

Beaminster Area Team

God our Father, renew our hope. By the Holy Spirit's power, strengthen us to pray readily serve joyfully and grow abundantly rejoicing in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Week: 28th February 2021, Second Sunday of Lent

Old Testament: Genesis 17: 1-7,15-16

Psalm: Psalm 22: 23-end

New Testament: Romans 4: 13-end

Gospel: Mark 8: 31-end

Reflection on the Gospel reading, by Revd. Alastair Wheeler

In Northern Galilee is the landmark of Mount Hermon's cool and snow-capped limestone slopes, there too was the Roman new town of Caesarea Philippi, beside the "Gates of Hades" – the vast limestone cave where the cold dark waters of the underworld symbolising death flowed out to become the river Jordan.

There too were Temples to Pan, Mediterranean God of sex and drink, patronised by a military garrison patrolling the Eastern borders of the Roman Empire. As today, it was a volatile area, where new leaders could make their mark.

It was there that Jesus chose to focus his ministry and reveal his glory, as well as warn of the agonies that lay ahead, and called his disciples to choose.

Jesus was truly messiah. BUT he was not going to take over from Caesar and his puppet ruler Philip. Jesus challenged expectations of a Messiah who would liberate God's people like Moses, a prophet greater than Elijah.

Instead, he spoke of triumph through defeat, suffering, death in the agony of a cross. Before rising again on the third day. Not Insurrection but Resurrection.

Use your imagination – see yourself there on those mountain slopes with Jesus and the crowd, see yourself where you are in your life this year, maybe alone in lockdown fearing the gates of the underworld.

Hear his call, his offer, the choice for all of us between this world's agenda or the community of the Kingdom of God as we follow Jesus, Messiah in his way of the cross to the light of Easter.

Collect for the Second Sunday of Lent

Almighty God,
you show to those who are in error the light of your truth, that they may return to the way of righteousness: grant to all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may reject those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Worship to enjoy at home

BBC Radio 4, 8.10am, Sunday Worship Lent 2 BBC 1 at 11.15, Sunday Morning Worship, Songs of Praise BBC1 1.15pm

A Useful Telephone Link from The Church of England. This is a free number where you can listen to prayers, reflections and hymns and join in worship with others.

