

Welcome to our home worship sheets. Today we are continuing our series on Old testament stories that Jesus' first disciples might have considered between Easter and Pentecost as they pondered the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection. We will also be celebrating the meaning of Christ's death for us as we take communion together. Please take a moment to find some wine (or juice) and bread so that you can join in later. Let's pray together as we start.

Father God, help us to hear your voice this morning as we sing, pray, read and reflect. Challenge us and comfort us today we pray. In the precious name of Jesus, Amen.

Call to worship (Psalm 111):

Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them.

Full of honour and majesty is his work,
and his righteousness endures forever.

**He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds;
the LORD is gracious and merciful.**

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding.

His praise endures forever.

Let's praise God as we sing/read/listen to "O Worship the King" (Source 425). [Click here to find the song on YouTube.](#)

Thanksgiving:

Loving God we have so much to thank you for that it is hard to know where to start. Our lives are in your hands and all good things come from you. This week we've been reminded about the importance of the rain, but we also thank you for the sunshine and the way we've been able to meet people outdoors. We thank you for the beauty of the spring and the joy we feel as the coronavirus restrictions are slowly being lifted. We thank you for the money and time we have and for the opportunity we have to give towards the work of your kingdom. Most of all today though we thank you for the gift of Jesus Christ, who loved us enough to die for us and rose so that we too could live in newness of life. Thank you doesn't seem enough but just now we want to say, "thank you for the cross my friend" Thank you Lord. Amen

Reading: (Genesis 22:1-19)

After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' ²He said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.' ³So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt-offering, and set

out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. ⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. ⁵ Then Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.' ⁶ Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. ⁷ Isaac said to his father Abraham, 'Father!' And he said, 'Here I am, my son.' He said, 'The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?' ⁸ Abraham said, 'God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.' So the two of them walked on together. ⁹ When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, 'Abraham, Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' ¹² He said, 'Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.' ¹³ And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt-offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called that place 'The LORD will provide'; as it is said to this day, 'On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.'

¹⁵ The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, ¹⁶ and said, 'By myself I have sworn, says the LORD: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, ¹⁸ and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.' ¹⁹ So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham lived at Beer-sheba.¹

Reflection:

This week's Old Testament story is a pivotal moment in the history of the people of God and would no doubt have been one of the stories the disciples thought of as they wondered how Jesus' death fitted in to the big story of God and his people. For us this story can appear quite shocking! Does our God really want child sacrifice (even with a last minute reprieve)? or would he really ask for such a cruel test of loyalty? Of course in the days of Abraham, child sacrifice was not uncommon. From the earliest days of human history, once people began to realise that their lives were at the

¹ Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

mercy of forces beyond their control, people had been making sacrifices to the “gods”, offerings to ask for rain, gifts to show their gratitude for a good harvest. So even though it was a difficult request, it wasn't unexpected or strange to Abraham that the God who had given him so much would ask for his most valuable possession in return. This story marks a turning point in the human understanding of what God is like; we don't provide for God, he provides for us. And as Abraham realises that God isn't going to ask him to sacrifice his son, that God himself will give what is needed he names God Jehovah Jireh- the God who provides.

Over the history of the people of Israel the God who provides was often forgotten and prophets were often called to remind the people that God didn't need their sacrifices, he wanted them to live the right way. The disciples had also experienced a pivotal moment in the history of God and his people. They had believed in and followed the Messiah, they were ready to fight for him and to die for him to bring about freedom from the Romans, to bring in the rule of King Jesus. Now they must have been beginning to realise that Jesus was a very different sort of King than the one they had been expecting. Over the weeks and months to come they came to realise that Jesus had given his life, not just for his friends but even for those who rejected him. They came to understand that the blessing and the gift that God offered them in Jesus was not just for the Jews, but it was also a blessing for the nations. The whole world was invited to benefit from the sacrifice of love that was Jesus' death and resurrection.

As we come to communion today, we are reminded again that we come to God with no righteousness of our own, nothing to offer, nothing we need to do. We simply come as we are with all our sins and failings and we come to receive. We come to be provided for. We come trusting in Jehovah Jireh the God who provides. We come to be healed, to be forgiven, to be restored and made new. We come to receive life in all its fullness!

Questions:

1. What echoes of the Easter story do you see in this passage?
2. Why is the understanding that God provides so important to our faith?

As we approach communion we're going to sing/read/listen “Jesus Christ, I think upon your sacrifice” (Source 274) [Click here for the song on YouTube.](#)

Communion:

Come to this table, not because you must but because you may,
not because you are strong, but because you are weak.

Come, not because any goodness of your own gives you a right to come,
but because you need mercy and help.

Come, because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more.
Come, because he loves you and gave himself for you.

Come and meet the risen Christ, for we are his Body.

We come to this table to celebrate the God who loved us so much that he was prepared to come into this world as one of us. We come to this table to look again at the amazing demonstration of God's love for us. We come to remember the cost of our freedom and the promise of new life.

Jehovah Jireh, provider God we come to remember that you are also Immanuel, God with us. You lived among us, you loved, you laughed, you cried and you died so that we could know your life in us.

Story:

The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

Words of Thanksgiving:

O God, we give thanks for this bread and wine: A timeless reminder of the flesh-and-blood life of Jesus: broken, rejected, yet unstoppable.

In Christ we see: a life that could not be ended by death; a purpose that could not be silenced by the forces of violence; a desire deep within you for the transformation of the world.

As we eat the bread and drink the wine: we thank you for the acceptance and tenderness with which you have transformed our shame into dignity and loved us into life; we thank you for cherishing the potential in us and for calling us to be partners in your vision for this world.

As we eat the bread and drink the wine: we call on your Spirit to come to us, to fill us again, to give us the power to live your life in this world. Amen.

The Sharing:

This broken bread we share is the body of Christ.

It is a sign of all that we live and risk together as the community of Christ.

Let all who seek Christ take and eat.

Break off a piece of bread and eat it.

This cup we drink together is the wine of the kingdom of God, the sign of God's undertaking for the life of the world.

Let all who seek Christ take and drink.

Take the cup and drink knowing that Christ died for you.

God of grace, you have called us to be your disciple people and gathered us to your table.

Here we have tasted the bread of heaven and shared the new wine of your kingdom.

**Empower us by your Spirit that we may be a gospel people:
good news for all the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Prayers:

Upon our knees we intercede, and raise to God this world's great need

We implore your Kingdom come, that here on earth your will be done

These are our needs which we declare, **Lord In your mercy, hear our prayer**

Unite your church with love and grace, To serve people in every place

We pray that we are true and bold, To bring lost sheep into your fold

These are our needs which we declare, **Lord In your mercy, hear our prayer**

We pray you heal our suffering earth, which suffers from our sinful curse

Amend our ways and help us live, In harmony with all you give,

These are our needs which we declare, **Lord In your mercy, hear our prayer**

Lord, stand beside the poor and needy, those who suffer because we are greedy,

Break the chains of the oppressed, Release those under false arrest

These are our needs which we declare, **Lord In your mercy, hear our prayer**

Bring peace to those in all distress, In sickness, mourning and unrest,

Let them know your gentle touch, we pray their pain is not too much,

These are our needs which we declare, **Lord In your mercy, hear our prayer**

We pray all this in Christ our Lord, to Father God in heaven adored

Let your Spirit lead our prayers, as we present you our affairs

These are our needs which we declare, **Lord In your mercy, hear our prayer²**

Let us conclude our time of prayer by saying the Lord's prayer together:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.**

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

**Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom,
the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

To finish let us sing/read/listen to a song that reminds us that our lives depend on God and his goodness "My hope is built" (Source 365)

[Click here to find the song.](#)

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore, Amen

² Adapted from Poetic Morning prayer by Andy Stinson