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UNLEASHING THE GOSPEL

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ARTICLE The Day the Earth Stood Still

Prayer Spotlight Opening Our Lives



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Next Week's Sermon April 2, 2023 Jesus our Defence IJohn 1:2-2:2 PREACHER Victor Ong

Pulpit Program To see the full Pulpit Program, <u>Click Here</u>

The Day The Earth Stood Still

This poem was preached as a sermon during the Good Friday Service on 15th April 2022. It consists of four scenes. The poem will be continued in the next issue with the last two scenes.



Scene 1 – In the Garden

We are gathered tonight, Good Friday to observe, The memory of the death of Christ, to preserve. Tracing His steps to the cross, as Scripture attested, We shall start at the place where He was arrested.

It was dark, the air in the garden was tense. The disciples' hearts were troubled, wrapped in suspense. Something's about to happen, they sensed, something ill, For it was the night before **the day the earth stood still.**

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Click Here to get our latest announcements and upcoming events by WhatsApp Save +6010-2206701 as FBCA in your contact list To the Garden of Gethsemane the group went, Jesus along with the Twelve, minus one of them. Met by olive trees that stood in eerie silence, As if creation was hanging in the balance.

For ever since the Fall, with the world trapped in sin, Between God and man, a huge chasm had set in. But the God of love had a plan so momentous, To reconcile sinners to Himself who's righteous.

He would give His beloved Son to die for us, He would place the penalty of our sin on Jesus. It would require His sacrifice on the cross, So that we wretched sinners would not be lost.

Here in the darkened Garden, the stage was set, For the day that history would never forget. The whole of heaven waited with bated breath, For the Son of God would soon submit to death.

As the hour neared, Jesus was filled with sorrow, At the thought of events that would soon to follow. "My soul is overwhelmed with anguish," He cried, In His disciples, this He tried to confide.

Seeking solitude, as His distress grew stronger, The Son of God bared His soul to His Father. He threw Himself to the ground and began to pray, Perhaps, just perhaps, there might be another way?

He prayed, "If possible, spare Me this cursed cup, But if it's Your will, I shall surely drink it up!" Three times Jesus poured His heart out in agony, His sweat, like drops of blood, trickled down furiously.





The scourge of the cruel cross weighed heavily on Him, Yet to Him the task was clear, a world to redeem. He humbled Himself to a gruesome death on the tree, To offer salvation to sinners like you and me.

The moment His prayers Jesus concluded, A band of armed men the Garden invaded. Led by Judas Iscariot who had betrayed the Lord, He brought soldiers, each wielding a club or a sword.

For earlier, Judas had devised his wicked plan, For thirty silver pieces, he would deliver the Man. But the Almighty God in His sovereignty, His purpose is served, despite men's sin or folly.

As the platoon confronted Jesus and His team, With a kiss, Judas proceeded with his scheme. With that kiss, Jesus' identity was revealed, With that kiss, the fate of the Savior was sealed.

Peter drew a quick sword, his Master to defend, Why Jesus did nothing, he could not comprehend. A swift blow, and the ear of a foe he did slice, To protect his Lord, his life he would sacrifice.

"Away with that weapon," Jesus did instruct, "My road to the cross, Peter, you shall not obstruct!" "My sole mission is to tread redemption's hill." "My single purpose is the Scripture to fulfil."

"Live by the sword, and by the sword you die," Jesus warned. Is there another meaning here, that can be drawn? Perhaps He also meant, that if you live in sin, In sin you will die, if there's no cleansing within. With a touch, Jesus healed the man who lost his ear, Even in this tense moment, His mercy was clear. Was He also saying, that anyone maimed by sin, He would also heal, and cleanse him from within?

The disciples deserted Jesus, they took flight, As their Master surrendered without a fight. They had followed Jesus for three intimate years, It's disappointing, they now gave in to their fears.

Jesus was led away like a lamb to the slaughter, He was taken, but not a word did He utter. This fulfilled what's written in the book of Isaiah, To show us that Jesus is indeed the Messiah.

As we contemplate what happened in the Garden, We seek to uncover the lesson that's hidden. Gethsemane, the start of the road to Calvary, Where Christ set His sights on the cross submissively.

O God, cause us also, to submit to You, Like Jesus, teach us to live in obedience too. Help us also say "Not my will, but Yours be done," Let our life's journey be aligned to what You want!

As Jesus did, set our sights on the cross, we pray, The emblem of our salvation, may we not stray. Day by day, lead us to the cross, we also ask. Keeping our eyes on Jesus be our constant task.

Scene 2 – At the Trial

From the Garden, Jesus was brought back to the city, Trial after trial, He was to face men without pity. He was to endure a longest night of ordeal, 'Twas the wee hours of **the day the earth stood still**.





First Jesus was questioned by Annas, a man so vile, As the former high priest, he had served for quite a while. He wanted Jesus dead, more than anything, His hatred for Jesus, you would find revolting.

The crimes of Jesus, Annas tried to investigate, Seeking proofs, so that Jesus he could incriminate. The humiliation Jesus had to suffer in that place, When, especially, someone slapped Him in the face.

When Annas was done, he sent Jesus to Caiaphas. Caiaphas was the son-in-law of Annas. As the current high priest, he was Annas' puppet, You might describe the both as the evil duet.

With Caiaphas, Jesus faced more interrogation, He had to endure even more humiliation. He was mocked, He was blindfolded, He was hit, "Tell us," they teased, "the one who hit You, who is it?"

All this while, lurking in the courtyard was Peter, Curious to see what's happening to his Master. Earlier in the Garden, he had fled the scene, Now, there's nothing he could do to intervene.

What's worse, Peter's cowardice would now be exposed, By his answers to questions that he was posed. Three times Peter was asked by people in the crowd, "I've seen you with Jesus, haven't I?" they vowed.

Thrice Peter disowned his Lord, when he had to choose, He scolded them, "Hey, I don't know the accused!" Just then, a rooster crowed, as Jesus had predicted, Peter realized what he did, his tears unrestricted.

Here lies a thought for followers of Jesus Christ: When you've to choose, are you willing to pay the price? How sure are we of our loyalty to our Lord? In the end, our action speaks louder than word! At sunrise, Caiaphas assembled the Sanhedrin, To charge Jesus in a formal court proceeding. Witnesses were queued, each with false testimony, They viciously accused Jesus of blasphemy.

But to kill Jesus, they needed Roman permission, They went to Pilate, the ruler of the region. It was the fourth trial that Jesus had to endure, His conviction, the Jews were bent to secure!

But... Pilate was in no mood to sit in court,

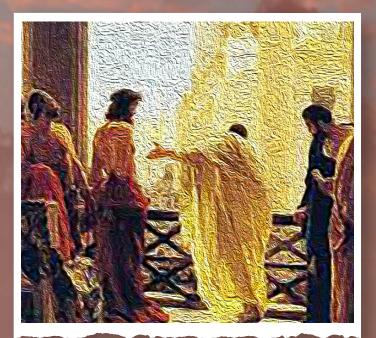
"These people should sort out their problems," he thought. He passively asked Jesus a question or two, And found no basis for a charge against this Jew!

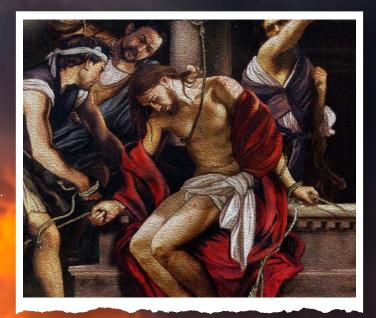
When Pilate was told that Jesus hailed from Galilee, And that the Galilean ruler was in vicinity,So, he quickly sent Jesus to Herod Antipas, In the hope that this little problem would pass.

At this fifth trial, more questions at Jesus were thrown, But He kept silent throughout, and held His own. Herod and his men ridiculed the Man in the dock, While Jesus stood still, as they continued to mock.

They brought Jesus back to Pilate, for His last trial, A mob had gathered, a crowd that was hostile. "This Man is innocent," Pilate still insisted, Such a verdict, the mob angrily resisted.

Pilate hatched a plan: a choice to them he would offer, Each year, the norm was for him to free a prisoner. "Jesus, or Barabbas the robber?" he asked the crowd, "Release Barabbas!" they demanded aloud.





Pilate frustrated, thought of another idea, He had Jesus flogged, that might be the panacea. Seeing Him bruised and maimed, they might be satisfied, But no, the crowd still wanted Jesus crucified.

And so Jesus was scourged, with a whip so cruel, Pieces of flesh torn out, to the soldiers' approval. He suffered torture and pain so excruciating, Only thing worse was the cross, that was awaiting.

Before the mob, a broken Jesus Pilate paraded, "Behold the Man," he thought they would be placated. But "Crucify Him!" was the crowd's unified cry, Pilate at last relented, sending Jesus to die.

It may seem wicked men plotted to have Jesus killed, But it's really us, who caused His blood to be spilled. He suffered exceedingly, due to our sinful stain, We were the wicked men, who caused Him so much pain.

Because of our sin, on the cross Jesus died, Yet, due to that cross, we're cleansed of the sin inside. For it is written, by His wounds we are healed, Our sin that caused His wounds, can now be repealed.

It's the power of the cross, Christ became sin for us, So that wretched sinners may now gain righteousness. Jesus may appear weak throughout His suffering, But the power of God all that time was working.

© Lee Yee Dian



by Lee Yee Dian Yee Dian is one of the Elders of First Baptist Church

Congratulations!

We rejoice with Nick and Ivy Tee on the arrival of newborn baby daughter Charlotte Tee and son Christopher Tee on 13th February 2023. We also rejoice with Gary and Naomi Lee on the arrival of newborn baby son Philip Lee born on 2nd March 2023.





PrayerSpotlight

Opening Our Lives

Find a peaceful place to sit and quieten your mind. Picture yourself at the foot of the Jesus' cross. From the cross Jesus looks directly at you. Notice him looking at you. He is looking at you lovingly, He is not someone harsh and demanding. He does not expect perfection. He understands your doubts, protests, anger, failures, disappointments and frustrations. Give those over to him and simply accept his love and forgiveness. Now in a time of quiet, just sit in the presence of your Saviour who became sin for you. Your God who accepts and loves you completely. Allow yourself to be loved and cleansed of the sin inside.

Taken from Opening our Lives, Trystan Owain Hughes, The Bible Reading Fellowship 2020, pg 180

