

## A song to sing or read: Here I Am Lord

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.  
All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

### Chorus

*Here I am, Lord; Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.  
I will hold your people in my heart.*

I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain  
I have wept for love of them. They turn away.  
I will break their heart of stone, give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send? **Chorus**

I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide till their hearts are satisfied.  
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send? **Chorus**

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## Closing Prayer

Our Father, we give you thanks for the freedom we enjoy in this country. We have been restricted from what we knew as normal. We thank you that we are free to read and discuss your word. We pray for those who have lost loved ones and ask for your comfort as they mourn. Likewise, may the disruption to our lives be used by us in reassessing what is important in your world. **Amen**

**Thank you to David Pattinson for preparing today's reflection.**



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Church in a Bag  
Sunday 28 June  
Dubbo Uniting Church



## A Gathering

Will your anchor hold in the storms of life  
when the clouds unfold their wings of strife?  
When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain  
will your anchor drift, or firm remain?

### Chorus

*We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
steadfast and sure while the billows roll.  
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move.  
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love!*

Will your eyes behold through the morning light  
The city of gold and the harbour bright?  
Will you anchor safe by the heavenly shore  
when life's storms are past for evermore? **Chorus**

*(Methodist Hymn Book No 634, Verses 1 and 4  
Music and Lyrics in the Public Domain)*



These verses remind us of the storms of life. Not that we need a reminder of the storms but it is good to remind ourselves of our anchor point. The virus is a storm that is common to the whole world, and Jesus is the one anchor point that is also common to the whole world.

## Preparation

Our Lord and our King, we thank you for your great sacrifice, for your example in facing difficulties without side stepping the issues, knowing that you were not alone. You drew strength from your Father and this is also our prayer as we too draw strength from Him. Help us today as we worship and reflect on these lectionary readings knowing that there are thousands of people all over the world also doing this. We ask for your Holy Spirit (our helper) to strengthen our resolve to face difficulties in this time of uncertainty. These things we ask in your name. **Amen**

## First Reading: Genesis 22: 1-14

Throughout the Old Testament there are many references to the Messiah. In the book "Portraits of Christ" the writer points out there are many, many prophecies relating to Jesus. Today's Genesis reading is just one comparison. God was prepared to give his Son as a sacrifice as was Abraham when asked if he was prepared to give up his son, Isaac. God asked him to go to the region of Moriah, that being the region where Jerusalem now stands and Jesus was sacrificed on a hill just outside Jerusalem. On the third day Abraham saw the hill and in his heart he knew he had lost his son three days previously. Jesus was dead for three days. On the third day Abraham received his son back and on the third day Jesus was returned to God. Isaac carried the wood on his back to the mountain similarly Jesus carried his cross as far as he could to the hill. Verse 8 says Abraham answered "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering" and as God did provide so Abraham called that place "The Lord will Provide".

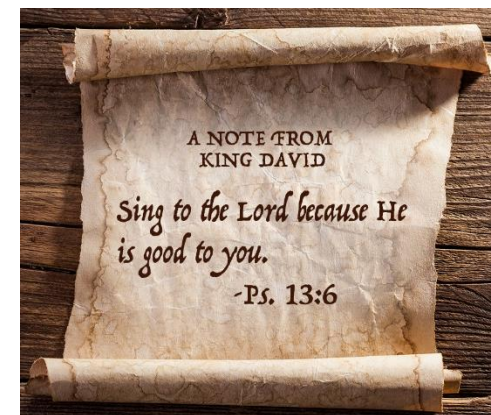
Another example written well before Jesus' time is found in Isaiah 53, verses 5 and 6 ".....But because of our sins he was wounded, beaten because of the evil we did. We are healed by the punishment he suffered, made whole by the blows he received. All of us are like sheep that were lost, each of us going his own way, but the Lord made the punishment fall on him, the punishment all of us deserved". God has provided, and does provide, just as we know the ultimate sacrifice was in Jesus' death and resurrection.



## Second Reading: Psalm 13 – A Psalm of David

Four times in this Psalm, David says "How long?" Remembering Abraham's promise of a son, Abraham must have asked "How long?" many times whilst waiting for an heir, the fulfillment of God's promise. In 2 Peter 3, verse 8, (Message version) we are reminded of God's "timetable" – "With God, one day is as good as 1,000 years and 1,000 years as a day. God isn't late with his promise as some measure lateness. He's restraining himself on account of you, holding back the end because he doesn't want anyone lost. He's giving everyone space and time to change".

David in this Psalm voices his frustration and longing and then sees past himself and changes "track" and says "But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord for he has been good to me". What a great conclusion and lesson for us, that it is okay to complain to God but never forget his love and salvation.



## Third Reading: Matthew 10:40-42

Chapter 10 can be hard to connect to Abraham and Isaac except that in the early part of the Chapter, Jesus sends his disciples out to preach and heal relying on God's provision. They are warned very strongly that it will not be easy and that they will be tested and to expect resistance and rejection. As with Abraham "God provides".

As we know, Abraham was rewarded for his obedience and we will be rewarded for our obedience – perhaps not in this world but in the next. We should all be challenged by this. Verse 42 in Good News Bible says "You can be sure that whoever gives even a drink of cold water to one of the least of these my followers because he is my follower, will certainly receive a reward".