

HARVEST Talk 2015: 'Prayer and Creation' – BCP version

Deut 8:6-18 only Who's been somewhere beautiful this year? (ASK)

We live in a beautiful world, don't we? For me: very blessed this year – beach (v), mountain (v), rivers/lakes, ornamental gardens (v). Took our main holiday in North Wales – went for a walk up a mountain on hottest day of holiday. Stunning – saw every type of wonder – hills reflected on still lake surfaces, panoramic views – also a wonderful stream bubbling hundreds of feet down valley - reminded me of this verse from our passage – READ v7.

Thinking about how creation inspires us to pray – all around us. Flowers by path up to church, or the tree, or the greenfinch singing in it (owl this week).

Tells us of the **goodness of God**. Want to be reminded of God's goodness – look around you – READ v7a again.

Goes on: READ v8. Second – tells us of the **gifts of God**. Natural to pray – READ v10. Offering of prayers of praise today.

Next Moses reminds them of journey from Egypt. Different landscape – desert, harsh. But God brought them through it. Just as majestic – back to our holiday. Magnificent slate heaps, then got to top of mountain – panoramic view (next service).

All got favourite views – remind us **greatness of God**. Don't forget me, God says, doesn't he? I made all this. Shows you how great I am. Life is best with me!

World points us towards God and reminds us of his gifts, his goodness, and his greatness. **ADD MARK 4:26-32:** Also teaches us about **kingdom of God (S)**. St Anthony: EXPAND "My book is the nature of created things, and this is before me whenever I wish to read the words of God."

Jesus used lots of images from nature to tell us more about what God's kingdom is like: 2 in our short reading from Mark – EXPAND – (S) (1) God at work all the time (beyond human effort) and **(S)** (2) God's work in world looks small but has a huge impact.

Creation not just 'there' – meant to inspire us. May it inspire our prayers. And let's give thanks today for God's goodness, his greatness, and his gifts.

PRAYERS:

BEGIN WITH: We praise you, O God, we worship you, we adore you.
Day & night tell of your glory; the song of the wind whispers of your majesty.
The flowers in the garden and the birds in the air tell of your goodness;
You satisfy all things living with your abundance,
and our hearts are full in your presence.
So we, too, would echo their praise.
Accept us, your children, Eternal Father, and hear our prayer.
Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Almighty and everlasting God, we offer you our heartfelt thanks for your fatherly goodness, care and provisions, in giving us the fruits of the earth in their seasons. Give us grace and wisdom to use your gifts rightly, for ourselves and our families, and for helping others in need. Especially we pray for the wonderful work of Foodbank. Please bless all who help to distribute the extra food given at Harvest, and above all bless those who receive it. May they know your love for them at this time.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

We think of those in need – use refugees prayer

RESPONSE: We cry out to you: **Lord have mercy**

*Gracious God / For every tear-streaked child / For every voiceless mother
For every desperate father / For every homeless and stateless family **R***

*For those slumped in despair / For those on their knees unable to take another step
For those who look and feel hunted and hopeless / For those who live in the
desperate captivity of fear **R***

*Soften our hearts / Move us to action / Fill us with compassion
Let us be channels of your love **R***

*Lord whose family had to flee a country / Lord who had nowhere to lay your head
Lord who weeps over the city **R***

*Move us to make a difference / To act with love and understanding / To offer hope
and strengthen the weak / To put the needs of the broken above our own **R***

THEN Prayer for ourselves – MERCIFUL FATHER...

MAIN SERVICE AT SM & AS: TALK PART 1 (Deut 8 and Mark 4)

Who's been somewhere beautiful this year? (SLIDES)

- Beach
- Mountains
- Rivers
- Gardens
- Or seen a beautiful flower?
- Or animals grazing?

We live in a beautiful world. Took our main hol in North Wales – went for a walk up a mountain on hottest day of holiday. Stunning – saw this (S). Reminded me of this verse – READ v7.

Thinking about how creation inspires us to pray – all around us. Flowers by path up to church, or the tree, or the greenfinch singing in it (owl this week).

Tells us of the **goodness of God (S)**. Want to be reminded of God's goodness – look around you – READ v7a again.

Goes on: READ v8. Did this at school harvest service – favourite foods (S). Tells us of the **gifts of God (S)**. Natural to pray – READ v10. Offering of prayers of praise today.

Next he reminds them of journey from Egypt. Different landscape – desert, harsh. But God brought them through it. Just as majestic – back to our holiday. Got to top of mountain and this was view (S).

All got favourite views – remind us **greatness of God (S)**. Don't forget me, God says, doesn't he? I made all this. Shows you how great I am. Life is best with me!

World points us towards God and reminds us of his gifts, his goodness, and his greatness. Also teaches us about **kingdom of God (S)**. St Anthony: EXPAND "My book is the nature of created things, and this is before me whenever I wish to read the words of God."

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Creation not just 'there' – meant to inspire us. (S) Let's give thanks today for God's goodness, his greatness, and his gifts.

TALK PART 2

Thought about main teaching of bible passage – creation is good. (S)

But also need to recognise another side of it: creation is spoiled. (S) We humans aren't perfect, not like God – and result is that things go wrong:

- Beautiful forests are cut down (current slide – rainforest)
- Rivers are polluted (S)
- People go hungry (S **foodbank**) – can all think of areas of world where people are in need. But also here in MK – that's why generous donations.

How do we respond?

- Called to share goodness and gifts of God. (S) Everyone is just as valuable to God.
- Prayer – another way creation inspires us to pray (sad, but important)
- Practical help – Jesus told us what marks out true people of God – respond to those in need.

Touched by Refugee Crisis. (S) Baptist Union published Refugees Prayer – finish this short section by praying it. May it be part of our response, as we seek to share the gifts and goodness of God to a needy world.

PRAYER (S) – response: We cry out to you: **Lord have mercy**

*Gracious God / For every tear-streaked child / For every voiceless mother
For every desperate father / For every homeless and stateless family **R***

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