



Order of Service
Sunday Morning, 21 November 2021 – Mr Dick Haffenden

Call to Worship

The Lord is King, Lift Up Thy Voice

(Josiah Conder, 1836, Public Domain)

The Lord is King! lift up thy voice,
O earth, and all ye heavens, rejoice;
from world to world the joy shall ring,
'The Lord omnipotent is King!'

The Lord is King! who then shall dare
resist his will, distrust his care,
or murmur at his wise decrees,
or doubt his royal promises?

He reigns! ye saints, exalt your strains;
your God is King, your Father reigns;
and he is at the Father's side,
the Man of love, the Crucified.

Alike pervaded by his eye
all parts of his dominion lie:
this world of ours and worlds unseen,
and thin the boundary between!

One Lord one empire all secures;
he reigns, and life and death are yours;
through earth and heaven one song shall ring,
'The Lord omnipotent is King!'

Prayer of Confession & Supplication

Psalm 103:8-18

8 The LORD is merciful and kind,
To anger slow, and full of grace.
9 He will not constantly reprove,
Or in his anger hide his face.
10 He does not punish our misdeeds,
Or give our sins their just reward.
11 How great his love—as high as heaven—
Towards all those who fear the LORD!

12 As far as east is from the west,
So far his love has borne away
Our many sins and trespasses
And all the guilt that on us lay.
13 Just as a father loves his child,
So God loves those who fear his name.
14 For he remembers we are dust,
And well he knows our feeble frame.

15 Each human life is like the grass,
And like a meadow flower it grows.
16 Its place will never be recalled
Once over it the tempest blows.
17 But everlasting is God's love
For those who fear him, and their seed—
18 For those who keep his covenant,
And carefully his precepts heed.

Bible reading

Joshua 8:1-29

8 And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear and do not be dismayed. Take all the fighting men with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, and his people, his city, and his land. ²And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king. Only its spoil and its livestock you shall take as plunder for yourselves. Lay an ambush against the city, behind it."

³So Joshua and all the fighting men arose to go up to Ai. And Joshua chose 30,000 mighty men of valour and sent them out by night. ⁴And he commanded them, "Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind it. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you remain ready. ⁵And I and all the people who are with me will approach the city. And when they come out against us just as before, we shall flee before them. ⁶And they will come out after us, until we have drawn them away from the city. For they will say, 'They are fleeing from us, just as before.' So we will flee before them. ⁷Then you shall rise up from the ambush and seize the city, for the LORD your God will give it into your hand. ⁸And as soon as you have taken the city, you shall set the city on fire. You shall do according to the word of the LORD. See, I have commanded you." ⁹So Joshua sent them out. And they went to the place of ambush and lay between Bethel and Ai, to the west of Ai, but Joshua spent that night among the people.

¹⁰Joshua arose early in the morning and mustered the people and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. ¹¹And all the fighting men who were with him went up and drew near before the city and encamped on the north side of Ai, with a ravine between them and Ai. ¹²He took about 5,000 men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, to the west of the city. ¹³So they stationed the forces, the main encampment that was north of the city and its rearguard west of the city. But Joshua spent that night in the valley. ¹⁴And as soon as the king of Ai saw this, he and all his people, the men of the city, hurried and went out early to the appointed place towards the Arabah to meet Israel in battle. But he did not know that there was an ambush against him behind the city. ¹⁵And Joshua and all Israel pretended to be beaten before them and fled in the direction of the wilderness. ¹⁶So all the people who were in the city were called together to pursue them, and as they pursued Joshua they were drawn away from the city. ¹⁷Not a man was left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel. They left the city open and pursued Israel.

¹⁸Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Stretch out the javelin that is in your hand towards Ai, for I will give it into your hand." And Joshua stretched out the javelin that was in his hand towards the city. ¹⁹And the men in the ambush rose quickly out of their place, and as soon as he had stretched out his hand, they ran and entered the city and captured it. And they hurried to set the city on fire. ²⁰So when the men of Ai looked back, behold, the smoke of the city went up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that, for the people who fled to the wilderness turned back against the pursuers. ²¹And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had captured the city, and that the smoke of the city went up, then they turned back and struck down the men of Ai. ²²And the others came out from the city against them, so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side. And Israel struck them down, until there was left none that survived or escaped. ²³But the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him near to Joshua.

²⁴When Israel had finished killing all the inhabitants of Ai in the open wilderness where they pursued them, and all of them to the very last had fallen by the edge of the sword, all Israel returned to Ai and struck it down with the edge of the sword. ²⁵And all who fell that day, both men and women, were 12,000, all the people of Ai. ²⁶But Joshua did not draw back his hand with which he stretched out the javelin until he had devoted all the inhabitants of Ai to destruction. ²⁷Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as their plunder, according to the word of the LORD that he had commanded Joshua. ²⁸So Joshua burned Ai and made it for ever a heap of ruins, as it is to this day. ²⁹And he hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening. And at sunset Joshua commanded, and they took his body down from the tree and threw it at the entrance of the gate of the city and raised over it a great heap of stones, which stands there to this day.

Psalm 1(b)

1 How blessed the one who does not walk
Where wicked men would guide his feet,
Who does not stand in sinners' paths
Or sit upon the scorners' seat.
2 The law of God is his delight,
His meditation day and night.

3 He prospers like a tree, which has
Been planted by a flowing stream,
And in its season yields its fruit;
Its leaves are always fresh and green.
In every act and every word
He knows the blessing of the LORD.

4 Not so the wicked: they are like
The chaff the wind will blow away.
5 They will not in the judgment stand,
Nor sinners with the righteous stay.
6 God knows the way the righteous go;
The wicked's way he'll overthrow.

Sermon: A Sure Victory

Pastoral Prayer

Great is Thy Faithfulness

(Thomas Chisholm, ©1951 Hope Publishing, CCL No 1905213)

Great is Thy faithfulness, o God my Father,
there is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
as Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

Refrain

*Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed Thy hand hath provided —
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!*

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
join with all nature in manifold witness
to Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Refrain

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Refrain

Benediction