

# *Singing With The Exiles*

Breaking Down The Gates

March 26, 2025

## AS WE GATHER

Judean exiles in Babylon were weary! They were stuck with sights and sounds that were so different. How they longed to be free! Enter Cyrus, a Persian king, whom God calls His “anointed one” (Isaiah 45:1). When we feel as though the devil has locked the gate and thrown away the key, God sends us Jesus, who is the Anointed One! During His earthly ministry, He opened eyes and ears and hearts—He even opened graves! If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36). Lord Jesus, we thank You that we are not locked in with no way out. We are free! Amen.

## WELCOME INVOCATION

**WE SING**                      **“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”**                      **LSB #700:1,3**

### CALL TO WORSHIP (Psalm 51)

P: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love; according to Your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

**C: Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.**

P: For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

**C: Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are proved right when You speak and justified when You judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.**

P: Surely You desire truth in the inner parts; You teach me wisdom in the inmost place.

**C: Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.**

P: Hide Your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

**C: Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from Your presence or take Your Holy Spirit from me.**

P: Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

**C: You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; You do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.**

P: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

**C: And so we come to You, O God, with broken spirits and contrite hearts, trusting only in the merits of Jesus to cleanse, heal and forgive us.**

(a time of silent reflection)

P: Upon this your confession, and through the saving work of our Lord Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven; in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**C: O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise!**

**WE SING**                      **Amazing Love (You Are My King)**

## **PRAYER**

P: O almighty God, merciful Father, You opened a way for your ancient people Israel to return from Babylon to the Promised Land and through Your Son, Jesus, You open up for us the way to everlasting life. Free us from the chains that bind us so that we follow where You lead, all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, we pray.

**C: Amen.**

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING**

**Isaiah 45:1-8**

<sup>1</sup>Thus says the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed: <sup>2</sup>"I will go before you and level the exalted places, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, <sup>3</sup>I will give you the treasures of darkness and the hoards in secret places, that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. <sup>4</sup>For the sake of My servant Jacob, and Israel My chosen, I call you by your name, I name you, though you do not know Me. <sup>5</sup>I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides Me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know Me, <sup>6</sup>that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides Me; I am the Lord, and there is no other. <sup>7</sup>I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity, I am the Lord, who does all these things. <sup>8</sup>"Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit; let the earth cause them both to sprout; I the Lord have created it."

## **EPISTLE READING**

**Hebrews 6:13-20**

<sup>13</sup>For when God made a promise to Abraham, since He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore by Himself, <sup>14</sup>saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." <sup>15</sup>And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. <sup>16</sup>For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. <sup>17</sup>So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of His purpose, He guaranteed it with an oath, <sup>18</sup>so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. <sup>19</sup>We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, <sup>20</sup>where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

## **GOSPEL READING**

**Matthew 9:27-34**

<sup>27</sup>And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." <sup>28</sup>When He entered the house, the blind men came to Him, and Jesus said to them,

“Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.”  
<sup>29</sup>Then He touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith be it done to you.”  
<sup>30</sup>And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, “See that no one knows about it.”  
<sup>31</sup>But they went away and spread His fame through all that district.

<sup>32</sup>As they were going away, behold, a demon-oppressed man who was mute was brought to Him.  
<sup>33</sup>And when the demon had been cast out, the mute man spoke. And the crowds marveled, saying, “Never was anything like this seen in Israel.”  
<sup>34</sup>But the Pharisees said, “He casts out demons by the prince of demons.”

**KIDS' TIME** **“Willpower”** *DCE Liz Peters*

**MEDITATION** **“Breaking Down the Gates”** *Pastor Doug Slavens*

**MEMORIAL HAND BELLS** **“Beneath the Cross of Jesus”**

**PRAYERS | LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**CLOSING BLESSING**

**WE SING** **“Abide With Me”** **LSB #878: 1,2,5,6**

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Note – Our offerings are received in the offering boxes located near our entrances  
*God is with us! We live our whole life as an offering of thanks to Him.*

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Our Lenten Midweek Series continues on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 PM.  
 Fellowship meals are served from 5–6:15 pm.

### *“Singing With The Exiles”*

Wednesday, March 26 Wednesday, April 2 Wednesday, April 9  Palm Sunday – April 13 Maundy Thursday – April 17 Good Friday – April 18 Easter Sunday – April 20	“Breaking Down The Gates” “Get Out!” “One Little Word Can Fell Him”  (regular worship times) (6:30 PM communion service) (6:30 PM worship service) (6:30 AM, 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM)
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Sunday Series During Lent

### *“You Are . . .”*

Sunday, March 30 Sunday, April 6	“Salt and Light” “My Disciples”
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