



Formation Devotional

March 9, 2020 Evening

Forming Worship, Life, and Ministry Together at Christ Covenant Church

As you come before him this evening, rest in the assurance of his great love. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.

Call to Prayer

May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice. (Psalm 141:2)

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, we remember those who suffer want and anxiety from lack of work. Guide the people of this land so to use our public and private wealth that all may find suitable and fulfilling employment, and receive just payment for their labor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 824)

Prayer of Examine

Turn your attention to Christ who is present with you now. With him, review the ordinary events and emotions of your day with gratitude.

1. Where did you move with or feel close to Jesus today?
2. Where did you resist or feel far from Jesus today?
3. Where is Jesus leading you tomorrow? Ask for joy as you follow him.

Praying the Psalms

Prayerfully read the psalm back to God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Psalm 98

Make a Joyful Noise to the LORD

A Psalm.

Oh sing to the LORD a new song,

for he has done marvelous things!

His right hand and his holy arm

have worked salvation for him.

²The LORD has made known his salvation;

he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

³He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness

to the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen

the salvation of our God.

⁴Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;

break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

⁵Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,

with the lyre and the sound of melody!

⁶With trumpets and the sound of the horn

make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD!

⁷Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

the world and those who dwell in it!

⁸Let the rivers clap their hands;

let the hills sing for joy together

⁹before the LORD, for he comes

to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness,

and the peoples with equity.

Old Testament Reading

Genesis gives the account of creation, and the reason why it is so amazing and so corrupt at the same time. The original intent of God for mankind is revealed: God creates the earth for mankind, and mankind for God. Though

things go wrong in the beginning, God promises the nomad Abraham that there would be a people who would know Him and walk in His ways in the midst of a broken and rebellious world. The rest of Genesis unfolds in the way God forms this people in the ancient world.

As you read and reflect on this passage, prayerfully consider how God might be revealing himself to you this evening.

Genesis 49

Jacob Blesses His Sons

Then Jacob called his sons and said, “Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in days to come.

²“Assemble and listen, O sons of Jacob,

listen to Israel your father.

³“Reuben, you are my firstborn,

my might, and the firstfruits of my strength,

preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power.

⁴Unstable as water, you shall not have preeminence,

because you went up to your father's bed;

then you defiled it—he went up to my couch!

⁵“Simeon and Levi are brothers;

weapons of violence are their swords.

⁶Let my soul come not into their council;

O my glory, be not joined to their company.

For in their anger they killed men,

and in their willfulness they hamstringed oxen.

⁷Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce,

and their wrath, for it is cruel!

I will divide them in Jacob

and scatter them in Israel.

⁸“Judah, your brothers shall praise you;
your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;
your father's sons shall bow down before you.

⁹Judah is a lion's cub;
from the prey, my son, you have gone up.

He stooped down; he crouched as a lion
and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?

¹⁰The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
until tribute comes to him;
and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

¹¹Binding his foal to the vine
and his donkey's colt to the choice vine,
he has washed his garments in wine
and his vesture in the blood of grapes.

¹²His eyes are darker than wine,
and his teeth whiter than milk.

¹³“Zebulun shall dwell at the shore of the sea;
he shall become a haven for ships,
and his border shall be at Sidon.

¹⁴“Issachar is a strong donkey,
crouching between the sheepfolds.

¹⁵He saw that a resting place was good,
and that the land was pleasant,

so he bowed his shoulder to bear,
and became a servant at forced labor.

¹⁶“Dan shall judge his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.

¹⁷Dan shall be a serpent in the way,
a viper by the path,
that bites the horse's heels
so that his rider falls backward.

¹⁸I wait for your salvation, O LORD.

¹⁹“Raiders shall raid Gad,
but he shall raid at their heels.

²⁰“Asher's food shall be rich,
and he shall yield royal delicacies.

²¹“Naphtali is a doe let loose
that bears beautiful fawns.

²²“Joseph is a fruitful bough,
a fruitful bough by a spring;
his branches run over the wall.

²³The archers bitterly attacked him,
shot at him, and harassed him severely,
²⁴yet his bow remained unmoved;
his arms were made agile
by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob
(from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),
²⁵by the God of your father who will help you,

by the Almighty who will bless you
with blessings of heaven above,
blessings of the deep that crouches beneath,
blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

²⁶The blessings of your father
are mighty beyond the blessings of my parents,
up to the bounties of the everlasting hills.

May they be on the head of Joseph,
and on the brow of him who was set apart from his brothers.

²⁷“Benjamin is a ravenous wolf,
in the morning devouring the prey
and at evening dividing the spoil.”

Jacob's Death and Burial

²⁸All these are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to them as he blessed them, blessing each with the blessing suitable to him. ²⁹Then he commanded them and said to them, “I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰in the cave that is in the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place. ³¹There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife. There they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah— ³²the field and the cave that is in it were bought from the Hittites.” ³³When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Work

- Thank God for giving you an identity that does not depend on your performance.
- Praise God for calling you to himself to continue in his creative and redemptive work, and for the abilities he has given you to bring him glory.

Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the hours of this night, so that we who are weary from the changes and chances of this life may rest in your eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 133)

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

Wonder what your next step in spiritual formation is? Consider getting involved in a Growth Group.

For a handy guide to the devotional elements and an archive of past issues, visit ccotc.org/devotional.