

Service at Home for Sunday 11th July 2021

Prepared by Joss Kingsley

Call to Worship

Praise the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.

² Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness. ³ Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, ⁴ praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe, ⁵ praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. ⁶ Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD. Psalm 150:1-6

STF 244

1 Blest are the pure in heart,
for they shall see our God;
the secret of the Lord is theirs,
their soul is Christ's abode.

2 The Lord, who left the heavens
our life and peace to bring,
to dwell on earth in lowliness,
our pattern and our King;

3 Still to the lowly soul
he does himself impart,
and for his dwelling and his throne
chooses the pure in heart.

4 Lord, we your presence seek;
a vision of your face;
give us a pure and lowly heart,
a temple of your grace.

vv.1,3 John Keble (1792-1866) vv.2,4 William John Hall

Prayer of Adoration

Lord we thank you for being our creator and our sustainer. We thank you for the beautiful world you have created, the beautiful flowers that we see blossoming, the different shades of green leaves we see on the trees, and the beautiful bird songs we hear every morning. You created it all for us to enjoy and you sustain its life. We thank you for the beautiful sunshine which makes us feel happy and brightens up our day, and helps the plants to grow. And we thank you for the rain we need to help things grow. We thank you Lord for your love to us, which we see everyday in all these things which surround us. Amen.

2 Samuel 11: 1-15

David Commits Adultery with Bathsheba

In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him; they ravaged the Ammonites, and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

It happened, late one afternoon, when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful. David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, 'This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.' So David sent messengers to fetch her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.) Then she returned to her house. The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, 'I am pregnant.'

So David sent word to Joab, 'Send me Uriah the Hittite.' And Joab sent Uriah to David. When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab and the people fared, and how the war was going. Then David said to Uriah, 'Go down to your house, and wash your feet.' Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king. But Uriah slept at the entrance of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. When they told David, 'Uriah did not go down to his house', David said to Uriah, 'You have just come from a journey. Why did you not go down to your house?' Uriah said to David, 'The ark and Israel and Judah remain in booths; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do such a thing.' Then David said to Uriah, 'Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back.' So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day. On the next day, David invited him to eat and drink in his presence and made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

David Has Uriah Killed

In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. In the letter he wrote, 'Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, so that he may be struck down and die.'

Ephesians 3: 14-21

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Sermon Based on Ephesians 3 14-21

Paul writes this letter to the Ephesians whilst chained to a Roman guard, he is being held and waiting for his fate to be decided by one of the worst Emperors possible Nero. Who was actively rounding up Christians and having them imprisoned after he beloved they caused a great fire in Rome. Paul was fearful and knew he was coming to the end of his life, he was possibly around 59 to 61 years old and he writes the Ephesian church.

I remember in my first church that in our pew there were knee pads hanging off the back of the row in the front of us. They were made by the congregation members beautiful in painstaking designs and sometimes with scripture. It seemed a shame that they were never used, I remember kneeling for Sacrament and still do in some churches today but the idea of Kneeling seems to have disappeared from a lot of churches over the years.

There is nothing more humbling then kneeling to God and Paul suggests this at the beginning of verse 14, when he says, 'I bow my knees before the Father.' We need to sometimes approach God with the right frame of mind, and kneeling not only makes you feel like you are looking up to the heavens, it also reminds us how small in comparison we are to his Greatness, in everything.

When I first became a local preacher, in 2011, I remember one of my first services, that the nerves hit me so hard, that I was frightened my voice would vibrate nervously, or I would squeak. I also feared I would need the toilet during the service, and I could feel a wave of panic approaching. I made the excuse on needing the toilet, so I could gather myself together and not look so awfully scared in front of the steward. I promptly fell to the toilet floor, kneeled and prayed to God to help me get through the service. I now continue to do this right up to now; I kneel to God in every toilet around the circuit! As I approach Him and remember what an honour it is to serve him.

Pauls passionate prayer here is for his church and like all good ministers, he is praying for his congregation. He is asking for the power to be strong within his members, and inwardly through the spirit. Paul reminds them that the spirit dwells within them, and with Gods power in us, God can do much more than anything we can ask or imagine. Verse 20 tells us so.

We often don't put a great deal of thought into our prayers, but with Paul here, he is asking for his holy people who have the power to understand the greatness of Christs love. He uses the term in verse 18, how wide and long and high and deep that love is. The people of Ephesus would have been familiar with this sort of expression, it was a hub of many different religions and beliefs, and there was alot of potions and spells which used the term of how long, wide, high and deep, so Paul uses this term to tell them that Christs love is greater than anyone ever know. He wants them to know that love and that you can be filled with the fullness of God. To give you an idea of what he means, imaging you are a hotel, with many rooms. Some rooms are filled with bedrooms, lobbies, bars, etc. You are not to be filled with these other rooms; God should be packed into every room available. Everything you do should involve his fullness, and this is what Paul means in verse 19when he says you can be filled with the fullness of God.

We must humble our hearts when we pray, remember we are in the presence of God, the creator of all things. Revelations tells us of the angels kneeling around his throne. So must we kneel, if able, in our minds and hearts, when we come to him, in prayer, to commit all things to God.

Amen.

STF 503

Love divine, all loves excelling
Joy of Heaven to Earth come down
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling
All Thy faithful mercies crown
Jesus, Thou art all compassion
Pure, unbounded love Thou art
Visit us with Thy salvation
Enter every trembling heart

Come almighty to deliver
Let us all Thy life receive
Suddenly return and never
Never more Thy temples leave
Thee we would be always blessing
Serve Thee as Thy hosts above
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing
Glory in Thy perfect love

Finish then Thy new creation,
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation,
Perfectly restored in Thee:
Changed from glory into glory,
'Til in Heaven we take our place,
'Til we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love and praise!

Charles Wesley (1707-88)

Prayer of Intercession

Father we come to in Prayer and humbly bring to you the worries that are happening on your planet. We pray for all our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world, particularly those who are persecuted for their beliefs and love for you. We pray for protection and guidance and support for them. We also pray for our churches around the world, that our congregations will grow and many will come to you through their doors. We pray for the Southampton and our churches within it, that they may meet the needs of the members and the communities around them, that they shine the light in this great city. We pray for our government as they bring us out of lockdown that they follow your desires and your plans for our nation, as we adjust to the change of regulations. We pray for wisdom for all those in authority and who make policies. Help all the children who are struggling at school, suffering from anxiety and mental health issues, and who have been affected by the pandemic, give them your love and peace in their heart. We ask all this in Jesus name.

Lords Prayer

STF 370

1. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.
2. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do and to endure.
3. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glows with Thy fire divine.
4. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine eternity.

Edwin Hatch (1835-89)

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you,
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face towards you
and give you peace;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**