

About...

## Healer of nations

### ...how and why it was written

Although the words of this song can be applied to so many nations and situations, it started off with a very specific situation.

Shortly after moving to Yorkshire (spring 2010) and beginning The Sanctuary's daily worship times in my kitchen basement, I was beginning to try and learn the discipline of responding specifically to the day's news – easier in spoken prayer or spontaneous song than in the use of existing songs.

One of the biggest and most distressing news stories at the time was the Pakistani floods. This song was written to help me intercede for this nation. I have since used it for other situations and nations, but it remains poignantly relevant to the prayers our hearts pour out for countries where natural disaster has devastated so many families and communities.

Prayer and worship are an end in themselves. It is sincere love for people that prompts us to pray for them. It is also the best thing we can do because God is sovereign and all-powerful, and though it's a mystery – our prayers make a difference. So this song helps us to pray for Christ's mercy to come into the nation and its situation.

But prayer also grows our compassion for situations as we catch God's heart for them. We often find ourselves impatient to get off our knees and go and be part of the answer, or we find we remember people through the day, and therefore get in touch, or reach out to them, because we have held them in prayer before God. So this song also voices a desire for God to reveal how he is asking us to be a part of the mercy He is sending.

### ...how, where and when it could be used

This song is written for congregational sung worship and intercession, and works well applied to specific contexts – including our own nation, sitting well along older songs such as Matt Redman's *Can a nation be changed?*

It can be taught very quickly to a congregation – and therefore can even be introduced when a specific situation needs to be prayed for – because of the call and response verses and simplicity and repetitive nature of both chorus and verse.

Consider trying it with photos in the background, or newspaper cuttings...

### ...its place on the journey to where world and worship meet

We need tools to help us express our response and heart-cry to situations, and to be able to apply to different nations as and when the needs arise. It's important that we can connect our hearts too rather than just praying

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through a factual list... looking to Jesus for inspiration on how to love, pray and act – but also recognising that he is able to do so much more than us – is fundamental to us responding to, and interceding for, our world as we meet with, and worship, him.