (V.1). And we see in this verse as well. That God is loyal to us. Therefore, God sent his Son Jesus Christ to save us. Many times, people who are loyal to others, will always find ways of helping them do right.
- We talk a lot about about God's love but not so much about God's justice, which is just as important,
- Love without concern for justice, is not true love, as love cries for justice.
- We see for instance, in Lebanon, the people have been calling out for justice. It is great to see the international community helping and speaking up to say that the gifts donated will have to be used wisely with accountability.
- Only the blameless V2-6, can dwell with God V.6, minister to God, and stand in the presence of the Lord V.7.
- Slander, pride, and deceit are the sins of the mouth, heart, and actions (V.5-7. As we seek God and grow in our spiritual journey, we must show and display maturity so that none of these issues hinder the church from growing into a healthy church.
- How do you respond when other bring an issue to you about someone you know in the congregation? Do you join the bunter and slander that person? Or do you advise them to speak to that person? What would Jesus do?
- It is our duty and role as Christians, to overlook other people's weaknesses and praise their strength and gifts which they share with us as a blessing. It is our duty to pray for them to be strong in their weaknesses.
- Let us thank God for the cross, where love and justice mingle – truth and mercy meet. This is where God is both just and justifies the one who has faith in God (Romans 3:23-26).
- Without the cross of Jesus Christ, we would be cut off from the Lord (Psalms 101:8).

Prayer

Father, thank you that through our Lord Jesus Christ, we have been justified by faith and have peace with you (Romans 5:1). Help us to bring this message of love, justice, and peace to the world. Amen.

Readings – Psalms 102:1-11; 1Corinthians 15:1-34

Reflection – Psalm 102:1-11

The Brevity of life

- The Psalmist is aware of how short life is: 'for my days vanish like smoke (V.3) My days are like the evening shadow; I wither away like grass (V.11). He has this sense that time is running out. Life on the earth is so short. Make the most of every day.
- V1-2, the Psalmist is suffering, he cries out,
- 'Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry of help come to you. Do not hide your face from me when I am in distress. Turn your ear to me; when I call, answer me quickly
- This is a striking example of wholehearted commitment to God, even in the midst of distress. Choose to turn to God. Know that God is eternal (V.12) and that God can be trusted.
- Each day you wake up, thank the Lord that you are up. Commit your plans to the Lord, pray for protection from harm and all troubles. And then ask God to help you with your day to get things done, and to be fruitful.

Prayer:

Lord, I thank you that, while my life is 'like the evening shadow', you are eternal, and I can trust you. I lift my problems before you now (present your problems to the Lord here). Heavenly Father let my cry for help come to you. We pray and ask all these things in Jesus name. Amen.

Readings – Psalms 102:12-17

Reflection – Take time to Reflect through this past week.

- What has happened? What challenges did you face? How do you feel the Lord responded and helped you?
- Have you managed to pray every day asking God for your protection, help and guidance?
- In terms of the past week what stood out for you in the readings?

Prayer:

Lord, I cry out to you to rebuild the church in this nation and throughout the world. Send your Holy Spirit, upon us again and our nation, I pray. Amen