

Sunday 4th October 2020

Welcome & Announcements

Call to worship psalm 134

Praise group- My Jesus my Saviour

Prayer pg 198

Old Testament Reading - Exodus 17:8-15

Offering

Video - 'Together team Hoyt'

New Testament Reading - Ephesians 6:10-13

Sermon

Prayers

Hymn Hp 721 Stand up stand up for Jesus

Blessing

Communion at 12 noon

CALL to WORSHIP Psalm 134

Praise the LORD, all you servants of the LORD
who minister by night in the house of the LORD.

² *Lift up your hands in the sanctuary*

*and praise the LORD.*³ May the LORD bless you from Zion,
he who is the Maker of heaven and earth.

Praise Group My Jesus my Saviour

Prayer We say together- *God of mercy, your love for us is strong, but our love for you is weak. You call us to follow Jesus, but we are slow to obey. You care for all that you have made, but we ignore the needs of others and misuse your creation. We are sorry for our sins. Forgive us, and help us to please you by the way we live; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

God is love & He forgives our sins through Jesus. Amen

Old Testament Reading Exodus 17:8- 15 The Amalekites came & attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, 'Choose some of our men & go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.'

So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, & Moses, Aaron & Hur went to the top of the hill. As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone & put it under him & he sat on it. Aaron & Hur held his hands up - one on one side, one on the other - so that his hands remained steady till sunset. So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.

Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered & make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven.'

Moses built an altar & called it The LORD is my Banner.

Offering

Video - 'Together team Hoyt'

New Testament Reading - Ephesians 6:10-13

⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

SERMON It was the beginning of March & we were moving ever closer to something that none of us had ever seen before, Lockdown...& to make matters worse my shoulder was sore! Yes to be honest it had been sore for weeks & like many people I had told myself that it would go away... but it hadn't ..in fact it seemed to get worse to the point where I could only lift up my arm about half way& it was at that point that this passage from the book of Exodus came to mind... Moses who in the midst

of a desperate situation had grown so tired that he needed others to hold his arms up.... **SLIDE 1**

Over these past few weeks we have been plodding along with the Israelites as they have moved out of Egypt miraculously through the Red sea & into the wilderness ... We have seen God rescue them from the Egyptians... how He told them that they wouldn't need to fight the enemy rather they only needed to *be still*. '14:14 Then we saw God split the waters saving His people & dealing with Pharaoh & his army once for all.. Then you remember we also saw God provided for His grumbling people, time & time again, water food water.. And yes the people have been slow learners ... but they have at least continued on....

However this morning as we come to hear about the latest trouble we see in Deuteronomy 25 that some of God's people were lagging behind the main group... becoming easy targets for enemies so in **SLIDE 2** Deut 25: 17-18 *remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. When you were weary & worn out, they met you on your journey & attacked all who were lagging behind; So as the people seek to move on through the wilderness, the Amalekites, a people descended in part from Esau , attacked the weakest slowest travellers at the back.. like jackals or birds of prey they picked off the weakest & most vulnerable... the easy targets....*

Now I don't want to labour the metaphor too much but I think its fair to say that as we travel forwards with Jesus that there can be difficult times... wilderness experiences... times when the way

has been hard & for different reasons we feel tired... & drained & maybe we begin to lag behind....On occasion people have said to me something like.. you don't have to go to Church to be a Christian' My response to that is always...While I believe that's right ...for a Christian is simply someone who has trusted in Jesus & committed themselves to daily following their Saviour....And yes at certain times & for certain reasons many of us miss Church... **However** the truth is that nearly all of us struggle at times with that 'daily following' & **SLIDE 3** we NEED the encouragement & grace that is available in meeting together to worship God & open up His word. To put it simply, we are far more likely to surrender to doubt, fear frustration & in the end faithlessness if we give up meeting with other believers..

So we need to keep going ...to keep together & keep going ..even if its just a plod....even if we are in a place where we can't physically meet its still so important to commit ourselves to gathering online at home... because while we probably won't be attacked by physical enemies the truth is that as our passage from Ephesians makes clear..we are in a spiritual battle.. **Slide 4** A battle not against flesh & blood ...*but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

Yes whether we like it or not one of the pictures that the bible offers us for the Christian life is one of a battle... one where we are attacked by forces opposed to Christ & called on to take up our armour & defend ourselves... This is a huge topic & I don't

want to say too much about it today...except this... the picture of battle, taken from the Roman legions, in Ephesians 6 & our passage from Exodus make clear that we are not to face this opposition alone but go TOGETHER into battle...

Just look back at the Exodus passage & we discover that this time God wasn't going to do ALL the fighting for them... But neither was He going to leave it all up to them either... in fact He was going to lead them to victory... Jehovah Nissi... God my banner.. BUT they had to work with Him... & WORK TOGETHER

Just look at how the battle unfolded... the younger man Joshua choose some men to go & fight the battle...while Moses who was by now a much older man.. went with other older men up a nearby hill & there held up the staff of God... And as Moses held up the staff high in the air ...the battle flowed Joshua's way... they were winning against their enemies... but when Moses eventually got tired & his arms began to sag & the staff was lowered...the enemies began to get the upper hand... Here is a picture of God at work in the midst of conflict... through different people WHO all had their part to play... each completely necessary.. **Slide 5**

One of the biggest lies that the enemy tells so many of us is this... we aren't that important or necessary... we have little to offer... we don't have the right knowledge ...or the right skills... or perhaps just that we are too old... And at the minute in the midst of this pandemic... that is probably a big one... I just can't

do the things that I was involved in.... NO that's true... BUT can I tell you this morning that if it wasn't for Aaron & Hur holding up Moses' hands... Joshua would not have won the victory....

Now listen ...I am not just trying to make some of you feel better this morning... I am actually calling us all to arms... I am reminding myself & us all that the present struggles we face as a Church & a nation are huge & that PRAYER & TOGETHERNESS aren't optional extras...they are ESSENTIAL... we need to stick together.... & we need to stick to prayer... for in prayer we hold up others....& we hold up the work of God.... Slide 6

Over the month of October as well as the usual prayer meeting through Zoom on Tuesdays at 1pm we will also be inviting you to come physically or join us online for an evening prayer gathering... These will take place here in the Hall at 7.30pm from Wed 14th Oct. We will simply be praying for our world, nation & Church in light of the present crisis.... I realise that not all of you will be able to come & some of you also won't be able to join with us online through Zoom... But you can still set that time aside to sit down at home & pray.... You can still reach out to God & hold up the arms of others....

We need each other... & we need God in these days... let us pray.

Prayers for Others

God, most gracious and most holy, grant us the help of your Spirit as we pray for the Church and the world.

We pray for the Church in every land.... Lord help us all to trust You and believe that we can be a blessing in these times. We pray for this church and for other local churches.. Help us to serve you with reverence and joy...help us to keep connected with each other & with You... & help us notice those amongst us who are discouraged & in need... Help us hold up each others hands..

Lord hear us. *Lord graciously hear us.*

We pray for the peoples of the world... Lord we pray especially for those who are most vulnerable, for those who have little access to health care or help. We pray for the leaders of the nations...and for our scientists & healthcare workers... God protect them & give them guidance in these most difficult of times may all work together for justice and peace.

Lord hear us. *Lord graciously hear us*

And now we pray for those who are ill and distressed, especially those who have requested our prayers...Leo... Timothy Harte... Daniel Kidson Paul McDowell Percy Foster... Jean Woods ... George ...Jerry & Jean McHaffee... AnnaTrevor ..Suszanne.. & we pray that You would continue to comfort those who have lost loved ones... the Margaret Mawhinney & family... Styephen & Stephanie Mckee & family... family of Tina Donaldson & all who have experienced loss this year...

Lord hear us. Lord graciously hear us...

Lord's Prayer

Hymn- Stand up, stand up for Jesus
ye soldiers of the cross;
lift high his royal banner,
it must not suffer loss:
from vict'ry unto vict'ry
his army he shall lead,
'til ev'ry foe is vanquished,
and Christ is Lord indeed.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
the trumpet call obey;
forth to the mighty conflict
in this his glorious day:
ye that are men now serve him
against unnumbered foes;
let courage rise with danger,
and strength to strength oppose.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
stand in his strength alone;
the arm of flesh will fail you,
ye dare not trust your own:
put on the gospel armor,
each piece put on with pray'r;

where duty calls, or danger,
be never wanting there.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
the strife will not be long;
this day the noise of battle,
the next the victor's song:
to him that overcometh
a crown of life shall be;
He with the King of glory
Shall reign eternally.

Blessing - Lord help us hold each other's hands... And we share
the grace together.

The Peace & Holy Communion 12 noon

