

## Worship at Home 14 March 2021 – Lent 4

A short act of worship for use in people's homes, provided by Erica Gassor.

Today we continue our Lent worship series, Worship in the Wilderness – the theme today is 'A Sacrificial Journey'. The outline for worship and some of the material has been prepared by Sam and Sara Hargreaves from Engage Worship as indicated.

### Call to worship <sup>1</sup>

'Do good and share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased'. (Hebrews 13:16)

### Opening prayer <sup>2</sup>

Jesus, you made the way for us to come and worship the Father.

As we see your sacrifice, lead us in the way of the wilderness,  
the way of the cross, the way that leads to eternal life. Amen

**HYMN** STF 287 Isaac Watts (1674-1748) [Click here to join in](#)

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| 1. When I survey the wondrous cross<br>on which the Prince of Glory died,<br>my richest gain I count but loss,<br>and pour contempt on all my pride.         | 3. See from his head, his hands, his feet,<br>sorrow and love flow mingled down;<br>did e'er such love and sorrow meet,<br>or thorns compose so rich a crown? |
| 2. Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,<br>save in the death of Christ my God;<br>all the vain things that charm me most,<br>I sacrifice them to his blood. | 4. Were the whole realm of nature mine,<br>that were an offering far too small;<br>love so amazing, so divine,<br>demands my soul, my life, my all.           |

**READING** Isaiah 53:1-12 <sup>1</sup> [Click here to listen](#)

<sup>1</sup>Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? <sup>2</sup>He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. <sup>3</sup>He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

<sup>4</sup>Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup>But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

<sup>6</sup>We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. <sup>7</sup>He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. <sup>8</sup>By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished. <sup>9</sup>He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

<sup>10</sup>Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.

<sup>11</sup>After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. <sup>12</sup>Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

### **Prayers of adoration and confession**

Father God, over the centuries your amazing love has encircled humankind, led us and shown us the way through your son Jesus Christ. We stand in awe of your creation, the world in which we live, the beauty of our surroundings, the complexity of the animal kingdom and the human race. Father, God, we thank you for these gifts and your unending care for each one of us.

Father God, we lower our heads before you and we confess that we have too often forgotten that we are yours. Sometimes we carry on our lives as if there was no God and we fall short of being a credible witness to you. For these things we ask your forgiveness and we also ask for your strength. Give us clear minds and open hearts so we may witness to you in our world. Remind us to be who you would have us to be regardless of what we are doing or who we are with. Amen

**Reading** Hebrews 10: 19-25 <sup>1</sup> [Click here to listen](#) from 2:40 to 3:35.

<sup>19</sup>Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup>by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, <sup>21</sup>and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup>let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup>Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup>And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup>not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

**Hymn** STF 446 <sup>3</sup> [Click here to join in](#)

I will offer up my life in spirit and truth,  
pouring out the oil of love as my worship to you.  
In surrender I must give my every part;  
Lord, receive the sacrifice of a broken heart.  
*Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring  
to so faithful a friend, to so loving a King?  
Saviour, what can be said, what can be sung  
as a praise of your name for the things you have done?  
O, my words could not tell, not even in part,  
of the debt of love that is owed by this thankful heart.*

You deserve my every breath for you've paid the great cost;  
Giving up your life to death, even death on a cross.  
You took all my shame away, there defeated my sin,  
opened up the gates of heaven, and have beckoned me in.  
*Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring*

**Reflection:**

As it says in John 15: 13 'Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends'. Indeed!

Jesus set the example for us all to follow in His ultimate sacrifice and we have seen amazing sacrifices in war and in many individual instances which we hear of in stories of courage and dedication. There are of course differing degrees of sacrifice and I also think that it is very apt that this Mothering Sunday has the theme of 'sacrifice'. Parents, and perhaps in particular mothers, sacrifice so much for their children, sacrificing careers, freedom, time and many, many other aspects of life. When I think back to how my mother gave up so much of her time to teach us the important things in life, to love, to care, to be honest, to have integrity and a good work ethic and, of course, the three 'R's. She went without so much so that we were well clothed and fed and this still continues today with many parents going without so that their young ones have sufficient. A parental role is a very sacrificial role and even continues into the children's adult lives.

Sports men and women also sacrifice many different things to achieve their success and without that hard work and dedication, they would not reach their goal. Everything I have ever tried in life has always been much harder than I first thought it would be and has required that extra effort and commitment. Professionals make their achievements look easy but behind the ease of performance there is always hard work and sacrifice.

There are of course some sacrifices which, on reflection, were not a good choice. I once worked for a very successful businessman who owned a beautiful house, had a large car, had lovely holidays and privately educated his three daughters but he was never at home – always working hard to ensure that they could afford the lifestyle they had created. On the noticeboard in his office was a picture of him that his middle daughter had drawn which just said – 'Miss you Daddy – Love Emily xxx'. I always tried to persuade him to go home earlier and attend the school sports days etc. but there was always some money making task which was more important.

I am sure we all sacrifice our time, stability, personal life, sleep, health and stillness at times due to the pressures of life but it is important to ensure it is for the right reason and if so, to do this willingly and not grudgingly. How often do we get a call to do something, when we would prefer to relax, get a call to go somewhere, when we would rather just 'chill', how often do we groan when we get called upon to make that 'sacrifice'. I am sure that each of us has that inner selfish self which wishes we could just ignore the task and carry on doing exactly what we wanted to. It is times like that when I pull myself up and think of the amazing sacrifice that Jesus made, moving forward in a resolute way, knowing what had to be done. How dare I even think of ignoring the task or request in hand or do it grudgingly. Christ is our constant example of how we should react and live as we move forward as willing servants of our Lord. Amen

**Prayers of intercession**

I will offer up my life in spirit and truth, in spirit as I work for you in this world, doing your will, being your disciple on earth in a willing and humble way to help those who are suffering– suffering from loss, from pain, from fear, from loneliness, from poverty, from depression. Show me how I can stand beside those who are in need.

There is such a great need in this world, never let me turn away and pretend I cannot see it, pretend it is not my business, pretend it does not exist.

I may think I am too busy, or too tired, or do not have the skills and talents to help but you Father God, can show me what I can do, however small, to help someone in need, to be near them and show them your love.

And Father on this special day, we remember and thank you for all mothers and their sacrifices and for Mother Church and thank you for their guidance in our lives. Amen

## **The Lord's Prayer**

**Hymn SF 168** William Rees (1802-1883) [Click here to join in](#)

Here is love vast as the ocean,  
loving kindness as the flood,  
when the Prince of Life, our ransom  
shed for us his precious blood.  
Who his love will not remember?  
Who can cease to sing his praise?  
He can never be forgotten  
throughout heaven's eternal days.

On the Mount of Crucifixion  
fountains opened deep and wide;  
through the floodgates of God's mercy  
flowed a vast and gracious tide.  
Grace and love, like mighty rivers,  
poured incessant from above,  
and heaven's peace and perfect justice  
kissed a guilty world in love.

## **Blessing**

The love of the Lord Jesus, draw you to himself,  
The power of the Lord Jesus strengthen you in his service,  
The joy of the Lord Jesus fill your hearts;  
And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen

## **Acknowledgements**

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