

GOOD FRIDAY MEDITATION 2021

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INTRODUCTION

IT IS **NOT** EASTER DAY... yet...

THE CROSS IS **NOT** EMPTY... yet...

THE TOMB IS **NOT** OPEN... yet...

Today is the day when we confront the horror of the cross and the unconditional love of our Lord

Jesus has been betrayed into the hands of his enemies. Lies, fear and injustice have been the jury in this Kangaroo Court and sentence has been passed to appease the powerful.

Today Jesus pays the ultimate sacrifice and we stand with the others at the cross and weep...

or do we... There has been much sadness, pain and loss in this last year. In our own lives, in the lives of someone we know, in our communities and in the world. As we watch the activity at the cross we may have our own questions, our own hurt, our own memories – bring them all, and lay them at the cross, and commit them into God's hands.

Meditation

Pilate asked what crime Jesus had committed.

It was a good question.

Jesus had annoyed the religious leaders, of that there was no doubt.

He had been critical of social and religious structures.

He had healed the villagers;

he had told stories to the crowds;

he was probably a threat to public law and order;

but was that enough to condemn him, to end his life?

But he would not defend himself -

the storyteller was silent now

and the crowd was noisy,

and Pilate handed him over to be crucified.

She was going to be there at his end -

she who had been there with God at his beginning.

She was his **mother**.

She had fed him and cradled him

and watched over his growing.

Whatever he had said and done,

he was still her son

and she would not desert him now.

Whatever pain of his she could embrace she would.

And in the meeting of their eyes

there was love,

suffering and shining.

But I am finding it hard to watch you, Jesus,
to see you struggling,
to see you on the ground.

Into your silence I want to shout:

'Why do they keep on hurting you?
What have you done wrong?'

I am not sure if I can watch this much longer.

In his pain I see my pain,
in his falling I feel myself falling,

In his cross... in his cross

I am included.

He carried it for me -

for me, and my enemies, and my friends.

We look on from a distance:

a distance of time and space and culture,
a distance of a Friday morning in England in Lent.

And for us it hurts to watch Jesus dying,
even at a distance.

It hurts to know that we are being rescued.

It hurts to know how much we are valued and loved.

Into your hands he placed himself:

all that he was, all that he had ever been,
all his obedience, all his loving.

In God's hands he placed himself.

He was returning to his father,
he was going home.

Jesus is dead and lies in the arms of his father.

Death is hard and final, not only for Jesus but for thousands and thousands
and yet,

In the memory of those who loved them,
loved ones remain.

And for us, and for all God's people,
our hope is safe in God.

From swaddling bands to grave clothes,
all the days of our living and dying,
we are cradled and wrapped in love.

The world sighs and waits.

And we wait in night's darkness,
longing for the morning,
longing for the light.

the light of hope to be restored... AMEN