

# Alton Baptist Church e-Service 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021

## Good Friday

We have come together to remember the vast sacrifice that Jesus made so that our sins could be forgiven and we could be saved. We will concentrate our thoughts on this but we will also remember others and their needs. We will do this towards the end of our service.

### **Opening Prayer**

Dear Lord and Father we thank you for the Lord Jesus and all He has done for us. We could remember His miracles and His words of help and encouragement and that would be wonderful, but as we look on into the New Testament we see Jesus praised because of what He did that first Good Friday. We can look into the book of Revelation and see Him praised in Heaven and we wish to join in that praise. We thank you O Lord for Jesus and praise you and Him for all He has done.  
Amen.

We will now read a passage in Marks Gospel to see a little of the cost all this was to Jesus.

### **Reading: Mark 14:32-42**

<sup>32</sup> They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.' <sup>33</sup> He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. <sup>34</sup> 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,' he said to them. 'Stay here and keep watch.'

<sup>35</sup> Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. <sup>36</sup> 'Abba, Father,' he said, 'everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.'

<sup>37</sup> Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. 'Simon,' he said to Peter, 'are you asleep? Couldn't you keep watch for one hour?' <sup>38</sup> Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.'

<sup>39</sup> Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. <sup>40</sup> When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.

<sup>41</sup> Returning the third time, he said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. <sup>42</sup> Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!'

I hope that as we read this scripture you too have been reminded that the crucifixion was not only a physically painful event but also a deeply painful spiritual experience.

We now have a hymn which speaks of the love which motivated our Lord.

Hymn 987 Here is love vast as the ocean  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8YOPj5TnUM>

We will continue with our Good Friday readings.

**Reading:** Mark 15:1-15 *Jesus before Pilate*

**15** Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

<sup>2</sup> 'Are you the king of the Jews?' asked Pilate.

'You have said so,' Jesus replied.

<sup>3</sup> The chief priests accused him of many things. <sup>4</sup> So again Pilate asked him, 'Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of.'

<sup>5</sup> But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

<sup>6</sup> Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested. <sup>7</sup> A man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder in the uprising. <sup>8</sup> The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

<sup>9</sup> 'Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?' asked Pilate, <sup>10</sup> knowing it was out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed

Jesus over to him. <sup>11</sup> But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to get Pilate to release Barabbas instead.

<sup>12</sup> 'What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?' Pilate asked them.

<sup>13</sup> 'Crucify him!' they shouted.

<sup>14</sup> 'Why? What crime has he committed?' asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, 'Crucify him!'

<sup>15</sup> Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

As I read this I am reminded that John at the beginning of his gospel told us of those who rejected Jesus and those who received Him.

Reading: John 1:10-12

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him. <sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God

It is still true today that there are people who reject and people who receive Jesus. We have been reading of those who were Jesus' bitter enemies. They saw Jesus as a challenge to the kind of kingdom that they wanted. They wanted a world that would serve them and follow them at all times. Jesus was showing them a world in which God would receive all kinds of people and work to change them. They did not want to change into the kind of people God is looking for and were threatened by that kind of goodness. Jesus offered a way in which ordinary people could become God's children. That is why Jesus came and suffered for us.

Hymn 988 How deep the Father's love for us

<https://youtu.be/sjDh4yui19w>

**Reading:** Mark 15:16-39

*The soldiers mock Jesus*

<sup>16</sup> The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. <sup>17</sup> They put a purple robe on

him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. <sup>18</sup> And they began to call out to him, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' <sup>19</sup> Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spat on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. <sup>20</sup> And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

### *The crucifixion of Jesus*

<sup>21</sup> A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. <sup>22</sup> They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means 'the place of the skull'). <sup>23</sup> Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. <sup>24</sup> And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

<sup>25</sup> It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. <sup>26</sup> The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

<sup>27</sup> They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>29</sup> Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, 'So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, <sup>30</sup> come down from the cross and save yourself!' <sup>31</sup> In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. 'He saved others,' they said, 'but he can't save himself! <sup>32</sup> Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.' Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

### *The death of Jesus*

<sup>33</sup> At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. <sup>34</sup> And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, '*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*' (which means 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?').

<sup>35</sup> When some of those standing near heard this, they said, 'Listen, he's calling Elijah.'

<sup>36</sup> Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. 'Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down,' he said.

<sup>37</sup> With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

<sup>38</sup> The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. <sup>39</sup> And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, 'Surely this man was the Son of God!'

Firstly we read of Simon from Cyrene. I think he became a follower of Jesus. The reasons for saying that are quite simply that the gospels record the names of a number of early Christians and other notable figures. This is the only incident recorded about Simon. In addition Mark spent a long time in Rome before he wrote his gospel. Paul sends a greeting to one Alexander. Is this Simon's son? We don't know and Alexander was a reasonably common name but I like to think that is was.

The chief priests and their friends said, "He saved others, but he can't save himself!" The truth is it was true but not the way they meant it. If we were to be saved from our sins then Jesus had to die upon that cross.

When Jesus died the temple veil or curtain was torn from top to bottom. To most of us, this symbolises the fact that the way back to God was now open.

It is also interesting to read of the reaction of the pagan centurion. He sees in Jesus one who at least represents God on earth.

Hymn 795 You laid aside Your majesty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HxXrV-0JqoI>

Reading: Mark 15:40-47

<sup>40</sup> Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph, and Salome. <sup>41</sup> In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.

### *The burial of Jesus*

<sup>42</sup> It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, <sup>43</sup> Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. <sup>44</sup> Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. <sup>45</sup> When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. <sup>46</sup> So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the

entrance of the tomb. <sup>47</sup> Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

There were those in all classes of society who loved Jesus and wanted to honour him even in death.

Hymn 995 Jesus Christ, I think upon your sacrifice

<https://youtu.be/5M6uaAWjkdo>

**Intercessory Prayer:**

As we think of what Jesus has done for us and His great love and wish to reach out to the whole world let us pray for others.

As we have prayed for others let us give thanks for what Jesus has done for us.

Dear Lord we thank you that you revealed so much of the love of God to us. Help us to look beyond Calvary to that great resurrection day. Bless us and watch over us we pray.

Amen