

16th April 2022
Holy Saturday

Between

**"The prayer of Ajax was for light;
Through all that dark and desperate fight,
The blackness of that noonday night."**

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, The Goblet of Life

I've never liked the Saturday between Good Friday and Easter Day. For a start, as a Presbyterian, having a liturgical event such as an Easter Vigil on the Saturday evening into the first few minutes of Easter Day isn't something I've been familiar with. So, it's always been a "nothing" kind of day for me, a day of waiting, a day of being in-between.

For the disciples who'd witnessed, and been broken by, the events of the Crucifixion on Good Friday, the day following must have been awful. Worse than a "nothing" day, it would have been a day that was the start of emptiness, a barren darkness that stretched out who knew how far. If "the prayer of Ajax was for light" after the blackness of his "noonday night", how much more would the prayers of these lost disciples be for *any* kind of light that would help them make sense of what seemed to make no sense, to give them hope in their hopelessness and despair.

On the rocks below Port Charlotte on the Rhinns of Islay there's a lighthouse, known locally as the Port Charlotte or the Loch Indaal Lighthouse. It's proper name, however, is *Rubh'an Duin*, and it was built to guard the northwest shore of Loch Indaal by David and Thomas Stevenson in 1869. As lighthouses go, it's very small, what a member of my family described as a "baby lighthouse that hasn't grown up yet". But at low tide, you can clearly see the dangers of the rocks that stretch into the loch. And in the darkest of nights, the *Rubh'an Duin* lighthouse really matters.

On this Saturday, my prayer with Ajax is for light – a little light, a baby light, enough light to help me through this day, as I pray that I'll make it. Will a light be shining for me? I hope so. Will it help me make sense of it all? I hope so. Will I survive this in-between day? I hope so, as I wait, watch and wonder in the blackness of *my* noonday night.

A prayer for today

Today, the Psalmist gives me my prayer:

"Lord, even the darkness is not dark to you." (Psalm 139:2)

And I say, "Thank God! Thank God!"