

Readings 2.7.21

Readers: Phyllis, Rachel

Prayers: Anita

Set us free, O God, from the bondage of sin, and give us the liberty of that abundant life which you have made known to us in your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

**Isaiah 40:21-31**

Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
Has it not been told you from the beginning?  
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

It is God who sits above the circle of the earth,  
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;  
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,  
and spreads them like a tent to live in;  
who brings princes to naught,  
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,  
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,  
when the Holy One blows upon them, and they wither,  
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

To whom then will you compare me,  
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

Lift up your eyes on high and see:  
Who created these?

The One who brings out their host and numbers them,  
calling them all by name;  
great in strength,  
mighty in power,  
not one is missing.

Why do you say, O Jacob,  
and speak, O Israel,

"My way is hidden from the LORD,  
and my right is disregarded by my God"?

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

God does not faint or grow weary;  
God's understanding is unsearchable.  
The Holy One gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.  
Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;  
but those who wait for their God shall renew their strength,  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be weary,  
they shall walk and not faint.

**Psalms 139.1-6, 23-24**

*(bracketed verses will not be read on Sunday but studied after the worship time)*

- 1** Holy God, you have searched me out \*  
and known me.
- 2** ***You know my sitting down and my rising up; \*  
you discern my thoughts from afar.***
- 3** You trace my journeys and my resting-places \*  
and are acquainted with all my ways.
- 4** ***Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, \*  
but you, O God, know it altogether.***
- 5** You press upon me behind and before \*  
and lay your hand upon me.
- 6** ***Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; \*  
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.***
- [7** Where can I go then from your Spirit? \*  
Where can I flee from your presence?
- 8** If I climb up to heaven, you are there; \*  
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.
- 9** If I take the wings of the morning \*  
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
- 10** even there your hand will lead me \*  
and your mighty hand hold me fast.
- 11** If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, \*  
and the light around me turn to night."
- 12** I know that you, O God will maintain the cause of the poor \*  
and render justice to the needy.
- 13** Surely, the righteous will give thanks to your name, \*  
and the upright shall continue in your sight.
- 12** Darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day; \*  
darkness and light to you are both alike.
- 13** For you yourself created my inmost parts; \*

you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
**14** I will thank you because I am marvellously made; \*  
 your works are wonderful, and I know it well.  
**15** My body was not hidden from you, \*  
 while I was being made in secret  
 and woven in the depths of the earth.  
**16** Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb; \*  
 all of them were written in your book;  
 they were fashioned day by day, \*  
 when as yet there was none of them.  
**17** How deep I find your thoughts, O God! \*  
 How great is the sum of them!  
**18** If I were to count them, \*  
 they would be more in number than the sand;  
 to count them all, \*  
 my life span would need to be like yours.  
**19** Oh, that you would slay the wicked, O God! \*  
 You that thirst for blood, depart from me.  
**20** They speak spitefully against you; \*  
 your enemies take your name in vain.  
**21** Do I not hate those, O God, who hate you? \*  
 And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?  
**22** I hate them with a perfect hatred; \*  
 they have become my own enemies. ]  
  
**23** Search me out, O God, and know my heart; \*  
 try me and know my restless thoughts.  
**24** *Look well whether there be any wickedness in me \*  
 lead me in the way that is everlasting.*

### **1 Corinthians 9:16-23**

If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel! For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself servant to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law

(though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

### **Mark 1:29-39**

After Jesus and his disciples left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.