

Worship for Sunday 13th June 2021
from Brian & Clare Kennard

“Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures for ever.”
(Psalm 125:1)

Suggested Hymn: *See how great a flame aspires*

See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace!
Jesu's love the nations fires,
Sets the kingdoms on a blaze.
To bring fire on earth he came;
Kindled in some hearts it is:
O that all might catch the flame,
All partake the glorious bliss!

When he first the work begun,
Small and feeble was his day:
Now the word doth swiftly run,
Now it wins its widening way;
More and more it spreads and grows
Ever mighty to prevail;
Sin's strongholds it now o'erthrows,
Shakes the trembling gates of hell.

Sons of God, your Saviour praise!
He the door has opened wide;
He has given the word of grace,
Jesu's word is glorified;
Jesus, mighty to redeem,
He alone the work has wrought;
Worthy is the work of him,
Him who spake a world from nought.

Saw ye not the cloud arise,
Little as a human hand?
Now it spreads along the skies,
Hangs o'er all the thirsty land:
Lo, the promise of a shower
Drops already from above;
But the Lord will shortly pour
All the Spirit of his love!

Prayer time:

Be still and focus on the awesome God we serve: great beyond all words, but revealing Himself through His Word, and most clearly through the Word who became flesh - the Lord Jesus Christ. Express your adoration, worship and praise in whatever ways you can.

The Bible says, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”
(1 John 4: 8-9)

Let God speak to you about the attitudes and actions that need changing in your life. Confess to Him your

weaknesses and failures, and receive His cleansing and forgiveness as He has promised.

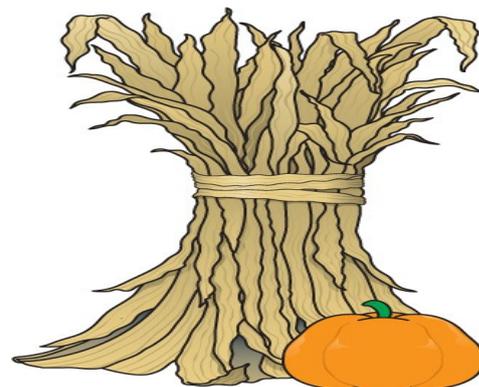
Prayer for today (“Collect”):

Lord, you have taught us
that all our doings without love are nothing worth:
send your Holy Spirit
and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of
love,
the true bond of peace and of all virtues,
without which whoever lives is counted dead before
you.
Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Reading: If you have a Bible of your own, please read **Psalm 20**

Reading: Mark 4: 26-34

²⁶He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ²⁸All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. ²⁹As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come." ³⁰Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? ³¹It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. ³²Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade." ³³With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. ³⁴He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.



Reflection: Little things

These two parables are part of a whole series that begin with a phrase like “The Kingdom of God is like....”. Jesus is here revealing to us the way that God operates in the world. Both of these concern small things, that is - seeds. To change the metaphor, anyone who thinks small things have no impact hasn't spent a night with a mosquito!

One of the things Jesus wants us to know here is that, even if our knowledge and experience of God is very small, it's still something...AND God wants to grow what He has planted in us so that we can be useful and effective servants in the world God loves. I'm sure I must have said before that you can never be too small (insignificant) for God to use, though you can easily be too big - that is, full of your own plans, ideas, wisdom and strength. God is also the master at using small actions - a kind word, an apology, a helping hand...to great effect. So the New Testament tells us “Whatsoever you do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus...” (Colossians 3:17)

The Kingdom of God is about God doing His work in us and through us (see v.28 for example) -it is not dependent on our abilities, cleverness or anything else. The Kingdom happens when we depend day-to-day not on our own resources but upon God's boundless provision: “My grace is sufficient for you” as God told St. Paul.

At the same time, God is calling us to be fruitful as I've just said (see v29 - harvest time!). There are many things that Jesus taught about the coming Harvest, when God will take those who are His out of this present world to be with Him forever. But there is a harvest right now that we need to be awake to. The mustard seed grows to be a tree to give shade to the birds, and so we are the people who bring comfort, hope and peace to our troubled and despairing fellows by sharing the source of our strength, namely the Lord Jesus.

So that leads us finally to the growth of the Christian community, the church of Jesus Christ. God wants His church to be expanding, encompassing more and more men and women, boys and girls! Thank God that in many parts of the world, that is exactly what is going on, often despite persecution and hostility. Jesus promised, “I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18) Hallelujah! Small beginnings, but a glorious completion is on the way when “The earth shall be filled with knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover

the sea.” (Habbakkuk 2:14)

Mediate on the words of today's hymn, and let them drive you to prayer and witness. God bless you richly! Amen.

Prayers of intercession

In your own words, remember before God...for a genuine and lasting peace in Israel..those in authority in this country and around the world grappling with the present crisis, especially just now in India,all those “on the front line” whether NHS staff, transport workers, shop workers, the emergency services...those most personally affected by the Covid-19 outbreak: the bereaved, those seriously ill, those who have already lost their jobs.. the Church of Jesus Christ as together we seek to witness to the love and care of God in word and action....and the many other difficult problems humanity faces...and for yourself and your family. Remember, too, thankfulness!

The Lord's Prayer (traditional version):

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done; .
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The blessing: Now may the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with and remain with us always. Amen.

Worship/teaching activities on the wings.

Plans to hold a small group on Sunday afternoons are still being finalised at time of writing, but I hope we can have up to 20 attending the chapel, starting with A & D wings on Sun 27th, from 2 to 3 p.m....then B & C wings the next week, and so on. Watch this space!

Brian