

# Enthroned in Humiliation

Good Friday at St Paul's, Ashgrove

John 18-19

Rev Dr Margaret Wesley

*Enter the church and sit in silence. Songs will not be announced. Please remain seated as you join the choir in singing the numbered songs from Together in Song.*

Jesus, we remember you,  
We honour you,  
And follow you through death to life. **Amen.**

Jesus, we remember you; Christ and we honour you,  
**by your Cross you have redeemed the world.**

*A period of silence is kept followed by a hymn. During this period, you are invited to kneel at the cross from your seats.*

*Song: When I survey (TIS 342). (sing while kneeling or sitting)*

O Saviour of the world, by your cross and precious blood you have redeemed us.  
**Save us, and help us, we humbly pray, O Lord.**

## **A reading Hebrews, Chapter 10, beginning at verse 19**

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), <sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

<sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for the one who has promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

*Choir sings*

## **Psalm 22**

*This psalm is a prayer to God from the depth of human suffering.*

*Jesus has joined us in this darkest place, so his voice joins with ours as we cry out to God for rescue, for justice, and for the opportunity to emerge from the darkness into a life of praise and service. The Gospel writers quote this Psalm more than any other section of Jewish Scripture in their telling of Jesus' death. For this reason, we read this psalm together on Good Friday.*

**1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me  
and are so far from my cry and from the words of my distress?  
2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but you do not answer;  
by night as well, but I find no rest.  
3 Yet you are the Holy One,  
enthroned upon the praises of Israel.  
4 Our ancestors put their trust in you;  
they trusted, and you delivered them.  
5 They cried out to you and were delivered;  
they trusted in you and were not put to shame.  
6 But as for me, I am a worm and not human,  
scorned by all and despised by the people.  
7 All who see me laugh me to scorn;  
they curl their lips and wag their heads, saying,  
8 "You trusted in the Lord; let the Lord deliver you;  
let God rescue you, if God delights in you."  
9 Yet you are the one who took me out of the womb,  
and kept me safe upon my mother's breast.  
10 I have been entrusted to you ever since I was born;  
you were my God when I was still in my mother's womb.  
11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near,  
and there is none to help.  
12 Many young bulls encircle me;  
strong bulls of Bashan surround me.  
13 They open wide their jaws at me,  
like a ravening and a roaring lion.  
14 I am poured out like water; all my bones are out of joint;  
my heart within my breast is melting wax.  
15 My mouth is dried out like a potsherd; my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;  
and you have laid me in the dust of the grave.  
16 Packs of dogs close me in and gangs of evildoers circle around me;  
they pierce my hands and my feet.  
17 I can count all my bones  
while they stare and gloat over me.  
18 They divide my garments among them;  
they cast lots for my clothing.  
19 Be not far away, O Lord;  
you are my strength; hasten to help me.  
20 Save me from the sword,  
my life from the power of the dog.  
21 Save me from the lion's mouth,**

*Silence and Reflection — (Choir)*

*There is a turning point here in the psalm – like the turning point in history that the cross of Jesus is*

for us.

**You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen.**

**<sup>22</sup> I will declare your name to my kindred;  
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.**

**<sup>23</sup> Praise the Lord, you that fear God;  
stand in awe of God, O offspring of Israel; all you of Jacob's line, give glory.**

**<sup>24</sup> For God does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither turns away  
from them;**

**when they cry to the Lord, they are heard.**

**<sup>25</sup> My praise is of God in the great assembly;  
I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship the Lord.**

**<sup>26</sup> The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and those who seek the Lord shall give praise:  
"May your heart live for ever!"**

**<sup>27</sup> All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord,  
and all the families of the nations shall bow before God.**

**<sup>28</sup> For sovereignty belongs to the Lord,  
who rules over the nations.**

**<sup>29</sup> To God alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship;  
all who go down to the dust fall before God.**

**<sup>30</sup> My soul shall live for God; my descendants shall serve God;  
they shall be known as the Lord's for ever.**

**<sup>31</sup> They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn  
the saving deeds that God has done.**

*Song: My Song is Love Unknown (TIS 341)*

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John, Chapter 18, beginning at the 1<sup>st</sup> verse.

We will sing verses from *Were You There?* Throughout this reading.

**18** After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. **2** Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place because Jesus often met there with his disciples. **3** So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

***Were you there when his friend betrayed the Lord?  
Were you there when his friend betrayed the Lord?  
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when his friend betrayed the Lord?***

**4** Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" **5** They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. **6** When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. **7** Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." **8** Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these people go." **9** This was to fulfil the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me."

<sup>10</sup> Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. <sup>11</sup> Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

<sup>12</sup> So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. <sup>13</sup> First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. <sup>14</sup> Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

***Were you there when they bound and took the Lord?  
Were you there when they bound and took the Lord?  
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when they bound and took the Lord?***

<sup>15</sup> Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, <sup>16</sup> but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. <sup>17</sup> The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." <sup>18</sup> Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

<sup>19</sup> Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. <sup>20</sup> Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. <sup>21</sup> Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." <sup>22</sup> When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" <sup>24</sup> Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

<sup>25</sup> Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." <sup>26</sup> One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" <sup>27</sup> Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

***Were you there when Peter denied his Lord?  
Were you there when Peter denied his Lord?  
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when Peter denied his Lord?***

<sup>28</sup> Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. <sup>29</sup> So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" <sup>30</sup> They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." <sup>31</sup> Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." <sup>32</sup> (This was to fulfil what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

<sup>33</sup> Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” <sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, “Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?” <sup>35</sup> Pilate replied, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?” <sup>36</sup> Jesus answered, “My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.” <sup>37</sup> Pilate asked him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.” <sup>38</sup> Pilate asked him, “What is truth?”

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, “I find no case against him. <sup>39</sup> But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” <sup>40</sup> They shouted in reply, “Not this man but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a rebel. <sup>19</sup> Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. <sup>2</sup> And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe.

***Were you there when they crowned his head with thorns?  
Were you there when they crowned his head with thorns?  
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when they crowned his head with thorns?***

<sup>3</sup> They kept coming up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and striking him on the face. <sup>4</sup> Pilate went out again and said to them, “Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him.” <sup>5</sup> So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!” <sup>6</sup> When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.” <sup>7</sup> The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.”

***Were you there when they cried out “Crucify!”?  
Were you there when they cried out “Crucify!”?  
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when they cried out “Crucify!”?***

<sup>8</sup> Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. <sup>9</sup> He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> Pilate therefore said to him, “Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you and power to crucify you?” <sup>11</sup> Jesus answered him, “You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.” <sup>12</sup> From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against Caesar.”

<sup>13</sup> When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge’s bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. <sup>14</sup> Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover, and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, “Here is your King!” <sup>15</sup> They cried out, “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!” Pilate asked them,

“Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” <sup>16</sup> Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

***Were you there when they chose Caesar as king?  
Were you there when they chose Caesar as king?  
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when they chose Caesar as king?***

So they took Jesus, <sup>17</sup> and carrying the cross by himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. <sup>18</sup> There they crucified him and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. <sup>19</sup> Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” <sup>20</sup> Many of the Jews read this inscription because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. <sup>21</sup> Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” <sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.” <sup>23</sup> When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. <sup>24</sup> So they said to one another, “Let us not tear it but cast lots for it to see who will get it.” This was to fulfill what the scripture says, “They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.” <sup>25</sup> And that is what the soldiers did. Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” <sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

***Were you there when he formed this family?  
Were you there when he formed this family?  
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when he formed this family?***

<sup>28</sup> After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), “I am thirsty.” <sup>29</sup> A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. <sup>30</sup> When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

<sup>31</sup> Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the Sabbath, especially because that Sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. <sup>32</sup> Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup> Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. <sup>35</sup> (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth, so that you also may continue to believe.)

***Were you there when he gave birth to the church?  
Were you there when he gave birth to the church?  
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when he gave birth to the church?***

<sup>36</sup> These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, “None of his bones shall be broken.” <sup>37</sup> And again another passage of scripture says, “They will look on the one whom they have pierced.”

<sup>38</sup> After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission, so he came and removed his body. <sup>39</sup> Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. <sup>40</sup> They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. <sup>41</sup> Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. <sup>42</sup> And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

***Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?  
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?  
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?***

### *Reflection*

When innocent people suffer injustice, **Lord, have mercy.**  
When power becomes violent and unrestrained, **Christ, have mercy.**  
Whenever Christ is crucified again in the bodies of those he loves, **Lord, have mercy.**  
When the church aligns with power instead of truth, **Lord, have mercy.**  
When religion offers silver instead of faith, **Christ, have mercy.**  
Wherever God’s people refuse to follow our Lord, **Lord, have mercy.**  
When we turn our faces from the sufferings of Jesus and the pain of humanity, **Lord, have mercy.**  
When fear strangles the impulses of faith, **Christ, have mercy.**  
Whenever we stand with those who crucified Jesus,  
Instead of with the disciples weeping under the cross, **Lord, have mercy.**  
**In your mercy, turn us from the path of destruction,  
And return us to the path of life. Amen.**

### *Song: Amazing Grace (TiS 129)*

...We pray for the Church throughout the world,  
Prince of Peace, we need you to lead us to unity and peace. *(pause for silent prayer)*  
Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

...deacons, for Jeremy our Archbishop and Geoffrey Smith our Primate.  
*(pause for silent prayer)* Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

...that you will heal our divisions and gather us, together, into your kingdom.  
*(pause for silent prayer)* Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

...And so we pray:  
**God of the nations,  
whose sovereign rule brings justice and peace,  
have mercy on our broken and divided world.**

**Shed abroad your peace in the hearts of all  
and banish from them the spirit that makes for war,  
that all races and peoples may learn to live  
as members of one family  
and in obedience to your law,  
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

...for all who live in darkness and despair.

**God who made our home,  
And made your home with us,  
Yet often had no place to lay your head,  
Have mercy today on all who have no home.  
Provide shelter and protection,  
A future and a hope,  
To all whose beds tonight will be unsafe, unstable or exposed.  
Grant wisdom and compassion,  
To everyone with power or resources  
To provide housing solutions,  
So that all may live in peace  
And share with equity and thanksgiving  
The good things you provide  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

...As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

*Hymn: There is a Green Hill (TiS 350)*

**Lord Jesus Christ, The story of your suffering is written on our hearts,  
and the salvation of the world is in your outstretched hands.  
Keep your victory always before our eyes,  
your praise on our lips, your peace in our lives. Amen.**

*Please depart in silence.*

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