

## Psalm and Readings Thursday 18th April 2024

### Psalm 136

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever.  
O give thanks to the God of gods,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever.  
O give thanks to the Lord of lords,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;

who alone does great wonders,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
who by understanding made the heavens,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
who spread out the earth on the waters,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
who made the great lights,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
the sun to rule over the day,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
the moon and stars to rule over the night,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;

who struck Egypt through their firstborn,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
and brought Israel out from among them,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
who divided the Red Sea in two,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
and made Israel pass through the midst of it,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
but overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red  
Sea,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
who led his people through the wilderness,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
who struck down great kings,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
and killed famous kings,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
Sihon, king of the Amorites,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
and Og, king of Bashan,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
and gave their land as a heritage,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
a heritage to his servant Israel,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever.

It is he who remembered us in our low estate,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;

and rescued us from our foes,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever;  
who gives food to all flesh,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever.

O give thanks to the God of heaven,  
for his steadfast love endures for ever.

### Exodus 25:1 – 22

The Lord said to Moses: Tell the Israelites to take for me an offering; from all whose hearts prompt them to give you shall receive the offering for me. This is the offering that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze, blue, purple, and crimson yarns and fine linen, goats' hair, tanned rams' skins, fine leather, acacia wood, oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing-oil and for the fragrant incense, onyx stones and gems to be set in the ephod and for the breastpiece. And have them make me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them. In accordance with all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.

They shall make an ark of acacia wood; it shall be two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside you shall overlay it, and you shall make a moulding of gold upon it all round. You shall cast four rings of gold for it and put them on its four feet, two rings on one side of it, and two rings on the other side. You shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. And you shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, by which to carry the ark. The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. You shall put into the ark the covenant that I shall give you.

Then you shall make a mercy-seat of pure gold; two cubits and a half shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its width. You shall make two cherubim of gold; you shall make them of hammered work, at the two ends of the mercy-seat. Make one cherub at one end, and one cherub at the other; of one piece with the mercy-seat you shall make the cherubim at its two ends. The cherubim shall spread out their wings above,

overshadowing the mercy-seat with their wings. They shall face each other; the faces of the cherubim shall be turned towards the mercy-seat. You shall put the mercy-seat on the top of the ark; and in the ark you shall put the covenant that I shall give you. There I will meet you, and from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the covenant, I will deliver to you all my commands for the Israelites.

### **Luke 1:57 – end**

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbours and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, 'No; he is to be called John.' They said to her, 'None of your relatives has this name.' Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. He asked for a writing-tablet and wrote, 'His name is John.' And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. Fear came over all their neighbours, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said, 'What then will this child become?' For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:

'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,  
for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them.  
He has raised up a mighty saviour for us  
in the house of his servant David,  
as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,  
that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.  
Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,  
and has remembered his holy covenant,  
the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,

to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,  
might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness  
before him all our days.  
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,  
to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.  
By the tender mercy of our God,  
the dawn from on high will break upon us,  
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the way of peace.'

The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

### **A prayer for this time of transition**

Faithful and loving God  
we hold our Benefice before you in this time of transition.  
Be with us in our waiting, in our expectation and in our preparation.  
Be with our new incumbent as he or she also waits, expects and prepares.  
Bring us together in love for you and for this Benefice,  
and be our light for the way ahead.  
In Jesus' name,  
Amen

### **The Collect of the Day**

Almighty Father,  
who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord:  
give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life  
and serve you continually in righteousness and truth;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen