

Worship@Home 17th September 2023

With Revd David Speirs

Opening Prayer:

Come, let us bless the Lord! For the Lord is a good parent to his children
compassionate and merciful,
filled with endless love. The Lord forgives our sins,
and heals the sickness inside us; The Lord surrounds us with love and
mercy and fills our lives with good things!
Let's worship the Lord our God together!

Adapted from 'RE:Worship'

https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2013/07/call-to-worship-psalm-103_4412.html

STF 65 - Sing of the Lord's goodness.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWwa0eF-jyA>

Sing of the Lord's goodness, Father of all wisdom,
come to him and bless his name.

Mercy he has shown us,
his love is for ever, faithful to the end of days.

*Come, then, all you nations,
sing of your Lord's goodness,
melodies of praise and thanks to God.*

*Ring out the Lord's glory,
praise him with your music,
worship him and bless his name.*

Power he has wielded, honour is his garment,
risen from the snares of death. His word he has spoken,
one bread he has broken, new life he now gives to all.

Come, then, all you nations...

Courage in our darkness, comfort in our sorrow,
Spirit of our God most high; solace for the weary,
pardon for the sinner, splendour of the living God.

Come, then, all you nations...

Praise him with your singing, praise him with the trumpet,
praise God with the lute and harp; praise him with the cymbals,
praise him with your dancing, praise God till the end of days.
Come, then, all you nations...

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One Licence Song Number: 80537

Please read: Psalm 103

<https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=463729365>

Time to Reflect

The Book of Psalms is frequently cited as being one of the most popular texts found within the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) due to the beauty of the poetry contained therein. It is also, possibly, one of the more challenging to translate from Hebrew into English. There is always a risk that something is being lost in translation, in particular the overtones of emotion or the nuance in the meaning of certain words that come with the Hebrew text. I am not a Hebrew scholar, and although I studied New Testament Greek as an undergraduate, biblical linguistics has always been something that has challenged me. I therefore rely on the various commentaries that have been produced by academics who understand not only the biblical languages but the full social and historical context in which texts were written. I also try to read scripture using different English translations whilst looking at what the commentators say about them and the translation of particular words or verses.

Yet the alternate Psalm that we have from the lectionary for this Sunday, Psalm 103, seems to have a very clear message regardless of which translation you are seeking to use.

You have here a hymn of praise that is intensely personal:

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name.

The starting place within the Psalm is an outburst of thanksgiving and blessing towards God. It then moves into being a song all about the steadfast love and mercy and justice of God. Stressing Yahweh's character of goodness, compassion, faithful love, not just for humanity but for the whole of creation.

Psalm 103 is a gift for those suffering through a season of low affection; particularly when you are struggling with your faith and when your spirituality seems dry. It is a reminder that in all that we are experiencing and going through, God is good and God's presence and being is constant. In the passage the author, attributed as David, reminds himself about the good things that God has done, through God's justice and liberation, holding on to the truths of God's character and nature.

In the psalm, the author is certain that it is not just that God loves us but that God himself embodies love in every way because God is love. Even in the wilderness, when God's people grumbled against God, as alluded to in verses 7 and 8, God continued in faithfulness and in love towards his people.

At the heart of this love is also God's forgiveness. When we are experiencing difficulties in our faith, we will often feel guilty and with that comes a sense of unworthiness about ourselves. Yet Psalm 103 reminds us of God's forgiving love and our status as his children. This is best understood when we see what God has done for us in Christ. That through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection the fullness of God's love for the world is displayed.

The psalms may not be easy to translate but the message here is clear: God is love and that love for us is steadfast. So let us bless the Lord and give thanks for his steadfast and eternal love for us.

Prayer of Intercession

You are invited to pray silently for:

The needs of the world...

The Church and its calling...

Loved ones going through difficult times...

For peace, justice, and reconciliation...

In Jesus name. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven...

StF 403 God is love, his the care

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1swGZqp6Vd0>

God is love: his the care, tending each, everywhere,
God is love, all is there!
Jesus came to show him, that we all might know him!

Sing aloud, loud, loud! sing aloud, loud, loud!
God is good! God is truth! God is beauty! Praise him!

None can see God above; we can share life and love
thus may we Godward move,
see him in creation, holding every nation.
Sing aloud, loud, loud...

Jesus lived on the earth, hope and life brought to birth,
and affirmed human worth,
for he came to save us, by the truth he gave us.
Sing aloud, loud, loud...

To our Lord praise we sing, light and life, friend and King,
coming down, love to bring,
pattern for our duty, showing God in beauty.
Sing aloud, loud, loud...

Percy Dreamer (1867–1936)
CCLI Song Number: 780738

Final Prayer

Faithful God, whose Word does not return empty but accomplishes all that you purpose, may your blessings fall like rain to water the earth, nourishing seed for our food, and filling us with the abundance of your love, through Jesus Christ your living Word. **Amen.**

Taken from "Remembering our Call..." © The Methodist Church
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/12456/reaffirmation-of-local-preachers-0719.pdf>