

## Malcolm's Monday Musings : 23 November 2020

Greetings.

This is your weekly 'Musings' email from me.

I don't find it easy to say, but (for a variety of reasons) I feel it necessary to take a three-week break from preparing the Monday Musings.

God willing, I shall be back on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December, just in time to wish you a 'Wonder-filled' Christmas.

Hopefully, a thoughtful reading of this week's attached Word document (together with its 'Notes') will keep you out of mischief for the next few weeks.

Let us thank God today that ***the Lord Jesus didn't use 'zoom'; He came in Person!*** As the apostle John expressed it: 'That which was from the beginning, which we have *heard*, which we have *seen* with our eyes, which we have *looked upon*, and our hands have *handled*, of the Word of life ... we declare to you' (1 John 1. 1-3). Yes, the life-giving 'Word' Himself became *audible, visible, contemplatable, and tangible*. Praise Him.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

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### (i) Scripture.

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.

Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread'.

But He answered and said, 'It is written, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*".

Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: "*He shall give His angels charge concerning you, and In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone*".

Jesus said to him, 'It is written again, "*You shall not tempt the Lord your God*".

Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give you if you will fall down and worship me'.

Then Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! For it is written, "*You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve*".

Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

Matthew 4. 1-11 (New King James Version)

### (ii) Food for thought.

#### **Four pithy temptations which failed with the Lord Jesus.**

(i) 'Cast yourself' (Matt. 4. 6).

(ii) 'Show yourself' (John 7. 4).

(iii) 'Pity yourself' (Matt. 16. 22: Geneva Bible, Cambridge Greek New Testament, and King James Version margin).

(iv) 'Save yourself' (Luke 23. 37, 39).

#### **Adam and Christ.**

'The only act of disobedience which Adam could commit he did commit; but He, who could have done all things as to power, only used His power to display more perfect service, more perfect subjection. (J. N. Darby, 'Synopsis of the Books of the Bible: Leviticus chapter 2'.)

#### **Temptation.**

'Let no man ... pretend to fear sin that does not fear temptation to it'.

(John Owen, 'Of Temptation', chapter 5.)

'Lead us not into temptation' (Matt. 6. 13); 'Here we have a "Permissive imperative" as grammarians term it. The idea is then: "Do not allow us to be led into temptation".'

(A. T. Robertson, 'Word Pictures of the New Testament', on Matt. 6. 13.)

### **Creation around us and the manifold riches of God's mercies.**

'The mercies of the Lord are demonstrated throughout the entire creation ... the fragrance of flowers, the beauty of birds, the foliage of forests, the majesty of mountains, the fruits of the field, the flavours of food, the shining of sunlight, the splendour of sunsets, the scintillation of stars, the succession of seasons, the refreshment of rains, the distilling of dews, the melodies of music, and a thousand more, express the amazing riches of (God's) mercies'.

C. J. Rolls, *'His Glorious Name'*, Kindle Edition, Locations 2909, 2920.)

### **Truth taught to the next generation in Israel about the significance of:**

- (i) the Passover (Exod. 12. 26). The truth of redemption.
- (ii) the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Exod. 13. 8). The truth of separation from evil.
- (iii) the redemption of the firstborn (Exod. 13. 14). The truth of consecration.
- (iv) the law and the testimonies (Deut. 6. 20-21). The truth of obedience.
- (v) the stones taken out of Jordan (Josh. 4. 6-7). The truth of resurrection life.

### **A glimmer of hope at the close of 2 Kings.**

In spite of the fall of Jerusalem and the exile, 'the book ends with a twist in the tale. The last few verses (2 Kings 25. 27-30) quietly report that in the thirty-seventh year of his exile, King Jehoiachin was released from his imprisonment. ... The story of redemption is not yet done, the Davidic line not yet extinct. [See 'Josias begat Jechonias {i.e. 'Jehoiachin'} ... Jechonias begat Salathiel ... and Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ' (Matt. 1. 11-16).] In the midst of crushing sin and slashing judgment, hope still beckons'.

(D. A. Carson, *'For the Love of God'*, 12 November.)

### **Praise in the Book of Psalms.**

'In Hebrew the name of the Psalter is 'the Book of Praises'. Each book of the Psalter ends with praise:

- (i) Book One (Psalms 1-41): "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen" (Psa. 41. 13).
- (ii) Book Two (Psalms 42-72): "Blessed be His glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with His glory! Amen and Amen!" (Psa. 72. 19).
- (iii) Book Three (Psalms 73-89): "Blessed be the Lord forever! Amen and Amen" (Psa. 89. 52).
- (iv) Book Four (Psalms 90-106): "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, 'Amen!' Praise the Lord!" (Psa. 106. 48).
- (v) Book Five (Psalm 107-150): "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" (Psa. 150. 6).

While all the books contain psalms of praise, Book Five in particular abounds, showing that the Psalter culminates in praise. Indeed, the last five psalms of Book Five are psalms that begin and end with the call to praise, showing us the fullness and perfection of praise'.

(W. Robert Godfrey, *'Learning to love the Psalms'*, Kindle Locations 647-656.)

See the attached '1 Chronicles 16. 9' picture.

### **Acceptable prayer and praise.**

(1) 'A holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ' (1 Pet. 2. 5).

'All our sacrifices can only be offered to God or be acceptable to Him, when presented through the agency of our ascended High-priest, cf. Heb. 13. 15.'

(G. W. Blenkin, 'The Cambridge Greek New Testament', on 1 Pet. 2. 5.)

(2) Throughout Old Testament days, it was always a question whether the people's sacrifice would prove acceptable. See, for example, the Lord's word to them in the days of Jeremiah, 'your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing to me' (Jer. 6. 20).

(3) Certainly our praises and thanksgiving are not so splendid, so fervent and so eloquent that God cannot but help be impressed and pleased with them. On the contrary, our very best efforts are feeble, unworthy and stained. But the Lord Jesus makes all the difference: our praises are 'acceptable to God' when offered through Him.

(4) This truth was well illustrated by John Bunyan in his book 'The Holy War'. The background is that the townspeople of 'Mansoul' had hardened their hearts against the captains of the Lord Shaddai. The party of Diabolus within Mansoul sent back word that they were resolved to stick to their king, and never to yield to Shaddai's claims. The captains of the Lord's army decided to send a petition to Shaddai, in which they begged him to send them 'more force and power', and that he would 'complete His conquest' of Mansoul. The petition was carried with haste to the King.

At that point, we take up the story in John Bunyan's own words: 'When this petition was come to the palace of the King, who should it be delivered to but to the King's Son. So he took it and read it, and *because the contents of it pleased him well, he mended, and also in some things, added to the petition himself*. So after he had made such amendments and additions as he thought convenient, with his own hand, he carried it in to the King ... Now *the King, at the sight of the petition, was glad; but how much more think you, when it was seconded by his Son?*'

(John Bunyan, *'The Holy War'*, Chapter VI.)

### **'Let'**

- (i) 'Let the God of my salvation be exalted' (Psa. 18. 46).
- (ii) 'Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day' (Psa. 71. 8).
- (iii) 'Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us' (Psa. 90. 17).
- (iv) 'Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense' (Psa. 141. 2).
- (v) 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers ... the powers that be are ordained of God' (Rom. 13. 1).
- (vi) 'Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall' (1 Cor. 10. 12).
- (vii) 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus' (Phil. 2. 5).
- (viii) 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly' (Col. 3. 16).
- (ix) 'Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt (Col. 4. 6).
- (x) 'Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity' (2 Tim. 2. 19).

### **'You ... who were dead in trespasses and sins' (Eph. 2. 1).**

'A delightful incident once happened to a good friend of mine. He and his wife were driving through the Smoky Mountains, enjoying the scenery. It began to get dark, and he was low on gas. His wife asked him if they shouldn't be getting gas somewhere, but he assured her they had enough for now.

Well, as these things often happen, he kept driving, thinking that surely he would find a gas station soon. But there were no stations, and by now he was in trouble. He prayed "Lord, help me find a gas station". He knew that if he didn't, there would be murder in the mountains!

He came around a turn and saw a country gas station with one of those old glass pumps. My friend knocked on the door, and an old mountaineer came out to pump the gas. His head was down as he kept his eye on the nozzle of that ancient pump. My friend was so relieved that he took a deep breath of mountain air, and with a smile said, "It's great to be alive".

The old mountaineer never lifted his head, but just replied, "I wouldn't know. I've never been no other way".

Well, my friend, I can tell you I have been some other way. *I was once dead in my sins*'.

Adrian Rogers, '*The Power of His Presence*', pages 167-168.

### **Late repentance.**

'Though true repentance is never too late—yet late repentance is seldom true ... The Lord has made a promise to late repentance—but where has he made a promise of late repentance?'

(Thomas Brooks, '*Apples of Gold*', Chapter 1, Reason 12.)

**Detailed notes.** [See the attached Word document, 'The Temptations of Christ'](#).

### **(iii) Go on, smile.**

Two reasons children should be quiet in church.

1. A mother asked her children just before entering a church service, 'And why do you think that you should be quiet in church?'

Annie, the youngest replied, 'Is it *because some of the people are sleeping?*'

2. Six-year-old Molly and her four-year-old brother Joel were sitting together in church.

Joel kept giggling and talking out loud.

Finally, his big sister had had enough. 'Be quiet', she whispered, 'You mustn't make a noise in church'.

'Why not?' Joel shot back, 'And anyway who's going to stop me?'

With a serious look on her face, Molly pointed to the back of the church. 'See those two men standing there by the door?' she told Joel, 'They will. *They're hushers!*'

Separately, see the attached 'The wet floor' picture.



**A police officer called the station on his radio.  
"I have an interesting case here. An old lady  
shot her husband for stepping on the floor she  
just mopped."  
"Have you arrested the woman?"  
"Not yet. The floor's still wet."**