

## News and Prayer Update for 31<sup>st</sup> January

### **Rostherne with Bollington, St John High Legh and St Paul Over Tabley**

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**Pastoral Worker:** Mr Stewart Jackson Tel: 07835 249 835

**Do You Need to Talk To Someone?** Call any of the above, we have other people who are also experienced in listening who are willing to help, so **please do call, we are here for you.** All conversations are in strict confidence.



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Link for this week's recorded service is: <https://youtu.be/Bj5rsLr8-7g>

**HYMN: Christ Whose Glory Fills the Sky** (Charles Wesley 1707 – 1788)

Christ, whose glory fills the skies  
Christ, the true, the only light,  
Sun of Righteousness, arise,  
triumph o'er the shades of night;  
Dayspring from on high, be near,  
Daystar, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn  
Unaccompanied by thee;  
Joyless is the day's return,  
till thy mercy's beams I see,  
till thou inward light impart,  
glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine,  
pierce the gloom of sin and grief;  
fill me, radiance divine,  
scatter all my unbelief;  
more and more thyself display,  
shining to the perfect day.

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### **Collect for the Presentation of Christ in the Temple**

Almighty and ever-living God,  
clothed in majesty,  
whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple,  
in substance of our flesh:  
grant that we may be presented to you  
with pure and clean hearts,  
by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### **Psalm: Psalm 24**

- 1 The earth is the Lord's and all that fills it, ♦  
the compass of the world and all who dwell therein.
- 2 For he has founded it upon the seas ♦  
and set it firm upon the rivers of the deep.
- 3 'Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord, ♦  
or who can rise up in his holy place?'
- 4 'Those who have clean hands and a pure heart, ♦

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- who have not lifted up their soul to an idol, nor sworn an oath to a lie;
- <sup>5</sup> 'They shall receive a blessing from the Lord, ♦  
a just reward from the God of their salvation.'
- <sup>6</sup> Such is the company of those who seek him, ♦  
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.
- <sup>7</sup> Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up, you everlasting doors; ♦  
and the King of glory shall come in.
- <sup>8</sup> 'Who is the King of glory?' ♦  
'The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord who is mighty in battle.'
- <sup>9</sup> Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up, you everlasting doors; ♦  
and the King of glory shall come in.
- <sup>10</sup> 'Who is this King of glory?' ♦  
'The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.'

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### **Old Testament Reading:** Malachi 3: 1-5

<sup>1</sup>See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>2</sup>But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap;

<sup>3</sup>he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness.

<sup>4</sup>Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

<sup>5</sup>Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

### **New Testament Reading:** Hebrews 2: 14-end

<sup>14</sup> Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,

<sup>15</sup> and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death.

<sup>16</sup> For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham.

<sup>17</sup> Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people.

<sup>18</sup> Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

### **Gospel Reading:** Luke 2: 22-40

<sup>22</sup> When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord

<sup>23</sup> (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'),

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<sup>24</sup> and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon;<sup>[d]</sup> this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him.

<sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

<sup>27</sup> Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law,

<sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup> 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;

<sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

<sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.'

<sup>33</sup> And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.

<sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed

<sup>35</sup> so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

<sup>36</sup> There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage,

<sup>37</sup> then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day.

<sup>38</sup> At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup> When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

<sup>40</sup> The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

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### **REFLECTION ON THE READINGS – Candlemas** (Revd Trish)

Over the last few weeks through the season of Epiphany, we have wondered at the stories of the manifestation of Christ – through the stories of his revelation to the Magi, His baptism, calling of the disciples and the beginning of his ministry of miracles and healing.

And today the season concludes with the story of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple – the Festival we also call Candlemas when Simeon and Anna recognise the baby Jesus – brought to the Temple by his parents – as the Salvation of the world. And at this point, we are signposted to the next – very different season – of Lent. Our focus is turned away from the baby Jesus to the man who – for love of those he came to save – was crucified. We cease looking back to the birth of Jesus and forward to his crucifixion and resurrection – our turning point from crib to cross.

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At Christmas we all received the Christ child into our hearts. We saw him, recognised him and worshipped him. Now he is brought to the temple and, along with Simeon and Anna, we must recognise him anew and sense how he is growing within us – as he grew as a human baby into childhood and then into adulthood. We recognise the caring power of Christ within us; and we seek to allow his flame of love to fire up our own weak sparks in readiness for what is ahead.

Because, as we put away the last of the Christmas decorations, we turn our hands to the real work of Christmas. The theologian Howard Thurmann reminds us about our calling as Christians as he writes:

Now that Christmas is over, and the song of the angels is stilled, the star in the sky is gone, the wise men are home and the shepherds are back with their sheep, now the work of Christmas begins.

To find the lost and the lonely

To heal the broken-hearted

To feed the hungry

To rebuild the nations

To bring peace among people

And to make the music of God in our hearts.

In this story of the presentation of Christ in the temple, Simeon recognises Jesus as the Light of the world – a light not just for the Jews but for the whole world. BUT he also sees that the way of his life will be a way of suffering because he will shine a burning light into the dark corners of our lives and be opposed. Simeon warns Mary of the sword that will pierce her heart.

The writer of Hebrews reinforces that message about 70 years later after the fulfilment of Simeon's prophecy.

Jesus is the light of the world, but as that light battles with the darkness that we have brought into our world, it will take him to the cross.

And Lent which is just around the corner is a time to reflect on our own contribution to the darkness that brought Jesus to the cross. However, we must not allow ourselves to be overcome or disheartened or to doubt either God's love for us or the part we can each play in bringing his Kingdom into this world.

I wonder if any of you have any snowdrops growing in your gardens yet – I have. I have some here too.

Snowdrops are the first of the spring bulbs to flower. They demonstrate that the darkness of winter has not meant the death of life - for new life is beginning to shoot everywhere and the snowdrops are the herald of this new life.

As the snowdrops emerge through the soil their clear white tip is like a flame reminding us of the purity of Christ's flame of love and the candles of Candlemas which used to be dedicated at that festival. And then as they develop we see the white flowers develop bowed down.

These white flowers bowed down remind us of the purity and obedience of Mary and for both these reasons it is thought that snowdrops were first brought to Britain in the

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fifteenth century by Italian monks to remind them of home and to use in their Candlemas celebrations.

The snowdrops along with other signs of spring, remind us that burning throughout creation is a flame that cannot be put out; and in looking at them we can be reminded that within us is a power that cannot be overcome – the power of love which Jesus shows us as he stretches out his arms on the cross ready to embrace us all. In Christ we recognise a light that cannot be extinguished.

The snowdrop reminds each of us that as we travel through the darkness of Lent, Passiontide and Holy Week, we carry a light from Christmas and Candlemas that nothing can put out; that within us burns the hope of Christ which gives us a resilience and strength.

**HYMN: Colours of Day** (Sue Mclellan b.1951, John Paculabo, 1946 - 2013, Keith Rycroft b 1949)

1. Colours of day dawn into the mind  
The sun has come up, the night is behind.  
Go down in the city, into the street,  
And let's give the message to the people we meet.

*Chorus: So light up the fire and let the flame burn,  
Open the door, let Jesus return.  
Take seeds of his Spirit, let the fruit grow,  
Tell the people of Jesus, let His love show.*

2. Go through the park, on into the town;  
The sun still shines on, it never goes down.  
The light of the world is risen again;  
The people of darkness are needing our friend.

*Chorus: So light up the fire....*

3. Open your eyes, look into the sky,  
The darkness has come, the sun came to die.  
The evening drawn on, the sun disappears,  
But Jesus is living, His Spirit is near.

*Chorus: So light up the fire...*

**Prayers for the coming week** (Intercessions for Candlemas from Revd Trish)

Living Lord, May the flame of your pure love within in us, burn away any darkness within us and may your spirit enable us to recognise you and your saving grace around us even in the most unexpected of places.

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We pray for your church as we continue to take your love into the world and deliver the work of Christmas:

To find the lost and the lonely

To heal the broken-hearted

To feed the hungry

To rebuild the nations

To bring peace among people

And to make the music of God in our hearts.

May we be inspired by your spirit.

**Lord in your mercy – hear our prayer**

We remember before God those in our communities who have been affected by the recent floods – especially in Little Bollington: the businesses already hard-hit by the Covid 19 restrictions further affected by damage to premises; the homes – previously a place of safety become a place of risk; farmers yet again challenged as they continue to care for the land and their stock. May they all know the reassuring presence of your Spirit.

**Lord in your mercy – hear our prayer**

We bring before God the leaders of the nations and communities and the decisions they must make about recent events especially the Covid 19 Pandemic; decisions about urgent matters including climate change and sustainable living and the peace and prosperity of the world. May they know the guiding light of your Spirit.

**Lord in your mercy – hear our prayer**

We bring before Christ, who left riches and became poor for our sakes, all those who are need – physical or spiritual; all those who are ill in body mind or spirit; all those who mourn. May they know Christ's healing touch in their lives. We pray too for those who are world-weary, the worn and the weak that they will know the strength of the Holy Spirit.

**Lord in your mercy – hear our prayer**

God of eternity, we remember those who live with you now in the fullness of Your life. May we too come, by your grace, to share the life which has no ending.

Lord God, you kept faith with Simeon and Anna and showed them the Infant King. Give us grace to put all our trust in your promises, and the patience to wait for their fulfilment.

**Merciful Father accept these prayers for the sake of your son Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Prayer for February:**

*With Valentine's Day coming in the middle of this month it is a good time to think about the virtue of love.*

Father God thank you that you love and value everyone. Help us to follow the commandment of Jesus 'to love one another as he has loved us'.

Please give us an awareness of your wonderful love for us so that an attitude of love may pervade our whole existence. Give us wisdom, patience, respect and kindness so that we follow the commandant of love in all our relationships.

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## NOTICES

❖ **Services – each of the PCCs in our United Benefice have decided to suspend worship services and private prayer in our Churches until mid-March due to the current situation with the pandemic.**

We will continue to stream a service each Sunday.

### Other Services for you to join:

- **Sunday morning 10.30 – Morning Worship** This is live online via Zoom Please join from 10.15 onwards and we will have time for a chat afterwards for those who wish to.  
Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82267599699?pwd=R2FRd0JGWVhXQlZMSVlyTTBCWWxlZz09>  
If you require the ID and Passcode please contact Revd Patricia.  
(this service is in addition to the weekly pre-recorded online service).

- **Wednesday Morning 09.00 – Celtic Morning Prayer** This is live online via Zoom with Revd Trish Cope.  
Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86430788721?pwd=dGVuMXpxWDkzTU5FbENraIB2Q09JQT09>  
If you require the ID and Password for this meeting please contact Revd Trish: Tel: 07703 470101; Email: [trishcope2012@btinternet.com](mailto:trishcope2012@btinternet.com)

The reading and psalm for this meeting are included at the end of this Update. This service uses a separate order of service. If anyone would like a hard copy of this service booklet please email Trish and she will get one to you as soon as possible.

- **Thursday Evening 19.00 – Telephone Service for Evening Worship**  
Please contact Chris Stanisstreet if you need further information or help.  
To join this service:  
1. DIAL THIS NUMBER: **0333 0164 757**  
2. You will be asked to enter the CONFERENCE ROOM NUMBER followed by the HASH KEY # . The number is: **358 104 39 #**  
3. You will then be asked to enter the PIN NUMBER followed by the HASH KEY # . The pin number is **1843 #**  
We can then speak to each other.

You can dial in any time between 6.45pm and 7.00pm.

The service will begin at 7.00pm and uses the Worship at Home booklet. Please say the words in bold and try to ensure that there is no background noise - I will need to move my snoring dog 'Bailey' into another room, that's for sure! Chris.

- **Suggestions:**  
If you have any other ideas please let us know - contact Revd Philip by phone 01565 830595 or email. [robinsonpj50@gmail.com](mailto:robinsonpj50@gmail.com)

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❖ **Coffee and Chat Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January:** We are having a Zoom Coffee and Chat meeting on Wednesday mornings from 11.00 am to 12.00 noon.  
Just click on the link below.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89014498190?pwd=WXJWU0JySGNqR05VRU1qOE1jbGwxQT09>

If you need the meeting ID and Password for this meeting please contact Patricia.  
Email: [pmrobinson51@gmail.com](mailto:pmrobinson51@gmail.com) or Tel: 01565 830 595

### ❖ **Join the Prayer Chain:**

Our Reader, Chris Stanisstreet has organised a **Prayer Chain** which is done by email and telephone. The idea behind this, is that when a specific prayer request is made, it is passed on by group e-mail to the people on the list who then pray for the particular situation.

If you would like to receive prayer requests or would like to make a prayer request, please let Chris Stanisstreet know:

Tel: 01925 755559; Mob 07918 981 723; [stanbess2003@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:stanbess2003@yahoo.co.uk)

❖ **Offering and Fund Raising** – Please continue to give if you can

### ❖ **Knutsford Food Bank**

Now the New Year is here please help us support the Knutsford Food Bank by bringing items to church or asking us to collect them for The Welcome - the New Year is a time when families and people in need can find themselves in difficulty. Contact Revd Patricia for more information or collection of items.

### ❖ **Homemade Jams For Sale:**

There are various Jams and Marmalade available at prices between £2.00 / £3.00 per jar depending on size - please order by telephoning the Vicarage we will deliver them to you as we go about our duties.

St Mary's are offering: Freshly made Chunky Seville Orange Marmalade £2.50.  
Also available – Finely Shredded Marmalade, Strawberry, Raspberry, Damson and Gooseberry Jams

St Paul's are offering: Strawberry, Strawberry +Gooseberry, Greengage, Gooseberry and Raspberry jams.

### ❖ **Morning and Night Prayer**

*If anyone does not yet have access to the "Worship at Home" booklet containing the Order of Service for Morning Prayer or Night Prayer, please contact the Vicarage, as there are large print copies and ordinary size ones that can be posted out or versions that can be e-mailed.*

### **Bible Readings and Psalms for the Coming Week from the Lectionary.**

*Here are some suggestions for more Psalms and Bible readings to use with Morning and Night Prayer:*

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Readings for Morning Prayer: These readings usually follow on from each other so you get a bit more of the story each day (except on special Saints Days).

Mon 1<sup>st</sup> Feb – Psalm 1; Hosea Chapter 9; 1 Corinthians 12: 12-end

Tues 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb – Psalm 5; Hosea Chapter 10; 1 Corinthians Chapter 13

Wed 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb – Psalm 119: 1-32; Hosea 11: 1-11; 1 Corinthians 14: 1-19

Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> Feb – Psalm 15; Hosea 11: 12 – 12: end; 1 Corinthians 14: 20-end

Fri 5<sup>th</sup> Feb – Psalm 19; Hosea 13: 1-14; 1 Corinthians 16: 1-9

Sat 6<sup>th</sup> Feb – Psalm 23; Hosea Chapter 14; 1 Corinthians 16: 10-end

### Readings for Night Prayer (for Epiphany)

#### Short Reading:

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. (Titus 2.11)

#### Psalm 16

- 1 Preserve me, O God, for in you have I taken refuge; ♦  
I have said to the Lord, 'You are my lord, all my good depends on you.'
- 2 All my delight is upon the godly that are in the land, ♦  
upon those who are noble in heart.
- 3 Though the idols are legion that many run after, ♦  
their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, neither make mention of their names  
upon my lips.
- 4 The Lord himself is my portion and my cup; ♦  
in your hands alone is my fortune.
- 5 My share has fallen in a fair land; ♦  
indeed, I have a goodly heritage.
- 6 I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel, ♦  
and in the night watches he instructs my heart.
- 7 I have set the Lord always before me; ♦  
he is at my right hand; I shall not fall.
- 8 Wherefore my heart is glad and my spirit rejoices; ♦  
my flesh also shall rest secure.
- 9 For you will not abandon my soul to Death, ♦  
nor suffer your faithful one to see the Pit.
- 10 You will show me the path of life; in your presence is the fullness of joy ♦  
and in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

#### Collect:

King of kings and Lord of lords,  
making the true light to shine:  
lighten our darkness now and evermore  
that with our lips and in our lives  
we may praise you;  
for you are our God, now and for ever.

#### Blessing:

May the living waters of Christ cleanse us,  
may the Spirit descend upon us,  
and the blessing of God be with us  
this night and always.

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### Psalm and reading for Celtic Morning Prayer 3<sup>rd</sup> February

**Psalm:** Psalm 119: 1-32;

#### *1 Aleph*

- 1 Blessed are those whose way is pure, ♦  
who walk in the law of the Lord.
- 2 Blessed are those who keep his testimonies ♦  
and seek him with their whole heart,
- 3 Those who do no wickedness, ♦  
but walk in his ways.
- 4 You, O Lord, have charged ♦  
that we should diligently keep your commandments.
- 5 O that my ways were made so direct ♦  
that I might keep your statutes.
- 6 Then should I not be put to shame, ♦  
because I have regard for all your commandments.
- 7 I will thank you with an unfeigned heart, ♦  
when I have learned your righteous judgements.
- 8 I will keep your statutes; ♦  
O forsake me not utterly.

#### *2 Beth*

- 9 How shall young people cleanse their way ♦  
to keep themselves according to your word?
- 10 With my whole heart have I sought you; ♦  
O let me not go astray from your commandments.
- 11 Your words have I hidden within my heart, ♦  
that I should not sin against you.
- 12 Blessed are you, O Lord; ♦  
O teach me your statutes.
- 13 With my lips have I been telling ♦  
of all the judgements of your mouth.
- 14 I have taken greater delight in the way of your testimonies ♦  
than in all manner of riches.
- 15 I will meditate on your commandments ♦  
and contemplate your ways.
- 16 My delight shall be in your statutes ♦  
and I will not forget your word.

#### *3 Gimel*

- 17 O do good to your servant that I may live, ♦  
and so shall I keep your word.
- 18 Open my eyes, that I may see ♦  
the wonders of your law.
- 19 I am a stranger upon earth; ♦  
hide not your commandments from me.
- 20 My soul is consumed at all times ♦  
with fervent longing for your judgements.
- 21 You have rebuked the arrogant; ♦  
cursed are those who stray from your commandments.

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- 22 Turn from me shame and rebuke, ♦  
for I have kept your testimonies.
- 23 Rulers also sit and speak against me, ♦  
but your servant meditates on your statutes.
- 24 For your testimonies are my delight; ♦  
they are my faithful counsellors.

### 4 Daleth

- 25 My soul cleaves to the dust; ♦  
O give me life according to your word.
- 26 I have acknowledged my ways and you have answered me; ♦  
O teach me your statutes.
- 27 Make me understand the way of your commandments, ♦  
and so shall I meditate on your wondrous works.
- 28 My soul melts away in tears of sorrow; ♦  
raise me up according to your word.
- 29 Take from me the way of falsehood; ♦  
be gracious to me through your law.
- 30 I have chosen the way of truth ♦  
and your judgements have I laid before me.
- 31 I hold fast to your testimonies; ♦  
O Lord, let me not be put to shame.
- 32 I will run the way of your commandments, ♦  
when you have set my heart at liberty.

### **Reading:** Hosea 11: 1-11;

- 1 When Israel was a child, I loved him,  
and out of Egypt I called my son.
- 2 The more I called them,  
the more they went from me;  
they kept sacrificing to the Baals,  
and offering incense to idols.
- 3 Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk,  
I took them up in my arms;  
but they did not know that I healed them.
- 4 I led them with cords of human kindness,  
with bands of love.  
I was to them like those  
who lift infants to their cheeks.  
I bent down to them and fed them.
- 5 They shall return to the land of Egypt,  
and Assyria shall be their king,  
because they have refused to return to me.
- 6 The sword rages in their cities,  
it consumes their oracle-priests,  
and devours because of their schemes.
- 7 My people are bent on turning away from me.  
To the Most High they call,  
but he does not raise them up at all.
- 8 How can I give you up, Ephraim?  
How can I hand you over, O Israel?

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How can I make you like Admah?

How can I treat you like Zeboim?

My heart recoils within me;

my compassion grows warm and tender.

<sup>9</sup> I will not execute my fierce anger;

I will not again destroy Ephraim;

for I am God and no mortal,

the Holy One in your midst,

and I will not come in wrath.

<sup>10</sup> They shall go after the LORD,

who roars like a lion;

when he roars,

his children shall come trembling from the west.

<sup>11</sup> They shall come trembling like birds from Egypt,

and like doves from the land of Assyria;

and I will return them to their homes, says the LORD.