

Meditation for Wednesday of Holy Week

Psalm 91

*You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,^[4]
will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust.”
For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler
and from the deadly pestilence;
he will cover you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.
You will not fear the terror of the night,
or the arrow that flies by day,
or the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
or the destruction that wastes at noonday.*

This Psalm is a cry, a prayer of someone who wants to trust in God, they are certain that God will act on their behalf. However, we might question that God will save them from disaster and pain and death. Maybe that is the lesson that Jesus taught us: he allowed for the possibility that he might indeed die at the hands of his enemies, and yet he still believed that God would put things right. He had to trust until his last breath; Jesus left everything in God's hands.

All this happened in a Garden. Having shared the Last Supper with his disciples, Jesus faces his fears – “The Son of Man will be handed over ...” He admits his weakness. Not just once – he ponders and prays again and again, before he finally surrenders. He accepts the coming pain and loss, he surrenders to the violence to come; he conquers the human inclination to run away and the wish that the future would be different. He gives his life and hopes into his Father's hands; he trusts in God.

Jesus is alone in all this; he puts his trust in three of his closest friends, but they cannot stay awake. They are indifferent to the reality; maybe because it is too hard for them.

Maybe – after this extended time of self-isolation – you are feeling crushed in spirit? That all your efforts will be in vain? Do you feel alone even with family or friends? Are you troubled by thoughts of release, freedom and life as you have known it before? This is your Gethsemane. This is your moment of offering to the Father. And Jesus – alive, risen, and conquering – is with you. He has opened the way through death into presence with the Father. He will provide what you cannot because he has already made that difference.

Jesus is not asleep, he stays awake and is near; in his loving company, tell God exactly how you feel. Let everything within your being tell God what you desire above all else – to act in love and trust through all that lies ahead.