

Message and Prayers for FBBC

On

Good Friday 2020



This is the text for Prayers and the message for the Good Friday Service for Faith Bible Baptist Church on the 10th of April 2020.

This is an unusual Easter time in many parts of the world because people are unable to physically gather due to mandatory precautions to prevent spreading of the virus known as Covid 19.

As we begin this message, it is important that we pray.

Please join me in prayer...

Sovereign Lord, you are the hope and healer of your people and have promised a world where there is no more sickness or crying or death. By your death and resurrection you have set your people free from the penalty of sin and death.

We pray your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Please prosper the work of those who are seeking a vaccine for the coronavirus, please strengthen those who are treating the sick, please comfort those who are mourning the loss of loved ones or living in fear of this disease.

Please give to governing authorities wisdom in their management of this crisis, and give to your people your peace beyond understanding, generous and wise hearts and a renewed trust in your sovereign goodness and glory.

Reveal yourself to the hearts of many now experiencing fear and anxiety that they may find that peace which is the fruit of the death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Please help us to learn from you as we reflect on the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ in whose name we pray, Amen.

Welcome the King

Palm Sunday and Good Friday 2020

We live in an age where “Independence”, “Liberty” and “Control” are primary values.

When Jesus lived in Israel, there were many for whom their group and the rights of their group was of utmost importance. Various sects and factions such as Pharisees and Sadducees were influential. All people were subject to the dominance of the “World Super -Power” Roman Empire which had conquered the land several decades prior to the birth of Christ. Five days prior to his crucifixion, Jesus Christ fulfilled prophecy by riding into the religious and political centre, Jerusalem on a donkey.

While a man riding a donkey was not a physical threat to political and religious institutions, the responses of people in Jerusalem revealed that Jesus was doing something profound. On Palm Sunday we remember this profound event.....

Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King John 12:12-19 (NIV)

¹² The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. ¹³ They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”^l “Blessed is the king of Israel!”

¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

¹⁵ “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.”

¹⁶ At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him....



Many people who welcomed Jesus by putting cloaks and palm branches on the road did so to welcome the King and acknowledge that Jesus was the Messiah and Saviour. They were also recognising that Jesus is the one who brings in the Kingdom of God by coming in the name of the Lord. (Psalm 118:26)

For them, the Kingdom of God was welcomed by acts of worship.

In 2020 as we prepare for Easter, we are faced with a situation where politics and religion have been challenged by Covid 19.

This is a moment in History where many are looking for hope. Many are looking for help beyond their own resources.

How is the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem in 30 AD relevant to now?

Here are possible answers to that question.

1. *Political and religious institutions are not capable of stopping a crisis.*

This week we have seen the Prime Minister of the UK, Boris Johnson in ICU suffering the effects of Covid 19.

We have also heard the President of the USA, Donald Trump, say “ This will probably be the toughest week, and there will be a lot of death, unfortunately.”

2. *Some will recognise the presence of Christ while others won't.*

In John 19:1-3 we have a blatant example of the Roman Governor , Pilate and soldiers who did not treat Jesus as the Messiah worthy of utmost respect.....



John 19:1-3 (NIV)

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. ² The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe ³ and went up to him again and again, saying, “Hail, king of the Jews!” And they slapped him in the face.

Political Correctness does not count as worship.

Pilate chose to comply with popular opinion and consented to the unjust crucifixion of Jesus. While God used this event to bring about his purposes, Pilate chose to please the crowd and his peers instead of implementing fair rule and justice. Pilate's actions were corrupt and in no way honoured Jesus as the Messiah.

Sarcasm is no excuse for disrespect of the King of Kings.

The soldiers made a “Fake” crown and a “Fake” robe from items they found. They then verbally and physically abused Jesus with no regard for his deity.

We need to be careful and consider how we live our lives. How much do we let public opinion determine how we treat others? How much do we let political correctness stop us from honouring God or implementing justice and love?

3. Any of us can call on the Lord to save us.

The suffering of Christ reveals that God loves us dearly. There are several places in the Bible where it says “All who call on the name of the Lord shall be saved”. (Acts 2:21)

4. All of us can acknowledge that Jesus is the King who is amongst us.

5. The Kingdom of God is more than material security.

Jesus demonstrated that eternal life and true riches are secured in a right relationship with God. Jesus suffered for our sins, so that we could confess them and seek God’s forgiveness. Physical health is beneficial, but not of utmost value. Material wealth is nice, but not lasting. God’s authority and Kingdom are the venue for spiritual and emotional security.

6. Worship is still possible in times of crisis.

The people who welcomed and worshipped Jesus on Palm Sunday were politically and financially oppressed. They were still able to worship Jesus in difficult times. By Worshipping Christ, they focussed on God and His kingdom. Worship is great therapy for the mind and the soul in times of crisis.

7. Such worship involves unselfish giving to honour the King and blessing others.

On Palm Sunday, people took their own cloaks and laid them down in order for Jesus to ride a donkey over them. Worship involves giving of yourself and your resources to worship God and bless others. How can we use what we have to honour God and bless others?

May we find encouragement and hope by acknowledging Jesus as King and Saviour.



Here are some prayers from Scripture and other Christian writers. May these prayers assist you in your faith and worship of God this week.

Loving God,

Please give us joy in our hearts as we shout “Hosanna”.

welcoming Jesus our King with palms

celebrating all that we hope for as the Easter story unfolds.

Then as the journey of Jesus turns towards Good Friday,

help us know that you are with us when celebration turns to sadness.

Please give us the faith we need to follow you in joy, repentance, forgiveness and selflessness....Amen

Psalm 5: 1-8

¹ Listen to my words, LORD, consider my lament. ² Hear my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray.

³ In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.

⁴ For you are not a God who is pleased with wickedness; with you, evil people are not welcome.

⁵ The arrogant cannot stand in your presence. You hate all who do wrong; ⁶ you destroy those who tell lies.

The bloodthirsty and deceitful you, LORD, detest.⁷ But I, by your great love, can come into your house; in reverence I bow down toward your holy temple.

⁸ Lead me, LORD, in your righteousness because of my enemies; make your way straight before me.

Psalm 100

¹ Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. ² Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

³ Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his^[a]; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

⁵ For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, for ever and ever.
Amen.*

