

# ALTON BAPTIST CHURCH

## eService

**Sunday 18 July 2021**

### A chosen people, a royal priesthood

#### Welcome

Let us rejoice that Our Lord leads and guides consistently because He knows the future.

#### Opening Prayer

O Lord we ask that you give us open minds and hearts as we come to You at this time of worship with You and others. That you will strengthen our belief in You as we listen to the YouTube videos, read Your Word, speak with you in our prayers and as we consider what Your Word has to say to us to encourage and enrich our lives.

#### Our 1<sup>st</sup> hymn.

Our first hymn is about ascribing greatness to our God the **rock** that we shall be reading about.

#### Mission Praise 40 - Ascribed greatness to our God the **rock**

---

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXomlNaDlOE>

---

#### Reading for today

### A chosen people, a royal priesthood

1 Peter 1: 23 – 2:12

New International Version

<sup>23</sup> For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. <sup>24</sup> For,

*“All people are like grass,  
and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;  
the grass withers and the flowers fall,*

<sup>25</sup> *but the word of the Lord endures forever.”*

And this is the word that was preached to you.

**<sup>1</sup>Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. <sup>2</sup>Like new-born babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, <sup>3</sup>now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.**

### **The Living Stone and a Chosen People**

**<sup>4</sup>As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— <sup>5</sup>you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup>For in Scripture it says:**

***“See, I lay a stone in Zion,  
a chosen and precious cornerstone,  
and the one who trusts in him  
will never be put to shame.”***

**<sup>7</sup>Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe,**

***“The stone the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone,”***

**<sup>8</sup>and,**

***“A stone that causes people to stumble  
and a rock that makes them fall.”***

**They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.**

**<sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. <sup>10</sup>Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**

### **Living Godly Lives in a Pagan Society**

**<sup>11</sup>Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. <sup>12</sup>Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.**

## 2<sup>nd</sup> hymn

In battles of long ago the King's presence was needed and the last time a reigning British monarch would personally lead troops into battle was on 27 June 1743 when King George II commanded the British Army against the French at Dettingen. Our King and Lord and Saviour is always with us in our battles.

## Mission Praise 650 - The King is among us

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggSjE26Iiw>

## Intercessory and Praise Prayers

- There are many who are anxious, whether domestically or in business, that you will calm those fears and guide them and us.
- For those within our fellowship and known to us who need your healing touch and reassurance regarding their health and for calm reassurance for those waiting tests.
- For the churches in Alton that they will have an impact in the community as they share the good news of the gospel.
- Us here at ABC.
- For the persecuted church by way of the Barnabas Fund prayer.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> hymn

When we build anything, it requires firm foundations and when building in Christ's time the essential start was the cornerstone that would take forces all round it. You did not want it failing. So, Christ is our cornerstone as we have read.

## Mission Praise 1334 - My hope is built on nothing less (Christ alone, cornerstone)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvLxZEU02uI>

Let us look at His word.

## A chosen people, a royal priesthood

=

We continue our journey through Peter's first epistle or letter. He was an apostle and one of Christ's twelve disciples and he wrote two epistles. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus says to Peter "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not

overcome it.” Christ is playing on words here as Peter in Greek means ‘rock’ and we shall see later that ‘rock’ is also used when talking about the **cornerstone** of a building and the church as in people. When we read this Epistle, it has remarkably good wording and grammar and style compared with the second epistle, and we have a big hint as to why this is. In the Epistle’s last verse where we read that Peter mentions, and by implication, thanks Silas who would have been the bearer of the letter to its destination. And crucially would have been the person whom Peter dictated the wording. So, Silas was the scribe and more than that, was a learned and informed and intelligent secretary who improved the grammar and style; but crucially not the content. Nothing unusual about that - two heads are better than one - and a practice continued to this day for our benefit and encouragement.

We start by looking at verse 23 of Chapter one as it states that we as God’s elect (opening verse of this Epistle) is about us being born again or new birth this time of imperishable seed through the living and enduring word of God. In Peter’s time they would have known all about the high death rate amongst new-borns. So, to say we are born again, this time imperishable, would have been remarkable. This comes about through the direct action of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5 <sup>5</sup> He, that is Jesus, saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,) and the word of God also plays an important role. (James 1:18 <sup>18</sup> He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created.) for it presents the gospel to the Sinner and calls for repentance and believe in Christ. It is more than just saying I believe. We may just say – “believe” -; but do we believe?!; it is the act of giving one’s whole being to Jesus’ service.

The second chapter starts by telling us to rid ourselves of all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Stern stuff, but we need to be pure; not contaminated.

Then connects and continues the analogy of the new birth with the exhortations that follow with being born again or as new-born babies we see they crave for milk; the unrestrained hunger of a healthy baby provides an example of the kind of eager desire for spiritual food that ought to mark the believer’s spiritual meal. By referring to God’s word, the author of course is speaking figuratively, once we taste that which is good, we have that urge for more. That we need to keep going on and on for ever; so that we may grow up in our salvation. Do we crave the desirable growth of children, that having tasted and proved satisfactory,

**the believers are urged to long for additional spiritual food - God's word? Do we read the Holy Scriptures each day?!**

**Peter then turns to familiar verses known to his hearers and us to-day in Isaiah - all about the analogy of Jesus being our **cornerstone** and that used in building work. (Isaiah 28:16). Remember the words used by Jesus to Peter about being a rock? Peter is using here the analogy of building a physical house of stone where the **cornerstone** is the starting point from which all other stones are placed out; whether going out in each direction and/or upwards. So, we as Christians, whether individually or collectively we need a **cornerstone** with which to build our spiritual house and Jesus is that **cornerstone**. Every stone in the spiritual house had been made alive by the Holy Spirit sent by the exalted living stone Jesus Christ. Above all, that cornerstone must be utterly reliable -- our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is that. He is eternal and has all power and strength; this cornerstone will not fail.**

**Peter's readers, or more likely, hearers as the letter was most probably read aloud would have understood the Old Testament that writes the background for this passage when Peter refers to us a chosen people being 'a royal priesthood, a holy nation, **God's** special possession....' – yes - the whole body of believers as priest believers and royal too!!! Incendiary stuff.**

**We are to**

**(1) reflect the holiness of God that of the high priest (we can go directly to the Godhead no more through an earthly man)**

**(2) offer spiritual sacrifices (no more animal sacrifices as Jesus has offered himself as a sacrifice for the atonement / remission / forgiveness of our sins) We shall be remembering this shortly. No list of spiritual sacrifices exists but sacrifices are mentioned in the New Testament:**

- + Our Bodies (Hebrews 10:10 <sup>10</sup> And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.),**
- + Our Faith (Philippians 2:17 <sup>17</sup> But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you.),**
- + Our Praise (Hebrews 13:15 <sup>15</sup> Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name.),**
- + Our Material assistance (Philippians 4:18 <sup>18</sup> I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that**

I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.),

✚ **Our Service** (Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.),

✚ **Our Doing good** (James 1:27<sup>27</sup> Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.)

✚ **Our Love** (Ephesians 5:1 Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children).

**(3) intercede for men before God** (Jesus tells us how to do this in Matthew 6) and

**(4) represent God before man.** (The great commission is to make disciples of all people. Matthew 28 The Great Commission

*Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.<sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the page."*

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Hymn

We always need Jesus.

**Mission Praise 799 - All I once held dear.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxpPIa-BskY>

#### COMMUNION

A time of Communion

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Hymn for Communion

Meals are usually affairs when one has to be invited. "The meal is ready please take your seats."

**Mission Praise 723 - We come as guests invited.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jafdLyZODw8>

#### COMMUNION

### **Optional Communion** (for those unable to meet in church)

If you wish to include communion as part of your worship, find yourself some bread and wine (or juice) and click on this link

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=na33U\\_QaEGQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=na33U_QaEGQ) at the appropriate time.

### **Closing Prayer**

#### **The Grace**

**“May the **grace** of the Lord Jesus Christ, and  
the **love** of God, and  
the **fellowship** of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.”**