

**31A\*THE TIMELESS PSALMS:  
A CALL TO WORSHIP  
EASTER DAY A 2014  
PSALM 118: 1-2, 14-24**

Today, I come to give thanks to the Lord my God, who is my glorious Song!  
**Today, we come to give thanks to the Lord our God, who is our glorious Song!**

Today, I come to give thanks to the Lord my God, who is my Almighty Strength!  
**Today, we come to give thanks to the Lord our God, who is our mighty Strength!**

Today, I come to celebrate and sing about the great goodness of God, whose faithful love endures forever. The Holy One is the victor over my every sin.  
**Today, we come to celebrate and sing about the great goodness of God, whose faithful love endures forever. The Holy One is the victor over our every sin and faithlessness, and yet is with us in that victory. Thanks be to our Holy God! Amen.**

**PSALM 118: 1-2, 14-24**

**1** Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good!

His faithful love endures forever.

**2** Let the congregation of Israel repeat:

"His faithful love endures forever."

**14** The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my victory.

**15** Songs of joy and victory are sung in the camp of the godly.

The strong right arm of the LORD has done glorious things!

**16** The strong right arm of the LORD is raised in triumph.

The strong right arm of the LORD has done glorious things!

**17** I will not die, but I will live to tell what the LORD has done.

**18** The LORD has punished me severely,

but he has not handed me over to death.

**19** Open for me the gates where the righteous enter,

and I will go in and thank the LORD.

**20** Those gates lead to the presence of the LORD,

and the godly enter there.

**21** I thank you for answering my prayer and saving me!

**22** The stone rejected by the builders has now become the cornerstone.

**23** This is the LORD's doing, and it is marvellous to see.

**24** This is the day the LORD has made.

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

**19** Open for me the gates where the righteous enter,

and I will go in and thank the LORD.

**20** Those gates lead to the presence of the LORD,

and the godly enter there.

**21** I thank you for answering my prayer and saving me!

**22** The stone rejected by the builders has now become the cornerstone.

**23** This is the LORD's doing, and it is marvellous to see.

**24** This is the day the LORD has made.

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

**PRAYERS OF THANKFULNESS & PETITION:  
EASTER DAY A 2014  
PSALM 118: 1-2, 14-24**

Holy God, as a community of faith we come to share in our worship of you; to build each other up in faith, love and hope; to confess to God and to each other how we have failed in our discipleship; to accept in humility the forgiveness that God gives to us; and to be in fellowship with each other and to encourage and bless each other in our journey through life. We pray that our thoughts, hopes and dreams are centred only on God in this time of worship; and because of God's faithful love for each one of us, - that our inner beings are focussed on the songs and prayers of thankfulness, because of God's merciful forgiveness. May we each respond in love to God's love—and be a genuine witness to that love in our personal and community living and loving.

Generous God, today we come, as individuals and as a community to give thanks to the Lord our God, for God's continuing blessings of goodness and mercy towards us all. Today, we come with our personal agendas, our fears and anxieties, our regrets and human weaknesses; to offer our thanks to the Holy One who is always gracious and generous with the gifts of faithful and enduring love towards every person here. Today, we also come with our community agendas that are overloaded with our fears and anxieties, our uncertainties about who and what we are and what God wants and asks of us. Together, we call now on God's faithful and enduring love to give us again that sense of the victory that God has already won for us; and we join in giving thanks and celebrating with God, who forever is our Almighty Strength and our glorious Song.

Creating God, the psalmist sang: *"The Lord is my strength and my song... songs of joy and victory are sung in the camp of the godly"*. Holy God, we all know that there are times when it is difficult to sing God's praises in our own "camp", because of the struggles of life and living; and that even though God is indeed our Strength, there are times when we feel weak and helpless. Help us to be like the Psalmist who also sang: *"I will not die, but I will live to tell what the Lord has done."* We give thanks for the holy life of God that is within each of us that renews and revitalises us when we are "down and out" in our living and loving. May we always have the capacity to sing about what God has done for us and the way God has guided and blessed us. May we always be willing to sing the refrain: *"This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it..."* giving *"...thanks to the Lord for he is good! His faithful love endures forever..."* Amen.

**A PERSONAL MEDITATION:  
EASTER DAY A 2014  
PSALM 118: 1-2, 14-24**

*“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.”*  
How do we know what is “faithful love”? Can we only truly understand and know what is “faithful love” when we have experienced “unfaithful love”? As I experienced the breakup of my marriage in addition to a trusted relationship, the word “fidelity” became very important to me. It seemed to sum up for me all that I had hoped for and lost – and for me –God’s faithful love is a perfect expression of fidelity. Various dictionaries define “fidelity” as: faithfulness, steadfastness, authenticity, loyalty, trustworthiness, commitment, reliability, allegiance and constancy; and devotion to a relationship, to a cause, or to a belief. How precious is that “faithful love” that God has for each one of us—and for all that has been and will be created! What a generous gift from God!

Creative pause:       The fidelity of God’s faithfulness is beyond question!

*“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.”*  
What exactly is the “love” that God has for us? How can we describe it? According to some commentators and in another context, the word “love” in the time of Jesus was described as being “attached” to a group or a person—and in the way our responses and behaviour demonstrate that attachment. In this electronic age with all its gadgetry, an “attachment” takes on a whole new meaning, as we frequently attach images, explanatory or defining comments or statement/s to reinforce our message in a letter, text or document. I have often used the words *“I am very attached to that person/vision/commitment”*—and so I give it all my energy and enthusiasm to enable that attachment to grow and bear fruit, and thus a deeper and richer relationship evolves; or a cause is strengthened because of the time and commitment that is given to it.

Creative pause:       Are you “attached” to someone, a group or a cause?

*“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.”*  
In this electronic age, to “endure” means that our messages may be stored by “someone” forever! The “faithful love” of God is timeless and persists in its measureless generosity. However, to “endure” also has a different meaning—we can also “endure” in a long-suffering, complaint-filled and well-rehearsed litany of woe to anyone who will listen to us. There is nothing *“hardly done by”* in the enduring nature of God’s faithful love and attachment to all God created. The faithfulness of God and God’s love for the created world and especially for humanity is something we have experienced and we cling to, as God’s promises have been fulfilled in yours and my lifetime along with countless other people. The Old Testament has many, many references to God’s faithfulness, and God’s steadfast love, and for me, Lamentations has the greatest of promises: *“...Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this. The unfailing love of the Lord never ends! By his mercies we have been kept from complete destruction. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each day...”*<sup>1</sup> Jesus confirms this for us all with his own words and actions as he prayed in his “High Priestly prayer”<sup>2</sup>.

Creative pause:       *“...The unfailing love of the Lord never ends... Great is his faithfulness...”*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>-Lamentations 3:21-23

<sup>2</sup> John’s Gospel prelude and prayer chapters 14-17

Acknowledgements:

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