

Great Thanksgiving
(*Wind, Rain, and Fire*)

The Lord is always present.

Is the Lord the destructive wind?

No the Lord is not the wind.

Is the Lord the destructive earthquake?

No the Lord is not the earthquake.

Is the Lord the blazing fire?

No the Lord is not the fire.

Where then is the Lord in the midst of my troubles?

Listen to the quiet at the center of the storm, listen for the voice of comfort.

I quiet myself as a weaned child at their mother's breast.

Lover of my soul, You are always present, closer than I can even imagine.

When the flood waters come, You face them with us.

When the wind storms come, You face them with us and do not flee.

When the fires blaze over field and forest, You do not leave us.

When the lightening dances across the sky and thunder echos through the night,

You are always there to hold us close.

From birth to death,

from before conception through life beyond death

You are always there to bless us.

The harshest realities of life are not Your punishment, for you control Your angry.

The painful realities of life are not Your neglect, for you are the source of blessing in every life.

The seasons of life are not a curse upon us, but reveal the many facets of your glory.

We know that Your ways are not our ways, and Your thoughts are not our thoughts,

You understand our confusion.

You understand our disappointment, when what we have built crumbles to the ground.

You understand our anguish, at all we feel we have lost.

You understand life so much more than we do, for we see too little and our time is too short.

This is why your soft voice says: "Do not be afraid."

This is why your comforting voice says: "I will be with you to the very end."

This is why your tender voice seeks to remind us: "I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

This is why in your silence You choose to hold us close and never let us go.

This is why we join in the song of survivors, those on earth and those in heaven proclaiming:

Lord, to You I sing

For You are victorious

Danger washed away

Lord, You are my strength

My power and my salvation

My ancestral God.

I will now proclaim

You Lord are my protector

The Love of my life. *(Exodus 15:1-3)*

You have saved us and in Jesus, You have given us a Savior.
Jesus did not stop the violence, babies still died in Bethlehem.
Jesus did not stop hunger, people were not fed every day on loaves and fishes.
Jesus did not stop poverty
and was not the only one who had parents too poor to afford a lamb for sacrifice.
Jesus did not take all the diseases away,
the man begging at the gate beautiful had to wait for Peter.
Jesus stopped the abuse of one woman caught in adultery, but not all abuse.
Jesus was Your presence.
Jesus showed us that Your will is love and compassion.
Jesus showed us that You never turn anyone away.
Jesus showed us what You can do through the life of those open to Your Spirit.

As we wash our hands, we remember,
that even though Jesus did not wash everyone's feet,
Jesus did step forward to wash the feet of those present at the Passover feast.
Jesus showed us that You did not look for those deserving the honor.
Jesus showed us that sin does not limit the expression of Your love.
Jesus showed us that You are not controlled by custom and tradition.
Jesus just washed the feet of all, and invited them to do the same
so Your love could reach more lives.

As we take this bread, we remember,
that even though Jesus was leading in the Passover ritual
Jesus was thankful that this bread could be through Your grace something more.
As Jesus broke and shared it, and said: "Take and eat, all of you, for this is my body given for you." Jesus invites us to give our bodies in the same way as a witness of Your presence.

As we take this cup of juice, we remember,
that after supper Jesus took a cup of Passover wine,
with a prayer of thanks that this juice could be through Your grace something more.
As the cup was passed, Jesus said, "Take a sip, each of you, for this is the cup of my blood,
poured out freely believing in God's promise of forgiveness, for you and for the world." Jesus
invites us to pour out our lives in the same way as a witness of Your presence.
We want to be a part of your continuing work of salvation.
We want to be like Christ and live our lives through humble service to all.
We want to be like Christ and give our bodies sacrificially,
so that all may receive help in their time of need.
We want to be like Christ and pour out our blood, to stop the endless cycles of violence with
Your promise of forgiveness.

We want to be more like Christ and so we embrace this Holy Mystery revealed in his life as we proclaim:

Christ gave his life freely, and so shall I.

Christ received life graciously, and so shall I.

Christ will return to serve and so will I.

Eye of the Hurricane, Unconsuming Flame
radically change this bread and this wine,
transform them for us into the body and blood of Christ
our constant help in time of need.

Eye of the Hurricane, Unconsuming Flame
radically change our live: our dreams, our plans and expectations
transform them for the world into Your church, the body and bride of Christ
our constant help in time of need.

Eye of the Hurricane, Unconsuming flame
be present with all those who have been confronted
by wind and water, flame and flood.
Let them hear your comforting voice.
Use us to extend your healing touch.
Use us to expend your miracles of grace and blessing.

We add our voice to Jesus.