



Service for personal use – 25th April 2021.

Call to Worship.

Jesus said, “I am the Good Shepherd,
I lay down my life for the sheep. John 10 vs 11.

Hymn. 9 H&P, 55 StF, 327 MP Immortal, invisible, God only wise

Opening Prayer.

O God, our loving Heavenly Father, we want to acknowledge again that You are the great God of wonders,
that in the mystery of your power, creativity and love,
you brought universe into being, you are omnipotent ,
yet only a prayer away. We want to thank for our Lord
and Saviour Jesus Christ, who for our sakes went humbly
and willingly to the cross, so that we might be forgiven, so
we come to you realizing that there are sometimes things in our lives which
are wrong, so if that is the case, please forgive and renew us. We pray in
Christ’s name. Amen.

Responsive reading, “A song of Resurrection”, 830 H&P.

Hymn. 479 H&P, 160 StF Powerful in making us wise to salvation

Bible Readings.

John 10 vs 11 – 18.

In this reading Christ shares the concept of he being the Good Shepherd who is willing to protect the sheep, even if it means sacrificing his life, he also talks in a universal way, of bringing other sheep from other areas, (vs 16).

Psalm 23.

I want to share a number of thoughts from this most famous psalm. This psalm is one of many which David wrote. It has two main themes, verses 1 – 4 show the Shepard, verses 5 & 6 show the King. The psalm starts by saying, “The Lord is my shepherd”. We think David was an old man when he wrote these words, so he is looking down the years of his life, with all its “ups and downs” and his conclusion is, “The Lord has been my shepherd”. Surely we can say the same, when we look back on our lives, we also can say, “The Lord has been my shepherd”. In verse 2, we see the work and provision of the shepherd, he provides for the sheep, food (green pastures) and drink (still waters), this makes the sheep grow and become strong. So, in a spiritual sense, our faith in the words and promises of Jesus builds us up and makes us strong. When the

devil tempts Jesus to make stones into bread, he says in reply “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which comes from the mouth of the Lord”. As it says in Romans 10 verse 17, “faith comes by hearing the word of God”. The result of being spiritually fed is we are restored, “he restores my life”. Jesus said, “Come unto me all you who are weary of carrying a heavy load and I will give you rest”. As the hymn says, “Drop thy still dews of quietness till all our striving cease, take from our souls the strain and stress and let our ordered lives confess, the beauty of thy peace”.

Another thing which the Lord does, “He leads me in paths of righteousness”. In the east, sheep are not driven, they are led, that’s because the sheep know them. Many times in India, I have seen young people leading a hundred sheep or goats. So Christ leads us in correct paths and even though that will eventually be death, we have no need to be afraid, because the Lord as the Good Shepherd will be with us and will protect us, as Christ says in John chapter 10, verse 27, 28, “My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me, I give them eternal life, they shall never perish and no one shall snatch them out of my hand”.

The sheep and us are led by the Shepherd into blessed experiences, however now as King, he prepares a table of spiritual food. The word prepare shows us the purpose of God. The purpose of God has many aspects, but chiefly it is to worship the living God, in spirit and in truth, this is God’s desire for every one of us, (John 4 verses 23, 24)

Continuing with blessed experiences, he anoints our heads with oil, this is symbolism for the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, (quoting Isaiah 61), “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me and has anointed me to preach”. When we are united under Christ, it is like a special anointing, (psalm 133). Oil is very important in a car engine, because it allows the parts to work together smoothly, likewise in our meeting together, we can have unity with the anointing of the Holy Spirit. When the Apostles were filled with the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, they were together in one place.

In this psalm is the blessing of abundance, “my cup overflows”. Jesus said, “I have come that you might have life and have it abundantly” (John 10 verse 10). In Ephesians 3 verse 20, it says, “Now unto him who is able to do far more abundantly, than all we ask or think”.

It’s a bit like the farmer who said, “God is good to me, my barns are always full, as I shovel out, He shovel’s in and His shovel is bigger than mine”. It is no wonder with all this blessing around, David could say, “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever”. Amen.

Hymn 673 H&P, 495 StF, 111 MP Dear Lord and Father of mankind

Prayers of intercession.

Living God, we trust You to answer our prayers, according to Your will and the richness of Your love for in Christ. We are sure you know us through and

through and love us just the same. Give us your awareness of others and by your Holy Spirit make us sensitive to them. Let us hurt where they hurt, even to weep with them, that they may know they are not alone.

Let us enter into their joys to laugh and rejoice with them, at those things which set them free.

Lovingly Lord, work through our imaginations, enabling us to offer quietly needful help, encouragement or a word in season. The needs of the world are great indeed, so this day, we lift the concerns, hardships, suffering and grief to you. We offer these prayers in Christ's name. Amen.

We pray these our prayers in Christ's most worthy name. Amen.

We say the Lord's Prayer together.

Hymn 69 H&P, 479 StF, 649 MP The King of love my Shepherd is

We say the "Grace". Amen.