

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 17 August 2020

(i) Scripture.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.
Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge.
There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

Psalm 19. 1-3 (*New King James Version*)

(ii) Food for thought.

'The waters were a wall to them' (Exod. 14. 22).

'At the Red Sea the foaming billows saw their God and stood upright in awe'.
(C. H. Spurgeon, 'The Treasury of David', on Psalm 89. 9.)

'All things' created and reconciled.

'In Him were *all things created*, in the heavens and upon the earth ... through Him to *reconcile all things* unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross ... whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens (Col. 1. 16, 20: Revised Version).

'Just as things in the heavens and the earth were created in Him, so now are all things in the same realms are reconciled to God through the blood of His cross'.

(Michael F. Bird, 'Colossians and Philemon', page 57.)

God the provider for the animal kingdom.

'Who provides food for the raven, when its young ones cry to God?' (Job 38. 41).

'The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their food from God' (Psa. 104. 21).

'The beasts of the field also cry out to you, for the water brooks are dried up' (Joel 1. 20).

Behind the scenes.

'God's ways are behind the scenes; but He moves all the scenes which He is behind'.

(J. N. Darby, 'Synopsis of the Books of the Bible', The Revelation, chapter 1.)

Israel and the other nations.

Other nations *chose* their god or gods, but one nation was *chosen by God* – the nation of Israel (Deut. 7. 6).

Other nations needed to *carry* their god or gods (Jer. 10. 5), but one nation was *carried by God* – the nation of Israel (Isa. 46. 3-4).

Many nations looked on their *king* as a god, but only one nation – the nation of Israel – *knew God as their King* (Psa. 47. 6).

Elisha and Jesus.

(i) *Both Elisha and Jesus* raised the dead son of a mother beside the Hill of Moreh. 'The *southern* slope of the Hill of Moreh saw the Prophet *Elisha* raise the dead son of a woman from Shunem (2 Kings 4. 18-36). *Jesus* raised a widow's son on the *north* side of the Hill of Moreh in a town called Nain (Luke 7. 11-17)'.

(Wayne Stiles, 'The Harod Valley', accessed at <https://waynestiles.com/the-harod-valley-your-overwhelming-anxiety-finds-its-peace/>.)

But when Elisha raised the child, 'he prayed to the Lord' and stretched himself twice on the body of the woman's son (2 Kings 4. 33-35), whereas when Jesus raised the widow's son, He simply spoke His powerful word (Luke 7. 14-15).

(ii) *Both Elisha and Jesus* fed a large company of men with just some barley loaves and a supplement, with food being left over (2 Kings 4. 42-44; John 6. 9-13). But when *Elisha* fed 100 men, he used 20 barley loaves, whereas when *Jesus* fed well over 5,000 men (Matt. 14. 21), He used only 5 barley loaves!

Seven things which 'He shall be'.

(i) 'He shall be for a sanctuary' (Isa. 8. 14);

(ii) 'He shall be exalted and extolled' (Isa. 52. 13);

(iii) 'He shall be called, "The Lord our righteousness"' (Jer. 23. 6);

(iv) 'He shall be their shepherd' (Ezek. 34. 23);

(v) 'He shall be a priest upon His throne' (Zech. 6. 13);

(vi) 'He shall be called a Nazarene' (Matt. 2. 23);

(vii) 'He shall be great' (Luke 1. 32).

The man blind from birth.

Soon after the man born blind was given his sight by Jesus, he lost a place where he could worship (John 9. 22, 34), but he found a Person whom he could worship (John 9. 38). You might say that the man exchanged 'a circumference without a centre' for 'a centre without a circumference'.

The death and resurrection of Christ.

'I have been used for many years to study the histories of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them. And I know of *no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence* of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer, than the great sign which God hath given us that Christ died and rose again from the dead'.

(Thomas Arnold, Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford University', appointed 1841, and author of the classic three-volume 'History of Rome'.)

Sin and death.

Were it not for *the sin of one man*, death would never have had a beginning. Were it not for *the death of one man*, sin would never have an ending.

'An advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous ... the propitiation for our sins' (1 John 2. 1-2).

In short space, John writes of our Lord's:

- (i) righteous character;
- (ii) propitiatory death; and
- (iii) heavenly advocacy.

'It is as being righteous Himself that He can so well plead with the 'righteous Father' (John 17. 25) for those who are not righteous'.

(A. Plummer, 'Epistles of John (Cambridge Bible)', on 1 John 2. 2.)

God has no 'pleasure' in the sinner's death, but in his repentance (Ezek. 18. 23, 32; 33. 11; 2 Pet. 3. 9).

'God is not vindictive and takes no pleasure in bringing judgment on the wicked. ... Judgment is to God a necessity; but what delights Him is the repentance of the wicked because it allows Him to forgive and restore'.

(L. E. Cooper, 'Ezekiel: The New American Commentary', page 192.)

'Blessings in disguise'.

There is a depth of intimacy with God that can only be known through suffering. There is a reliance on Him that can only be experienced when everything else around my soul seems to give way. And *if that's what it takes to make this stubborn child cling to that old rugged cross, you can have your prosperity*. I'd rather have Jesus ... I'm convinced that the things we sometimes see as senseless suffering are often blessings in disguise'.

(Laura Story, 'What If Your Blessings Come Through Raindrops', pages 2 and 82.)

To make or break.

God 'disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness' (Heb. 12. 10). God does not plan or permit our trials to *break* us but to *make* us.

Christ and 'the Godhead' – distinguishing things which differ.

'The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead' (Rom. 1. 20: King James Version).

'In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily' (Col. 2. 9).

(i) Romans 1. 20 'is the only New Testament instance of *theiotes*, 'divinity' ['Godhead', KJV] If God's *divinity* is shown *in creation*, His full *deity* or divine essence (*theotes*) is embodied *in Christ* (Col. 2. 9)'.

(F. F. Bruce, 'Romans', Tyndale Commentaries 1985.)

(ii) In Romans 1. 20 Paul 'is declaring how much of God may be known from the revelation of Himself which He has made *in nature*, from those vestiges of Himself which men may everywhere trace in the world around them. Yet it is not the personal God whom any man may learn to know by these aids; He can be known only by the revelation of Himself in His Son ... But in (Col. 2. 9), Paul is declaring that *in the Son* there dwells all the fullness of absolute Godhead; they were no mere rays of Divine glory which gilded Him, lighting up His Person for a season and with a splendour not His own; but He was, and is, absolute and perfect God; and the apostle uses *theotes* to express this essential and personal Godhead of the Son.

(R. C. Trench, 'Synonyms of the New Testament', § ii.)

(iii) '*Theotes* indicates the "divine" essence of Godhood, the personality of God; *theiotes*, the attributes of God, His "divine" nature and properties'.

(W. E. Vine, 'Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words', article 'Divinity').

'Look around you'.

The epitaph of the brilliant architect Sir Christopher Wren consists of a plain stone plaque in St Paul's Cathedral. This plaque contains the Latin words, '*Lector, si monumentum requiris, circumspice*', which translate as, 'Reader, if you seek his monument, *look around you*'.
With Romans 1. 20 in mind, It seems to me as if God says to all of mankind, 'If you want to perceive my invisible attributes of power and divine nature, *look around you*!'

Detailed notes. [See the attached Word document, 'Hymn Stories: Number 3'](#).
And see the attached 'In the dark' picture.

(iii) Go on, smile.

Family fun.

1. Edith was interviewed by a local newspaper. She was asked the secret of staying together with her husband George through all the time she had been raising eleven children.
'Oh, it was easy', Edith replied, 'Very early on we made a solemn promise to each other: *the one who leaves takes the kids*'.

2. I have read that a good wife is a woman who stands by her husband in all his troubles ... *most of which he wouldn't have had if he had remained single*.

3. Sarah had just given birth to a lovely baby boy, and Sarah's mother had to drive her to a doctor's appointment.

So Sarah asked her grandmother, Nan Emily, to take care of the baby.

As soon as Sarah and her mother left, Emily called some of her friends to come over.

'Can we see the baby?' they asked.

'Not yet', replied Emily.

Fifteen minutes later, they asked again. 'Are we able to see the baby?'"

'Sorry, not yet', Emily said.

Another fifteen minutes passed, and they tried again: 'Come on, let us see the baby'.

'No, not yet', Emily answered.

By now, the lady visitors were growing rather impatient. 'Well, *when can* we see the baby?'

'You'll be able to see him when he cries', Emily promised.

'But why must we wait', they wanted to know, 'until the baby cries?'

'Because', Emily explained, '*I forgot where I put it*'.

4. David and Shirley decided to go on a safari in South Africa, and Shirley persuaded David to bring along his mother-in-law, Margaret. One evening, while deep in the jungle, Shirley awoke to find that Margaret was missing. She shook her husband vigorously to wake him up, insisting that he get up immediately to help her find her mother. They both got dressed quickly and set off to look for her.

Very soon, in a clearing not far from the camp, they came upon an alarming sight. David's mother-in-law was backed up against a thick, impenetrable bush, with a large male lion standing facing her.

'David', Shirley cried out, 'whatever are we going to do?'

'Nothing', said David, '*the silly lion got himself into this mess, let him get himself out of it*'.

Finally, see the attached 'Fancy meeting you here' picture.

Believe in the darkness what
you have seen in the light.

– *Lilias Trotter*

