

Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 15 June 2025

AM Worship

Call to Worship: Psalm 100:1-5

Opening Hymn: 213 Glory Be to God the Father

Confession of Sin

Most merciful God, Who are of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and hast promised forgiveness to all those who confess and forsake their sins; We come before You with a humble sense of our own unworthiness, acknowledging our manifold transgressions of Your righteous laws. But, O gracious Father, Who desires not the death of a sinner, look upon us, we beseech You, in mercy, and forgive us all our transgressions. Make us deeply sensible of the great evil of them; And work in us a hearty contrition; That we may obtain forgiveness at Your hands, Who are ever ready to receive humble and penitent sinners; for the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ, our only Savior and Redeemer. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: Romans 3:21-26

Psalm of Preparation: 22B All You That Fear Jehovah's Name

Old Covenant Reading: Psalm 22

New Covenant Reading: Matthew 27:39-56

Sermon Title: *The Death of the King*

Hymn of Response: 342 Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted

Confession of Faith: 1 Heidelberg Catechism (p. 872)

Doxology (Hymn 568)

Diaconal Offering

Closing Hymn: 343 What Wondrous Love is This

PM Worship

286 Let Us Love and Sing and Wonder

276 Jesus Paid It All

278 Nothing but the Blood

Old Covenant Reading: Exodus 25:1-40

New Covenant Reading: Hebrews 10:1-3

Sermon Title: *The Shadow of the Law*

No Sunday School – Fellowship Lunch

Suggested Preparations

Monday (6/9) Read and discuss Matthew 27:39–56

And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, “This man is calling Elijah.” And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.” And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. (ESV)

There is an extraordinary amount of irony in this passage. Let’s see if we can unpack just a bit of it:

1. People passing by wag their heads and deride our Lord. First of all, please notice that they both recognize Him and that they have some familiarity with some of His teaching. They say: “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” How do they get what our LORD said about the Temple wrong? For one thing, Jesus never said that He was going to destroy the Temple. Rather, Jesus said: “[You] destroy this Temple, and I will raise it up in three days (John 2:19).” The irony is that even as they are hurling insults at Jesus, they are fulfilling the first part of His words. Three days later He would fulfill the second.
2. The introductory words “If you are the Son of God” should remind us of all the times the word “if” was directed towards Jesus and what this reveals about what God is truly like. Do you remember how Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness? He said, “**If** you are the Son of God ...” and then He challenged Jesus to use His position to avoid all of His suffering. Intriguingly, after Christ defeats Satan in the wilderness we are told that Satan departed from Him until an opportune time. Now, these callous people passing by on the road are serving as Satan’s mouthpiece – they are saying, “If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross and stop suffering.”

3. Matthew doesn't want us to imagine that those mocking Jesus are just the poor riff-raff of society, so he reminds us that the chief priests, the scribes, and the Elders joined in the mocking. In fact, even the two criminals being crucified with Jesus begin to join in. What we are to see is that EVERYONE was against Him. And we need to mark this well, they are all recognize that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. Oddly, there are modern critics who suggest that Jesus never claimed to be the Son of God and that this is just an idea that Christians developed over the first few centuries of the Church. Apparently, the Scribes, Chief Priests, Elders and of course the Gospel writers and Apostles never received the memo.

Read or sing Hymn 213 Glory Be to God the Father

Tuesday (6/10) Read and discuss Psalm 14

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."
They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds;
there is none who does good.

The LORD looks down from heaven on the children of man,
to see if there are any who understand,
who seek after God.

They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt;
there is none who does good,
not even one.

Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers
who eat up my people as they eat bread
and do not call upon the LORD?

There they are in great terror,
for God is with the generation of the righteous.
You would shame the plans of the poor,
but the LORD is his refuge.

Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!
When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people,
let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad. (ESV)

How can we faithfully respond when evildoers malign and persecute us? Should we not start by reminding ourselves that **we too were once children of wrath** – just like they are? Instead of complaining that life isn't fair – we should be grateful that the LORD has not treated us as we deserve. But, with abundant grace and kindness, He has brought us out of the kingdom of darkness and delivered us into the Kingdom of His beloved Son. Whatever we endure at the hands of Christ's enemies **Jesus endured more**. And whatever we endure at the hands of Christ's enemies is far less than what we actually deserve. Reminding

ourselves that, **in Christ**, we are receiving exceedingly better than what we deserve will help us **to graciously respond** to hardship in a way that glorifies Almighty God.

So, ...

1. First, we should remember that the LORD takes notice of our plight; and
2. Second, we should remember that left to ourselves we would be just like those who are mocking and persecuting us. Yet, thanks be to God the LORD has not left us to ourselves!

Nevertheless, God as our King will not hold His nor our enemies to be guiltless. Look at verses 5 and 6 with me:

There they are in great terror,
for God is with the generation of the righteous.
You would shame the plans of the poor,
but the LORD is his refuge.

The cultured despisers of God and His people normally only persecute those Christians who appear to be vulnerable or even defenseless. Dale Ralph Davis puts it well:

These butchers have miscalculated and made a fallacious assumption. They meet with something they have not counted on – that these seemingly helpless people **have a Defender**. Why [are they] so terrified? Because they discover that God is both **present with** and **protecting His people**. Apparently, they didn't see the sign that read: 'Beware of sheep.' You touch God's people, and you will find yourself – sooner or later – having to deal with their God.¹

Read or sing Psalm 22B All You That Fear Jehovah's Name

Wednesday (6/11) Read and discuss Psalm 22

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?
O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.

Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
To you they cried and were rescued;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

¹ Dale Ralph Davis, *Slogging Along the Paths of Righteousness*, p. 37

But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.
All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;
“He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!”

Yet you are he who took me from the womb;
you made me trust you at my mother’s breasts.
On you was I cast from my birth,
and from my mother’s womb you have been my God.
Be not far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.

Many bulls encompass me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.

I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.

For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet—
I can count all my bones—
they stare and gloat over me;
they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.

But you, O LORD, do not be far off!
O you my help, come quickly to my aid!
Deliver my soul from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dog!
Save me from the mouth of the lion!
You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!

I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:
You who fear the LORD, praise him!

All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him,
and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
For he has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and he has not hidden his face from him,
but has heard, when he cried to him.

From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will perform before those who fear him.
The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the LORD!
May your hearts live forever!

All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before you.
For kingship belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.

All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the one who could not keep himself alive.
Posterity shall serve him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;
they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn,
that he has done it. (ESV)

The LORD is a God who answers prayer! Isn't that what we read in the 2nd half of verse 21? Look there with me ...

You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!

The poetic transition is so abrupt that it almost seems out of place. Some commentators find it hard to see how this could apply to Jesus on the cross but let me suggest that this fits really well during that brief time between when Almighty God finished pouring out His holy wrath on Christ for all of our sins and the time when Jesus shouted: "It ... is ... finished!"

I think that's helpful, because it reminds us that Jesus wasn't only thinking about us – as He died for our sins. In fact, He was preeminently thinking about His Father's glory and that this good news about who His Father is and what He Himself had done would be proclaimed to the ends of the earth.

Try listening to verses 22 through 26 from this perspective that they express Christ's own perspective on His finished work and see if this works. Beginning in verse 22:

I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:
You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him,
and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
For he has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and he has not hidden his face from him,
but has heard, when he cried to him.

From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will perform before those who fear him.
The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the LORD!
May your hearts live forever!

What do you think? For me, it makes good sense to hear these words as Christ's own perspective regarding one of the ramifications of the cross. God's grace will be magnified in the presence of His people.

Nevertheless, I also think these words apply to us as God's people. They remind us that we have been blessed in order to be a blessing. Our lives, our suffering, and our praise all have the same intended goal: "That we would glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

As Tim Keller puts it:

God never calls us in to love and change us without then sending us out to reach and serve others. We are blessed [to be a blessing].

That's simple, but it is really central to how we think about our lives:

God never calls us in to love and change us without then sending us out to reach and serve others. We are blessed [to be a blessing].

Spend some time, this week, thinking about how the LORD's grace *towards* you can be more fully shared in God's grace *through* you.

Read or sing Hymn 342 Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted

Thursday (6/12) Read and discuss Exodus 25

The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me. And this is the contribution that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and

bronze, blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, goats' hair, tanned rams' skins, goatskins, acacia wood, oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, onyx stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. Exactly as 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. Two cubits and a half shall be its length, a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside shall you overlay it, and you shall make on it a molding of gold around it. You shall cast four rings of gold for it and put them on its four feet, two rings on the one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it. 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 to carry the ark by them. The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. And you shall put into the ark the testimony that I shall give you.

“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 breadth. And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work shall you make them, on the two ends of the mercy seat. Make one cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the other end. Of one piece with the mercy seat shall you make the cherubim on its two ends. The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings, their faces one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel.

“You shall make a table of acacia wood. Two cubits shall be its length, a cubit its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. You shall overlay it with pure gold and make a molding of gold around it. And you shall make a rim around it a handbreadth wide, and a molding of gold around the rim. And you shall make for it four rings of gold, and fasten the rings to the four corners at its four legs. Close to the frame the rings shall lie, as holders for the poles to carry the table. You shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, and the table shall be carried with these. And you shall make its plates and dishes for incense, and its flagons and bowls with which to pour drink offerings; you shall make them of pure gold. And you shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before me regularly.

“You shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand shall be made of hammered work: its base, its stem, its cups, its calyxes, and its flowers shall be of one piece with it. And there shall be six branches going out of its sides, three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it; three cups made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on one branch, and three cups made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on the other branch—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand. And on the lampstand itself there shall be four cups made like almond blossoms, with their calyxes and flowers, and a calyx of one piece with it under each pair of the six branches going out from the lampstand. Their calyxes and their branches shall be of one piece with it, the whole of it a single piece of hammered work of pure gold. You shall make seven lamps for it. And the lamps shall be set up so as to give

light on the space in front of it. Its tongs and their trays shall be of pure gold. It shall be made, with all these utensils, out of a talent of pure gold. And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain. (ESV)

Christopher Wright comments:

God's instructions begin with the object that will be the focus of His most holy presence – the ark of the covenant. ...

The ark was a rectangular wooden chest, approximately three feet nine inches longer by two feet three inches wide and deep. It was overlaid and decorated inside and out with gold and had four feet with rings attached so that it could be carried without being touched, by means of two gold-plated wooden poles permanently inserted in the rings.

The significance of the ark lay both in what was stored *inside it* and in what was fitted *on top of it*.

Inside were “the tablets of the covenant law.” The Hebrew expression is “the Testimony.” But from 32:15-16 and Deuteronomy 10:1-5, we know that this term refers to two stone tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments. The ark, then, “embodied” the word of God, spoken and written, on which the covenant relationship with Israel at Sinai had been ratified. God's holy presence in the midst of His people was focused, not on mantras or incantations devised by a priestly elite and meaningless to most worshippers but rather on the clear, intelligible, and formative word of the living God, the God who spoke from heaven at an unprecedented and unparalleled historic moment in their story and His.

On top of the ark was a spectacular cover carved from a single, solid piece of gold. Its significance lies in the name given to it, on the one hand, and in the two cherubim that brooded over the top of it, on the other.

The lid or cover on the ark is called the *kapporet*. The word is used only of this object and is a noun derived from the verb *kipper* which is usually translated “to make atonement.” ... [The meaning is closely connected with the ideas] to *ransom*, and to *wipe clean* or *cleanse*.

The *kapporet* features in one of the key moments on the Day of Atonement. Aaron (and later the high priest in office) was to take some of the blood from the sacrifice of a bull and one of the two goats, enter the most holy place (only on this one day in the year), and sprinkle the blood on and in front of the *kapporet*. This action is then explained:

In this way he will make atonement for the Most Holy Place because of the uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites, whatever their sins have been.

Friday (6/13) Read and discuss Hebrews 10:1–3

For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. (ESV)

Tom Wright comments:

At this point, and at one or two other moments in this letter, many readers have wondered if perhaps the writer is using ideas that had been made famous by the philosopher Plato. In particular, the idea of something being a ‘shadow’ rather than a ‘real form’ sounds like his well-known picture of the Cave, in which people who haven’t yet been enlightened think they’re looking at reality but are in fact only looking at shadows cast by objects that remain out of sight.

This appearance, though, is superficial. The contrast the writer is making is not, like Plato, the contrast between physical objects and non-physical ideas, or ‘forms.’ As verse 1 insists, it is the contrast between the *present* and the *future* realities. Jesus, who has gone ahead of us into God’s future reality, will reappear when the future reality bursts into the present for the whole world. And He Himself was and remains a thoroughly physical human being.

What was wrong with the sacrifices and offerings of the old covenant, says Hebrews, wasn’t that they were physical, ‘earthly’ in that sense. Jesus’ own sacrifice was just as earthly, just as much a matter of physical reality, as the animal sacrifices in the Temple. That always was part of the truth of Christianity, however scandalous it may seem to tender-minded Platonists in the ancient or the modern world. What was wrong was that the old sacrifices need to be done over and over again, thus demonstrating that they hadn’t really dealt with the problem. If I have to take my car back to the mechanic every week with the same problem, that’s a fair indication that he hasn’t succeeded in fixing it.

Read or sing Hymn 343 What Wondrous Love is This

Saturday (6/14) Read and discuss Matthew 27:39–56

And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God

deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, “This man is calling Elijah.” And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.” And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. (ESV)

In verse 46, Jesus gives us His own interpretation of His death – by crying out in the words of Psalm 22: “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” That is, Jesus isn’t focusing on the brutal punishment that He is receiving from wicked men. Jesus is focusing on the forsakenness that He is experiencing – from His perfect heavenly Father. And yet – we should remember that Jesus knew the OT perfectly. While Psalm 22 begins “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” That is not where it ends. Christ isn’t just bearing the wrath of God in itself. He is bearing the wrath of God to accomplish something on behalf of His people. So the Psalm concludes:

All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before you.
For kingship belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.

All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the one who could not keep himself alive.
Posterity shall serve him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;
they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn,
that he has done it.

Christ's horrible cry of dereliction – a cry of overwhelming anguish – is actually the beginning of a shout of victory – but the crowds didn't understand this at all. Instead, they wonder if Jesus was calling for Elijah to save Him. ... Boy, do they have that wrong. Elijah would not save Jesus. Jesus was in the process of saving Elijah.

Prayer: Please lift up tomorrow's morning and evening worship services.