

5th April 2023 – Wednesday of Holy Week

There?

“It was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. They had a prisoner whose name was Barabbas. So Pilate asked, ‘Which one do you want me to release: Barabbas, or Jesus called the Messiah?’”

From Matthew 27

“Were you there when they crucified my Lord?” the Spiritual asks. As you put yourself in the place of those who *were* there, are you not there too?

*Barabbas was a lucky man with fortune on his side,
Released from jail, without a trial, the week that Jesus died.*

*I wonder what Barabbas did when Jesus took his place.
Did he look on, or mock and jeer, or vanish without trace?*

*If I had been Barabbas then, I wonder how I’d be,
The day that Jesus took my place and went to Calvary.*

*A soldier, being an army man, had orders to obey,
And found himself on crowd-control on Crucifixion Day.
I wonder what a soldier did when gambling games were done.*

Did winning matter more to him as Jesus’ fate he shunned?

*If I had been a soldier then, would gambling be for me,
The day that Jesus’ cross was raised on high at Calvary?*

*Now Pilate was a troubled man who wrestled with a choice –
To heed the clamour of the crowd, or mercy’s pleading voice.
I wonder what this Pilate did when Christ was dragged away.*

Did he remain a restless soul, and hate that awful day?

*If I had stood in Pilate’s shoes, would I heed mercy’s plea,
Or would I send the Son of God to die on Calvary?*

*Two nameless thieves, for whom the final judgement bell had tolled,
Would suffer there the agonies of body, mind and soul.*

*I wonder what a dying man would do, despite his cries,
When Jesus said, “You’ll be with me and rest in Paradise.”*

*If I was dying, would the fear of death disquiet me,
Or would I trust the reassuring words from Calvary?*

*Disciples too, were watching there, in disbelief and fear,
The ones who hadn’t run away, and those who stood in tears.*

*I wonder what they really felt when death was on its way.
Did they believe that hope and faith would die for good that day?*

*If I had watched and wept with them, would I fall on my knees,
And curse the world that put my Love to death on calvary?*

A prayer for today

“Were you there?” I’m asked. Not then, for sure. But am I there *now*? Of course, I have to be.