

Ironies of the Passion

Wednesday, March 25, 2020



Opening Hymn: 149

1. Come to Calvary's holy mountain,

Sinners, ruined by the fall;

Here a pure and healing fountain

Flows to you, to me, to all,

In a full, perpetual tide,

Opened when our Savior died.

2. Come in poverty and meanness,

Come defiled, without, within;

From infection and uncleanness,

From the leprosy of sin,

Wash your robes and make them white;

Ye shall walk with God in light.

3. Come in sorrow and contrition,

Wounded, impotent, and blind;

Here the guilty free remission,

Here the troubled peace, may find.

Health this fountain will restore;

He that drinks shall thirst no more.

4. He that drinks shall live forever;

'Tis a soul-renewing flood.

God is faithful; God will never

Break His covenant of blood,

Signed when our Redeemer died,

Sealed when He was glorified.

P: O Lord, open my lips.

C: And my mouth shall declare your praise.

P: Hasten to save me, O God.

C: O Lord, come quickly to help me.

P: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

P: Lord God, you have brought us safely to this hour of evening prayer. We thank you for providing all that we need for body and life. Bless us who have gathered in your name. Forgive our sins. Speak to our hearts. Dispel our sorrows with the comfort of your Word, and receive our hymns of thanks and praise, through Jesus Christ, our living Savior, who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Responsive Reading

Psalm 38:1-9, 15-22:

P: LORD, do not rebuke me in anger.

C: Do not discipline me in wrath.

P: Indeed, your arrows have stuck in me.

C: Your hand has come down on me.

P: There is no health in my flesh because of your rage.

C: There is no wellness in my bones because of my sin,

P: because my guilt has gone over my head.

C: Like a heavy burden, it is too heavy for me.

P: My wounds stink and ooze because of my folly. I am drooping. I am completely bent over.

C: All day long I go around mourning.

P: Even my back burns with pain.

C: My whole body is unhealthy.

P: I have become numb. I am totally crushed.

C: I groan loudly because of my anxious thoughts.

P: Lord, all my needs lie before you.

C: My sighs are not hidden from you.

P: Yet I wait for the LORD.

C: You will answer me, O Lord my God.

P: So I said, "Do not let them celebrate because of me.

C: Do not let them gloat when my foot slips."

P: Look! I am about to fall,

C: and I am always in pain,

P: so I declare my guilt,

C: and I am troubled by my sin.

P: My aggressive enemies are numerous.

C: Those who hate me for no reason are many.

P: Those who repay evil for good

C: slander me because I pursue what is good.

P: Do not forsake me, O LORD.

C: My God, do not be far from me.

P: Hurry to help me,

C: O Lord, my salvation.

Psalm Prayer

P: Lord our God, You did not forget the pierced body of Your Son and His sighing was not hidden from You. In Your kindness look also on us, Your children, weighed down with sins, and grant us the fullness of Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.

C: Amen.

Lesson: Passion history part IV.

LESSON FOUR

Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, and said to them, “You brought this man to me as one who is misleading the people. Look, I have examined him in your presence. I have found in this man no basis for the charges you are bringing against him. Herod did not either, for he sent him back to us. See, he has done nothing worthy of death. So I will have him flogged and release him.”

At the time of the Festival the governor had a custom to release to the crowd any one prisoner they wanted. At that time they were holding a notorious prisoner named Barabbas, who had been thrown in prison for a rebellion in the city and for murder. The crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

So when they were assembled, Pilate said to them, “Do you want me to release the King of the Jews to you? Which one do you want me to release to you? Barabbas—or Jesus, who is called Christ?” For Pilate in fact knew that they had handed Jesus over to him because of envy.

While he was sitting on the judgment seat, Pilate's wife sent him a message. "Have nothing to do with that righteous man," she said, "since I have suffered many things today in a dream because of him." But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus put to death. The governor asked them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

They all shouted together with one voice: "Take him away! Release Barabbas to us!"

Pilate said to them, "Then what do you want me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews? What should I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?"

They all said to him, "Crucify him!"

But the governor said, "Why? What has he done wrong?"

But they kept shouting even louder: "Crucify him!"

Pilate addressed them again, because he wanted to release Jesus. But they kept shouting, "Crucify! Crucify him!"

He said to them the third time, "Why? What evil has he done? I have found no grounds for sentencing him to death. So I will whip him and release him." But they kept pressuring him with loud voices, demanding that he be crucified. And their voices were overwhelming.

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.

The governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole cohort of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. They twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand, knelt in front of him, and mocked him by saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spit on him, took the staff, and hit him repeatedly on his head. They also kept hitting him in the face.

Pilate went outside again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him."

So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!"

When the chief priests and guards saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!"

Pilate told them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no basis for a charge against him."

The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. He went back inside the palace again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?"

But Jesus gave him no answer.

So Pilate asked him, "Are you not talking to me? Don't you know that I have the authority to release you or to crucify you?"

Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over me at all if it had not been given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin."

From then on Pilate tried to release Jesus. But the Jews shouted, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar! Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar!"

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside. He sat down on the judge's seat at a place called the Stone Pavement, or Gabbatha in Aramaic. It was about the sixth hour on the Preparation Day for the Passover. Pilate said to the Jews, "Here is your king!"

They shouted, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!"

Pilate said to them, "Should I crucify your king?"

"We have no king but Caesar!" the chief priests answered.

When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing and that instead it was turning into a riot, he decided that what they demanded would be done. He took water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, "I am innocent of this righteous man's blood. It is your responsibility."

And all the people answered, "Let his blood be on us and on our children!"

Since he wanted to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them.

So then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

After they had mocked him, the soldiers took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. Jesus was carrying his own cross.

As they were going out of the city, a certain man, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), was passing by on his way in from the country. They placed the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A large crowd of the people was following him, including women who were mourning and wailing for him.

Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. Be sure of this: The days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never gave birth, and the breasts that never nursed.' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do these things to the green wood, what will happen to the dry?"

Sermon Hymn: 142:1-3, 6

1. A Lamb goes uncomplaining forth,

The guilt of all men bearing;

And laden with the sins of earth,

None else the burden sharing!

Goes patient on, grows weak and faint,

*To slaughter led without complaint,
That spotless life to offer;
Bears shame and stripes, and wounds and death,
Anguish and mockery, and saith,
"Willing all this I suffer."*

*2. This Lamb is Christ, the soul's great Friend,
The Lamb of God, our Savior;
Him God the Father chose to send
To gain for us His favor.
"Go forth, My Son," the Father saith,
"And free men from the fear of death,
From guilt and condemnation.
The wrath and stripes are hard to bear,
But by Thy Passion men shall share
The fruit of Thy salvation."*

*3. "Yea, Father, yea, most willingly
I'll bear what Thou commandest;
My will conforms to Thy decree,
I do what Thou demandest."
O wondrous Love, what hast Thou done!
The Father offers up His Son!
The Son, content, descendeth!
O Love, how strong Thou art to save!
Thou beddest Him within the grave
Whose word the mountains rendeth.*

*6. And when Thy glory I shall see
And taste Thy kingdom's pleasure,
Thy blood my royal robe shall be,
My joy beyond all measure;
When I appear before Thy throne,
Thy righteousness shall be my crown,—
With these I need not hide me.
And there, in garments richly wrought
As Thine own bride, I shall be brought
To stand in joy beside Thee.*

Sermon: Matthew 26:1-5 (Link online)

<https://youtu.be/cz-juX7PRJs>

“It is Better That One Man Die for the People”

(Pastor David Ude)

Hymn: 157

*1. There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.*

*2. The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, as vile as he,
Washed all my sins away.*

*3. Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved to sin no more.*

*4. E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme
And shall be till I die.*

*5. When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave,
Then in a nobler, sweeter song
I'll sing Thy power to save.*

Prayers

O God, we praise You for all Your mercies. We thank You that You have redeemed our lives from destruction and crowned us with loving kindness; and that You have not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. Because of Your rich grace and mercy, You have given Your only-begotten Son to be made sin for us, to shed His innocent blood, and to die for our transgressions, so that we might have everlasting life.

Grant that we will seek You while You may be found and call upon You while You are near, may sincerely repent of the evil in our hearts and lives, forsake all sinful thoughts and ways, and be assured of Your abundant forgiveness because of Christ's death for us.

And since You, O Lord, are aware of all the needs of all people, providing daily bread for both the righteous and the ungodly, keep us mindful of the daily care that You give us, and enable us to receive Your blessings with thanksgiving.

O Lord, cause Your Gospel to be preached in all lands, and in every language. Maintain Your church, the world over, in union with Jesus Christ, and cause the truth of Your Word to prevail everywhere. Bless our Christian schools with teachers who acknowledge and serve You so that that the students will excel in all useful knowledge, but especially in the saving knowledge of the grace of Christ. Give wisdom and counsel to all who have authority over us in government, so that we may worship and serve You without hindrance, and live in peace and righteousness.

Deliver us from the works of the wicked, and preserve us in all dangers through which we must pass. We pray for the hundreds of thousands worldwide who are suffering from sickness, those who are anxious and fearful, those who are unable to pay bills, and those who are putting their own lives in danger to care for others. Give them all the strength of faith that will enable them to bear their cross, and the spirit of Christ, who taught us to say with our prayers, "Thy will be done." In His glorious name and for His kingdom's sake we pray, Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Prayer for Peace

M: Lord God, all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works come from you. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments. Defend us also from the fear of our enemies that we may live in peace and quietness, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing

M: The grace of our Lord † Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: Amen.

Closing hymn: 552:1-2, 6-8

*1. Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!*

*2. Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see.
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me!*

*6. I need Thy presence every passing hour;
What but Thy grace can foil the Tempter's power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me!*

*7. I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if Thou abide with me.*

*8. Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!*