



**The Benefice of the Piddle Valley,
Hilton & Ansty, Cheselbourne
and Melcombe Horsey**

8th March 2020

Lent 2

Altar Colour - Purple

Readings: *Gen 12: 1-4a, Psalm 121, Rom 4: 1-5, 13-17, John 3: 1-17*

Collect: 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. **Amen**

Genesis 12:1-4 (ESV) - The Call of Abram

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonours you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

COMMENT: The call of Abram (or Abraham as he later became known) to leave his homeland and migrate to an unknown country is one of the crucial events of the Old Testament. Apart from the saga itself, there are sixty-five other references to him in the Hebrew scriptures, often in a formulaic association with his son and grandson, Isaac and Jacob. Genesis 11:31 states that Abram's father, Terah, had earlier migrated from Ur of the Chaldeans, near the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers to Haran in the upper Euphrates valley. It was from Haran that Abram and his nephew Lot migrated to Canaan (12:4b). According to archeological and linguistic research, this migration corresponds with the movement of Amorite tribes

from the northern Arabian desert in both directions southeast along the Tigris-Euphrates valley and southwest into Canaan. This also was the ancient trade route between east and west along the Fertile Crescent. One hypothesis holds that Abram may have been a caravan merchant, although biblical evidence presents him only as a pastoral chieftain. He was thought to have been a contemporary of Hammurapi, an identifiable historical monarch (ca.1750 BC) in the territory later known as Babylonia, and today as Iraq. The biblical saga of Abram (11:27-25:11) lists as many as twenty-two contacts with a wide variety of tribal groups and individuals. His change of name is explained in relation to the dialectal 'ab-hammon' "father of many." This probably has more to do with his role as the personification of the diverse Semitic clans subsequently united as a confederate people known as Israelites. Whether the stories surrounding this migration are tribal legends or actual events, there is no doubt that they became a formative part of Israel's faith history. Subsequent generations would look back to this first of Israel's patriarchs and see in Abram's obedience to the divine summons the initial response to God's covenant with Israel. New Testament authors name Abram as a hero second to only Moses. There are as many references to him in the NT as in the OT. Even today the religious significance of this biblical figure for all Middle Eastern cultures cannot be ignored. Jews, Christians and Moslems all regard him as their spiritual progenitor. In this regard, while paying tribute to the late King Hussein of Jordan, the former prime minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, spoke of "all the children of Abraham."

John 3:1-17 (ESV) - You Must Be Born Again

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus[a] by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again[b] he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its

sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

For God So Loved the World

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

COMMENT: John regarded this meeting between Jesus and Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews, as one of the most significant events in the theological conflict of Christianity with Judaism. Here he states the real purpose of Jesus’ life and ministry. In many ways, the story reiterates what Paul had said to the Romans: Faith in God’s love so fully revealed in Jesus, God’s Son, is the only means of coming into a right relationship with God and our neighbours in this global age. Indeed, the whole of the New Testament conveys a similar message for all the world.

Short Preface: And now we give you thanks because you give us the spirit of discipline, that we may triumph over evil and grow in grace, as we prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery with mind and heart renewed.

Post Communion: Almighty God, you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves: keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Blessing: Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Benefice Prayer List:

Sara Milne, June Kellaway, Ann Lambert, Fay Lord, Richard Hanbury, Geoff Harris, Ruth Tutt, Roger Gray, Bernard, Martin DeWavrin, Stephanie Dibble, Marion Traynor.

Parishioner visits are undertaken regularly throughout the benefice by Fr. Roger and if you would like a visit, please do contact him. Often a chat over a cup of tea, perhaps with prayer, helps make the storms of life seem a little easier to bear.



What's going on around the Benefice!

Tuesday 10th March – 6.00pm Learn to pray the Anglican Rosary, Piddletrenthide

Wednesday 11th March – 6pm Learn to pray the Anglican Rosary, Cheselbourne

Thursday 12th March – 9am Communion, Coffee and a Chat with the Rector at Cheselbourne

Thursday 12th March– 9.30am Morning Prayer Piddlehinton

Friday 13th March – 6pm, Evening Prayer/Compline at Alton Pancras, Piddlehinton & Hilton

Next Sunday 15th March 2020

Lent 3 (Purple)

CORRECT READINGS:

Exodus 17.1-7, Psalm 95, Romans 5.1-11, John 4.5-42

8.30am Holy Communion at Piddletrenthide

9.30am Family Service at Cheselbourne

11.00am Sung Morning Prayer at Hilton (Lay Led)

11.00am Parish Communion at Piddlehinton

11.00am Horsey Half Hour at Melcombe Horsey

Please refer to benefice website and facebook page for upto date information regarding Covid-19 (the SARS-COV-2)

Dates for your Diary

Fr. Roger Police Chaplaincy - Dorchester Station Visits 18th March

Combined Benefice Service at Milton Abbey 29th March 10.30am

Messy Church – St George and the Dragon - Saturday 25th April 3-5pm

Benefice Meeting at Piddle Valley School Wednesday 20th May 6.30pm

Rector: Fr. Roger Butcher, The Vicarage, Church Lane, Piddletrenthide. DT2 7QY.

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