



TENEBRAE

Wednesday – March 31, 2021
7:00pm

***Watching with Christ in the darkness and shadows,
while he prepares to suffer for the sake of the world.***

The name *Tenebrae* is the Latin word for "darkness" or "shadows". The most conspicuous feature of the service is the gradual extinguishing of candles until only a single candle, considered a symbol of our Lord, and his abandonment by his disciples.

Toward the end of the service this candle is hidden, typifying the apparent victory of the forces of evil. At the very end, a loud noise is made, symbolizing the earthquake at the time of the resurrection (Matthew 28:2), the hidden candle is restored to its place, and by its light all depart in silence.

If you are reading this service in your home, we invite you to set up a series of candles, uneven in number (up to 15). Depending on how many you are using, extinguish one when you see ***+ A candle is extinguished***, until only the center candle remains, representing our Lord.

As you read each Psalm, hold the meaning lightly, allowing the psalm to articulate at one and same time, the voice of the psalmist speaking to God, of Jesus crying to his father, and of your prayers in this time of global crisis.

PART ONE

Psalm 69: 1-15

1. Save me, O God, for the waters have risen up to my neck.
2. I am sinking in deep mire, and there is no firm ground for my feet.
3. I have come into deep waters, and the torrent washes over me.
4. I have grown weary with my crying; my throat is inflamed;
my eyes have failed from looking for my God.

5. Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; my lying foes who would
 destroy me are mighty. Must I then give back what I never stole?
6. O God, you know my foolishness, and my faults are not hidden from you.
7. Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me, Lord GOD of hosts;
 let not those who seek you be disgraced because of me, O God of Israel.
8. Surely, for your sake have I suffered reproach, and shame has covered my face.
9. I have become a stranger to my own kindred, an alien to my mother's children.
10. Zeal for your house has eaten me up; the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.
11. I humbled myself with fasting, but that was turned to my reproach.
12. I put on sack-cloth also, and became a byword among them.
13. Those who sit at the gate murmur against me, and the drunkards make songs about me.
14. But as for me, this is my prayer to you, at the time you have set, O LORD:
15. "In your great mercy, O God, answer me with your unfailing help.

+ A candle is extinguished

Psalm 69: 16-23

16. Save me from the mire; do not let me sink;
 let me be rescued from those who hate me and out of the deep waters.
17. Let not the torrent of waters wash over me, neither let the deep swallow me up;
 do not let the Pit shut its mouth upon me.
18. Answer me, O LORD, for your love is kind; in your great compassion, turn to me."
19. "Hide not your face from your servant; be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.
20. Draw near to me and redeem me; because of my enemies deliver me.
21. You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; my adversaries are all in your sight."
22. Reproach has broken my heart, and it cannot be healed; I looked for sympathy,
 but there was none, for comforters, but I could find no one.
23. They gave me gall to eat, and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink.

+ A candle is extinguished

Psalm 69: 31-38

31. As for me, I am afflicted and in pain; your help, O God, will lift me up on high.
32. I will praise the Name of God in song; I will proclaim his greatness with thanksgiving.
33. This will please the LORD more than an offering of oxen,
 more than bullocks with horns and hoofs.
34. The afflicted shall see and be glad; you who seek God, your heart shall live.
35. For the LORD listens to the needy, and his prisoners he does not despise.
36. Let the heavens and the earth praise him, the seas and all that moves in them;
37. For God will save Zion and rebuild the cities of Judah;
 they shall live there and have it in possession.
38. The children of his servants will inherit it, and those who love his Name will dwell therein.

+ A candle is extinguished

Reflection One: *Jesus in Gethsemane*

Excerpt from *Intense Moments with the Savior*, by Ken Gire

As Jesus makes his way to the heart of the garden of Gethsemane, the weight of his destiny bears down on him. He stops to rest his forearm against a large branch. For generations the olive branch has been a symbol of peace. But not tonight. Not for Jesus.

Alone in a clearing, Jesus falls to his knees, then fully to the ground. Seen through the foliage, this darkly mottled portrait is charge with intensity. And humanity. For Jesus was never more human than he is now. Never more weak. Never more sad.

And yes, never more afraid.

He clutches the grass as if to rein in the run-away terror. He writhes on the ground, his agony reflected in the twisted trunks of the on-looking trees. He grasps at the ground, groping for its embrace.

But there is no embrace. There is only silence and darkness and the cold, hard ground.

He wrestles in prayer. But his prayer is no well-constructed sonnet, whispered with composure. His words are the shards of a broken heart. And they shred his soul on the way up.


+ A candle is extinguished

Song

Theme I

The Lord is my light 36


Calmly (♩ = 66)



The Lord is my light, my light and sal-va-tion: in God I trust, in God I trust. The

Chords: (A1) Dm, G, (A2), (B1), (B2), fine

Theme II



The Lord is my light, my light and sal-va-tion: in God I trust, in God I trust. The

Chords: (A1), (A2), (B1), (B2), fine

PART TWO

Psalm 27: 1-11

1. The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?
the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?
2. When evildoers came upon me to eat up my flesh,
it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who stumbled and fell
3. Though an army should encamp against me, yet my heart shall not be afraid;
4. And though war should rise up against me, yet will I put my trust in him.
5. One thing have I asked of the LORD; one thing I seek;
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life;
6. To behold the fair beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.
7. For in the day of trouble he shall keep me safe in his shelter;
he shall hide me in the secrecy of his dwelling and set me high upon a rock.
8. Even now he lifts up my head above my enemies round about me.
9. Therefore I will offer in his dwelling an oblation with sounds of great gladness;
I will sing and make music to the LORD.
10. Hearken to my voice, O LORD, when I call; have mercy on me and answer me.
11. You speak in my heart and say, "Seek my face." Your face, LORD, will I seek.

+ A candle is extinguished

Psalm 27: 12-18

12. Hide not your face from me, nor turn away your servant in displeasure.
13. You have been my helper; cast me not away; do not forsake me, O God of my salvation.
14. Though my father and my mother forsake me, the LORD will sustain me.
15. Show me your way, O LORD; lead me on a level path, because of my enemies.
16. Deliver me not into the hand of my adversaries,
for false witnesses have risen up against me, and also those who speak malice.
17. What if I had not believed that I should see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!
18. O tarry and await the LORD'S pleasure; be strong, and he shall comfort your heart; *
wait patiently for the LORD.

+ A candle is extinguished

Reflection Two: *Jesus in Roman Hands*

Excerpt from *Intense Moments with the Savior*, by Ken Gire

Jesus' hands—hands that once reached out to touch lepers and to stroke the hair of children—are cuffed in rope. Guards shouldered on either side parade him around the expansive hall where hundreds of soldiers are gathered.

As they stop, one guard cuts the rope from the prisoner's wrists. Weary from the loss of sleep and

light-headed from the loss of blood, Jesus collapses. A voice commands, “Strip him!” and a few of the soldiers pounce and pull Jesus to his feet, ripping the blood-soaked garment off his back. He stands naked before his enemies.

He not only stands naked and silent before his shearers, he stands alone. There is no one to defend him. No one to shield him from their stares. No one to protect him from their savagery.

They drape a red cape around his shoulders. One soldier has taken a strand of thorns from the tinder box and woven it into a wreath. “King’s gotta have a crown.” And he mashes the three-inch thorns into Jesus’ scalp. Jesus grimaces as God’s curse on Eden comes to curse him back.

+ A candle is extinguished

Song *Oh Lord, hear my prayer*

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a tempo marking of ♩ = 72. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call an - swer me. O The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: All my hope comes from God. The". The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me. O Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: God, the well - spring of life. The". Both systems end with a "fine" marking and a fermata over the final note.

PART THREE

Psalm 88: 1-10

1. O LORD, my God, my Savior, by day and night I cry to you.
2. Let my prayer enter into your presence; incline your ear to my lamentation.
3. For I am full of trouble; my life is at the brink of the grave.

4. I am counted among those who go down to the Pit;
I have become like one who has no strength;
5. Lost among the dead, like the slain who lie in the grave,
6. Whom you remember no more, for they are cut off from your hand.
7. You have laid me in the depths of the Pit, in dark places, and in the abyss.
8. Your anger weighs upon me heavily, and all your great waves overwhelm me.
9. You have put my friends far from me; you have made me to be abhorred by them;
I am in prison and cannot get free.
10. My sight has failed me because of trouble; *LORD, I have called upon you daily;
I have stretched out my hands to you.

+ A candle is extinguished

Psalm 88: 14-19

14. But as for me, O LORD, I cry to you for help; in the morning my prayer comes before you.
15. LORD, why have you rejected me? why have you hidden your face from me?
16. Ever since my youth, I have been wretched and at the point of death;
I have borne your terrors with a troubled mind.
17. Your blazing anger has swept over me; your terrors have destroyed me;
18. They surround me all day long like a flood; they encompass me on every side.
19. My friend and my neighbor you have put away from me, and darkness is my only companion.

+ A candle is extinguished

Reflection Three: *Jesus at Golgotha*

Excerpt from *Intense Moments with the Savior*, by Ken Gire

One of the Roman soldiers at the foot of the cross curses Jesus and mocks him: If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.

Jesus opens his swollen eyes and sees the blur of men below. What stories these eyewitnesses could tell their superiors if he did come down and save himself. What evangelists they would make. It is an unparalleled opportunity...If only Jesus would save himself.

Then another taunt comes from the robber hanging on a cross nearby: Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!

Slowly Jesus turns his head to see the man who insulted him. He sees eyes that are lit with anger; anger at life, anger at Rome, anger at Jesus.

How simple it would be for Jesus to ease the burning in the soul that enflames the man's eyes. Jesus has done it so many times before with so many others, by a word, a touch, a gesture of compassion. He can stop the fire in this man's soul too...

If only Jesus would save himself.

But Jesus knows something the man hanging next to him doesn't. He knows he can save himself. Or he can save us. But he can't do both.

In this final hour, in spite of how much pain he is in. In spite of how tired he is. How weak. And how alone. He has the strength to choose on our behalf. It is not his strength, but the strength of his heavenly Father, the strength of the Father's love for the whole world, that strengthens Jesus for this final choice.

Jesus chooses to save us.

+ A candle is extinguished

Song *Our darkness is never darkness in your sight*

Our dark - ness is nev - er dark - ness in your sight: the
 La té - nè - bre n'est point té - nè - bre de - vant toi: la

deep - est night is clear as the day light. Our
 nuit com - me le jour est lu - miè - re. La té -

PART FOUR

Psalm 90

1. Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.
2. Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth were born, from age to age you are God.
3. You turn us back to the dust and say, "Go back, O child of earth."
4. For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past and like a watch in the night.
5. You sweep us away like a dream; we fade away suddenly like the grass.
6. In the morning it is green and flourishes; in the evening it is dried up and withered.
7. For we consume away in your displeasure; we are afraid because of your wrathful indignation.

8. Our iniquities you have set before you, and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
9. When you are angry, all our days are gone; we bring our years to an end like a sigh.
10. The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even eighty;
yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly and we are gone.
11. Who regards the power of your wrath? who rightly fears your indignation?
12. So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.
13. Return, O LORD; how long will you tarry? be gracious to your servants.
14. Satisfy us by your loving-kindness in the morning;
so shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.
15. Make us glad by the measure of the days that you afflicted us and the years in which we suffered adversity.

+ A candle is extinguished

Psalm 63

1. O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,
as in a barren and dry land where there is no water.
2. Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place,
that I might behold your power and your glory.
3. For your loving-kindness is better than life itself; my lips shall give you praise.
4. So will I bless you as long as I live and lift up my hands in your Name.
5. My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,
6. When I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the night watches.
7. For you have been my helper, and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.
8. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast.

+ A candle is extinguished

Song *Stay with me, remain here with me*

Musical score for the song "Stay with me, remain here with me". The score is in 2/4 time with a tempo of 72. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are in English and German. The English lyrics are: "Stay with me, remain here with me, watch and pray, be tet, watch and pray, be tet." The German lyrics are: "Blei - bet hier und wa - chet mit mir, wa - chet und be - tet, wa - chet und be - tet." The piano accompaniment includes chords such as Dm, Gm°, F, C, Dm, Asus, and A. The score is marked with dynamics like p and f.

Psalm 143

1. LORD, hear my prayer, and in your faithfulness heed my supplications;
answer me in your righteousness.
2. Enter not into judgment with your servant, for in your sight shall no one living be justified.
3. For my enemy has sought my life; he has crushed me to the ground;
he has made me live in dark places like those who are long dead.
4. My spirit faints within me; my heart within me is desolate.
5. I remember the time past; I muse upon all your deeds; I consider the works of your hands.
6. I spread out my hands to you; my soul gasps to you like a thirsty land.
7. O LORD, make haste to answer me; my spirit fails me;
do not hide your face from me or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.
8. Let me hear of your loving-kindness in the morning, for I put my trust in you;
show me the road that I must walk, for I lift up my soul to you.
9. Deliver me from my enemies, O LORD, for I flee to you for refuge.
10. Teach me to do what pleases you, for you are my God;
let your good Spirit lead me on level ground.
11. Revive me, O LORD, for your Name's sake;
for your righteousness' sake, bring me out of trouble.

+ A candle is extinguished

Canticle 16: The Song of Zechariah

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
he has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty savior,
born of the house of his servant David.
Through his holy prophets he promised of old,
that he would save us from our enemies, from the hands of all who hate us.
He promised to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham,
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

+ A candle is extinguished

The remaining candle is taken from the stand and hidden.

A brief silence is observed.

Christ for us became obedient unto death, even death on a cross; therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the Name which is above every name.

Anthem *Jesus Remember Me*

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

The image shows a musical score for the anthem 'Jesus Remember Me'. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: 'Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.' The first system ends with a double bar line, and the second system continues the melody and accompaniment.

Leader:

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross.

Nothing further is said; but a noise is made, and the remaining candle is brought from its hiding place and replaced on the stand.

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