

Daily Office Devotional, Friday, April 30, 2021
The week of the fourth Sunday of Easter
The Rev. David W. Perkins, Th.,.D.

Today we celebrate the Feast of Sarah Josepha Buell Hale . (See below.)

Daily Office Lectionary readings

AM Psalm 40, 54; PM Psalm 51

Wisdom 6:12-23; Colossians 3:1-11; Luke 7:1-17

Morning Prayer, Rite 2, page 75, Book of Common Prayer

Evening Prayer, Rite 2, page 115, Book of Common Prayer

Compline (Night Prayer), Page 127, Book of Common Prayer

Daily Office Gospel, Luke 7:1-17

7:1After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. 2A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. 3When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. 4When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, 'He is worthy of having you do this for him, 5for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.' 6And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, 'Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; 7therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. 8For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, "Go," and he goes, and to another, "Come," and he comes, and to my slave, "Do this," and the slave does it.' 9When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, 'I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.' 10When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

11 Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. 12As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. 13When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, 'Do not weep.' 14Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, 'Young man, I say to you, rise!' 15The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. 16Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet has risen among us!' and 'God

has looked favorably on his people!' 17This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

David's Reflections

That Jesus performed healings and that he freed people from evil spirits is beyond dispute in practically every expression of biblical scholarship. The key question has to do with whether Jesus performs these miracles of healing today. Does the Spirit of God continue to work in the world in ways similar to the way God worked in and through the life of Jesus?

The answer to that question does not come with quite the same unanimity. Some argue that God's ways of working in the world differ now and that the church does not continue the healing ministry of Jesus in the same ways that Jesus worked.

In one respect, I would agree. Medical science in that day was only a faint shadow of the healing arts we enjoy now. I would say that all healing is divine, no matter how it comes about. Yet, I also believe that the church has a healing ministry analogous with that of Jesus. The author of Luke-Acts assumes that in his account in Acts. The healing miracles of Jesus are replicated by the Apostles in the early chapters of his narrative.

Unction (anointing for healing) is one of the seven sacraments of the church, not reserved only for people in the moment of death. (See *The Book of Common Prayer*, pages 453-461.) *The Book of Occasional Services* also contains a form for Holy Eucharist that includes prayers for healing and anointing with oil. (See *Book of Occasional Services*, pages 166-173.) *Enriching Our Worship: 2* contains a form for the public healing service with inclusive language.

Healing can take a number of forms: spiritual healing (salvation, forgiveness), physical healing, inner or emotional healing (healing of memories), healing of intergenerational wounds and scars, and deliverance from caughtness in evil and the influence of evil spirits. The Anglican tradition certainly has made room for all of these ministries of the church.

Today, I am grateful that Jesus loves so profoundly that he desires our wholeness. That love creates a hospitable space where we are safe to reveal our needs for healing. May our churches be just such a space, a safe place in which to seek God's healing love through prayer.

Collect of the Day, The Fourth Sunday of Easter

O God, whose Son Jesus is the good shepherd of your people; Grant that when we hear his voice we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 225)

Collect of the Weekdays of Easter

Almighty and everlasting God, you have given your Church the great joy of the resurrection of Jesus Christ: Give us also the greater joy of the kingdom of your elect, when the flock of your Son will share in the final victory of its Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Today we celebrate the Feast of Sarah Josepha Buell Hale, editor and prophetic witness (died April 30, 1879).

http://www.satucket.com/lectionary/sara_hale.htm

Collect of the Feast of Sarah Josepha Buell Hale

Gracious God, we bless your Name for the vision and witness of Sarah Hale, whose advocacy for the ministry of women helped to support the deaconess movement. Make us grateful for your many blessings, that we may come closer to Christ in our own families; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A Collect for Fridays

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, 97)

In the Order of Worship for Evening

Almighty, everlasting God, let our prayer in your sight be as incense, the lifting up of our hands as the evening sacrifice. Give us grace to behold you, present in your Word and Sacraments, and to recognize you in the lives of those around us. Stir up in us the flame of that love which burned in the heart of your Son as he bore his passion, and let it burn in us to eternal life and to the ages of ages. *Amen.* (BCP, 113)

A Collect for Mission

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 280)