



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 17th November 2024

compiled by Dean James - Worship Leader

Some words of scripture that call us to worship:

Isaiah 25: "Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done wonderful things, things planned long ago."

Psalms 34:1-3: "I will extol the LORD at all times; his praise will always be on my lips. My soul will boast in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the LORD with me; let us exalt his name together."

Hebrews 12:28-29: "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our 'God is a consuming Fire'"

Hymn

1] Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark! How the heav'nly anthem drowns
All music but its own!
Awake, my soul and sing
Of Him Who died for thee,
And hail Him as thy matchless King
Through all eternity.

2] Crown Him the Lord of love!
Behold His hands and side—
Rich wounds, yet visible above,
In beauty glorified.
No angel in the sky
Can fully bear that sight,
But downward bends His wond'ring eye
At mysteries so bright.

3] Crown Him the Lord of life!
Who triumphed o'er the grave,
Who rose victorious in the strife
For those He came to save.
His glories now we sing,
Who died, and rose on high,
Who died eternal life to bring,
And lives that death may die.

4] Crown Him the Lord of heav'n!
One with the Father known,
One with the Spirit through Him giv'n
From yonder glorious throne,
To Thee be endless praise,
For Thou for us hast died;
Be Thou, O Lord, through endless days
Adored and magnified.

Matthew Bridges (1800-1894)

Let us Pray:

Dear Lord, in our busyness of life, we pause to enter into Your presence. Quiet our hearts and minds as we seek You in this moment of stillness. Speak to us, Lord, and help us feel Your peace that surpasses all understanding. May this time of worship be a sanctuary of rest for our souls.

Lord, we thank you for your faithfulness. Thank you that you walk with us everyday, that you are with us in each moment. Thank you that your promises are true and your goodness never fails us.

We know that we are precious in your sight - unique individuals loved and blessed in so many ways. We stand in awe of the one who has created all things. We worship not in our own strength but in the knowledge that God's Spirit abides within us, in our worship today and in our daily lives, where ever we are. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Reading: Mark 13: 1-8

As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!" "Do you see all these great buildings?" replied Jesus. "Not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down." As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, "Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?" Jesus said to them: "Watch out that no one deceives you. Many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and will deceive many. When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

Here Jesus is giving a prophecy of the destruction of the temple. According to records from the time; In April 70 AD, three days before Passover, the Roman army started besieging Jerusalem. The city had been taken over by several rebel factions following a period of massive unrest and the collapse of a short-lived provisional government. Within three weeks, the Romans broke the first two walls of the city, but a stubborn rebel standoff prevented them from penetrating the third and thickest wall. According to Josephus, a contemporary historian and the main source for the war, the city was ravaged by murder, famine, and cannibalism. On August 30, Roman forces overwhelmed the defenders and set fire to the Temple. Resistance continued for another month, but eventually the upper and lower parts of the city were taken as well, and the city was burned to the ground. The destruction of Jerusalem marked a major turning point in Jewish history. The loss of the mother-city and Second Temple necessitated a reshaping of Jewish culture to ensure its survival. With sacrificial worship no longer possible, Jewish practices shifted to prayer, Torah study, and synagogue gatherings. Where were the Christians? Many had been driven out of Jerusalem by persecution decades earlier. Eusebius wrote that when the revolt began, in A.D. 66, some of the remaining Jewish Christians fled to Pella, a city across the Jordan River. But here Jesus also points to His authority and how it would be challenged by others coming claiming the, "I Am" mantle.

Hymn

1] Before the throne of God above
I have a strong and perfect plea,
a great High Priest whose name is "Love,"
who ever lives and pleads for me.
My name is graven on His hands;
my name is written on His heart;
I know that while in heav'n He stands,
no tongue can bid me thence depart;
no tongue can bid me thence depart.

2] When Satan tempts me to despair,
and tells me of the guilt within,
upward I look and see Him there
who made an end of all my sin.
Because the sinless Savior died,
my sinful soul is counted free;
for God the Just is satisfied
to look on Him and pardon me;
to look on Him and pardon me.

3] Behold Him there, the risen Lamb!
My perfect, spotless Righteousness;
the great unchangeable I AM,
the King of glory and of grace!
One with Himself I cannot die;
my soul is purchased with His blood;
my life is hid with Christ on high,
with Christ my Saviour and my God;
with Christ my Saviour and my God!

Charitie L. Bancroft (1841-1892)

Reading: Hebrews 10: 19-25

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Reflection

When Peter, James and John asked Jesus privately about when to expect these things to happen rather than explain when, Jesus tells the disciples to look out for those claiming to come in His name. Jesus warns of these messianic claimants who have designs on power that belongs to God alone. Jesus describes that as the beginning of birth pangs and ever since people have been looking at events in the world and thinking, could the end be near! Jesus warns His disciples and us not to be led astray by those claiming the "I Am" title.

In our human strength it can be tempting to cling to anything or anyone that promises stability when we feel everything in the world is out of control. Political leaders, life coaches, social media influencers and sometimes even church leaders can put themselves in the "I Am" position claiming all will be well if we follow them. We must also be careful not to put ourselves in the "I Am" position in our lives. I am in control of my life. I can do what I want when I want. I will build up wealth for security and be in control.

A couple of weeks ago on Songs of Praise, three people told their story of finding Jesus. One was a big man who used to be on the TV show Gladiators. He told how he watched Arnold Schwarzenegger in films as a boy and thought, that's what I want to be like. He concentrated on body building and got a job on the Gladiators show. He earned a lot of money and gained a bit of fame. But when the show finished all his security fell away and he felt empty. Someone then invited him along to an alpha course and he discovered the love of God in Jesus. He has since become a minister in the church. Jesus must be the only one we look to!

The writer of Hebrews, writing to early Jewish believers tells them that Jesus is the only one who has done everything necessary for us to enter the Most Holy Place by His blood, and we can draw near to God in full assurance through faith in Him. We can have full access to God, the creator of the universe who is over all things through faith in Jesus. Jesus told us that he would send the Holy Spirit to give us guidance and peace. John 14: 25-28 "All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. "You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I".

So let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful and the "I Am" mantle belongs to Him alone! Amen

Prayers of Intercession

Creator God, our Bible tells us that nations will rise up against nations and that there will be famines and earthquakes. We pray for all those suffering the ravages of war, terrorism, natural and man-made disasters. May they be governed by men and women of integrity, who are prepared to serve their people with honesty and justice, working for peace and reconciliation and guided by your Spirit as they lead those they represent. In a moment of silence please pray for the people suffering from the devastation of war, famine or flooding.

Merciful God, we pray for the many people we know who are suffering, whether in body mind or spirit. We pray especially for all who are waiting for treatment or recovering from it. Thank you for the medical staff who provide that care and healing. We ask for your peace and comfort for all who are suffering. Please name anyone you know who needs our prayers today.....

Father God, we pray that your Church, being built on the foundation of your Son, will be so faithful to His teaching and will reflect His glory around the world. We pray for Christians in countries where their faith makes them vulnerable to harm and danger. Strengthen and sustain all who are persecuted. We pray that they will be aware of your presence with them. In Jesus name. Amen

Hymn

1] Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,
and publish abroad his wonderful name;
the name all-victorious of Jesus extol;
his kingdom is glorious and rules over all.

2] God ruleth on high, almighty to save;
And still he is nigh, his presence we have;
the great congregation his triumph shall sing,
ascribing salvation to Jesus our King.

3] "Salvation to God, who sits on the throne!"
let all cry aloud, and honour the Son;
the praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
fall down on their faces and worship the Lamb.

4] Then let us adore and give him his right:
all glory and power, all wisdom and might,
all honour and blessing with angels above
and thanks never ceasing and infinite love.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Blessing

May the love of God be the passion in our hearts.
The joy of God your strength when times are hard.
The presence of God a peace that overflows
And the Word of God the seed that you might sow.
Amen