

It was noon when darkness came over the whole land, until 3 in the afternoon when soon after Jesus breathed his last;

It was nine in the morning when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles on the Day of Pentecost and it was three in the afternoon when Peter and John went to the Temple to pray.

The gospels were originally written in Greek and contain two different words for time. Chronos and Kairos.

Chronos is the word used to indicate a specific time or moment.

Kairos times are a bit different – they are about moments of significance – when something life-changing happened or an unexpected event meant that life took a different course.

Scripture is packed with transformational Kairos moments. For those who heard Jesus' birth announced, the moment each of the disciples heard him calling them, the moment they realised who he was.

I'm sure we can all recall Kairos as well as Chronos moments in our lives.

Someone once said that the best way to make God laugh is to tell him our plans.

Christians believe that it is God alone who holds the future. His words through the prophet Jeremiah affirm this:

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.



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GREATER MANCHESTER COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY

PRISON PRAYER LETTER MAY 2019

I spent a weekend in London in early March. One of London's landmarks is the 19th century Queen Elizabeth Clock Tower which houses the Big Ben bell. It was of course silent because of repair work continuing until 2021.



Although clocks weren't invented until the 14th century and wristwatches at least two hundred years later, keeping time became important with the advent of the railways in the early 1800s. Accurate time-keeping was needed to overcome confusion caused by having different times in each town and station along the expanding railway network. Railway companies often faced resistance from locals who refused to adjust their public clocks to bring them into line with London Time. As a consequence, two different times would be displayed in the town, with the station clocks and the times published in train timetables differing by several minutes from that on other clocks. Despite early reluctance, railway time soon became adopted as the default time across the whole of Great Britain.

Today we look to the clock where in previous centuries we would have been far more attuned to watching the sun, or looking to the crops and what is growing. For most of us time is not the unfolding of eternity or the cycle of life; time is simply a span to be reckoned by its length. We measure time by what we can do with it. If we have a lot of time we can get a lot done; if we don't have much time we can't get things done.



The gospel accounts refer to time in several places:

It was four in the afternoon when disciples, Andrew and Simon Peter, first spent time with Jesus; four in the morning when Jesus appeared as a ghost, walking on the water;

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- 1 R is struggling to cope with issues around family breakdown; pray for him, and for all who try to support families in times of stress.
- 2 Pray for J and P, whose mum has died, that they may be comforted.
- 3 K is really struggling with anxiety; pray for her, that she may find healing and a sense of peace.
- 4 Pray for J, who is uncertain about where he might be sent in the future.
- 5 Gospel events are taking place at HMP Thorn Cross today, and on 7th, 12th and 14th of this month. Pray that they will run smoothly, and that through them men will be drawn to Christ.
- 6 F is about to be released and is fearful of what the future might hold; pray that he will find any support that he needs and will flourish.
- 7 D is in custody for the first time; pray for him as he adjusts.
- 8 Pray for R, who is worried about what has happened to his family.
- 9 A is struggling with using "spice", but is really growing in faith; pray for deliverance that he might be freed from addiction and temptation.
- 10 Pray for T, who is currently trying hard to overcome his dependency on alcohol.
- 11 C has been moved to HMP Manchester and wants to return to another jail; pray that his feelings of being stuck will ease.
- 12 Pray for S, who has just received a long sentence as he begins to serve this.
- 13 Pray for the Victim Impact session in the Thorn Cross Sycamore Tree programme taking place today, and for all the men participating, the tutor and volunteers and for Lyn and Mick Connolly as they share their experience.
- 14 Pray for P who is now mentoring others in prison; that he may be faithful in his commitment.
- 15 M's mother is ill; pray for M and for his mother at this time.
- 16 Pray for B, who is far from his family and home and has little contact with those he loves.

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- 17 S is very depressed, and not engaging with support; pray that he will find hope and reach out to those who can help.
- 18 N is waiting to hear the outcome of an appeal; pray for him at this time of uncertainty.
- 19 Pray for the Breaking Free worship event taking place at Thorn Cross this morning, and for Fiona Bruce MP as she attends.
- 20 D's sister is close to death; pray for him and for her at this sad time, that both may find comfort and peace.
- 21 G has been having a really tough time; pray that things will start to improve for him.
- 22 Pray for D, who is hoping to be moved to a Category D place this month.
- 23 Pray for C, facing deportation.
- 24 D has been able to open up about past trauma that she has not previously spoken about; pray that she will find healing and growth.
- 25 Pray for N, released this month, that he will seek out fellowship in the community, and also for S that he might make good choices in the company he keeps.
- 26 Pray for the Oaks team as they lead the Sunday Service at Thorn Cross this morning, sharing about the discipleship/housing project and how men can get involved, and for the men hearing this message.
- 27 Pray for W, released this month and whose faith was growing, that he will continue on his journey of faith.
- 28 Pray that a new tutor will be found for Sycamore Tree in Styal.
- 29 D is isolated from his family and anxious about his upcoming release; pray that he will find the support he needs.
- 30 D's brother took his own life in April; pray that God's peace will fill D's heart and mind.
- 31 Pray for all prison chaplaincy teams, for unity and coherence.