

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 3 May 2021

Greetings.

This is my 'Monday Musings' email.

Yesterday, 2nd May 2021, marked the 410th birthday of *the King James Version of the Bible*. (The original printing was performed by Robert Barker, the King's Printer, on 2 May 1611.)

The 1611 edition differs slightly from the King James Version in use today (which is Benjamin Blaney's 1769 Revised Oxford Edition).

Richard Bancroft, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, was the chief 'overseer' of the production of the King James Version. In one of his sermons, Archbishop Bancroft well said:

'All Christian men should read the Scriptures, buy unto themselves Bibles, and meditate continually upon the word of God, so as, thereby, *their eyes* might be opened, *their consciences* comforted, *their faith* nourished, and *their hope* lifted up to a full assurance of the promises therein contained'.

(Richard Bancroft, 'Of the Church', Tracts of the Anglican Fathers, Volume VIII, page 168.)

At a time when there are so many deaths worldwide, I felt it right that we turn our attention to the one passage of scripture which specifically aims to provide **hope and comfort to those who mourn the loss of loved ones**. Hence, this week's attached document.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

(i) Scripture.

Blessed be Thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all.

Both riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name.

1 Chronicles 29. 10-13 (*King James Version*)

(ii) Food for thought.

The joy of angels.

(i) At the creation of the earth (Job. 38. 4-7).

(ii) At the incarnation of the Lord Jesus (Luke 2. 10-14).

(iii) At the conversion of the sinner (Luke 15. 10).

'Be perfect'.

'The word 'perfect' is used with reference to each of the three great revelations of God - the Almighty (to Abraham), Jehovah (to Israel), and Father (to the Christian).

1st. God said to **Abraham**, "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect" (Gen. 17: 1); which means that Abraham was to walk before God, ever confiding in His Almighty power. Abraham did not; he failed in respect of this; and lied (Gen. 20 .2) precisely on that account ...

2nd. The **Israelites** were instructed: "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord (Jehovah) thy God" (Deut. 18. 13). This was in respect of their not imitating the abominations of the Canaanites in their idolatries ...

3rd. In the **Sermon on the Mount** we read, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5. 48). The Lord Jesus Himself explains it by what goes before. This perfection consists in acting in love, and not according to the law of retaliation ("an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"); it is to act toward men on the principle of the divine conduct towards us, according to the grace of our heavenly Father ... show forth, therefore, His character toward, the world; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. He acts in grace, and not according to law; you saved sinners, you are the proof; be the witnesses of it; the

publicans love those who love them - your heavenly Father loves His enemies, acts by this rule; "be ye perfect", etc.'

(J. N. Darby, 'Sin in the flesh: a word on perfection', The Christian's Friend (1874), pages 184-185.)

John 1: 'found'.

'Andrew ... first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ)' (John 1. 41).

'The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me"' (John 1. 43).

'Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph"' (John 1. 45).

'It is throughout the chapter of **the Eureka's**.

(R. C. Trench, 'Studies in the Gospels', page 69.)

Those whom Jesus invited, 'Come to me'.

(i) The heavy laden: 'Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest' (Matt. 11. 28).

(ii) Little children: 'Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. 19. 14).

(iii) Thirsty souls: 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink' (John 7. 37).

A contrast between David and David's greater Son.

'All the people departed every man to his house: and David returned to bless his house' (1 Chron. 16. 43).

'Every man went to his own house. Jesus went unto the mount of Olives' (John 7. 53; 8. 1).

Truly, 'the Son of man' had nowhere 'to lay His head' (Luke 9. 58). 'In this verse more than in any other we see the poverty and homelessness of the latter part of the Lord's ministry'.

(F. W. Farrar, 'St. Luke (The Cambridge Bible)', page 197.)

The Lord Jesus: wounded and smitten.

"What are these wounds in your hands?" ... "Those with which I was wounded ['smitten'] in the house of my friends" ... "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd ... smite the Shepherd"' (Zech. 13. 6-7).

'Our loss will be great if we fail to distinguish between the two kinds of smiting which the Lord Jesus endured: His being wounded in the house of His friends and His being smitten by God. Both the one and the other are fully shown in the New Testament.

All the cruel sufferings heaped upon the Saviour's head by wicked men could never have made atonement for our sins. Love it was that made Him willing to suffer, and it was for the sake of truth and righteousness that He was afflicted.

But when men, instigated by Satan, had done their worst, and when the holy Sufferer was shrouded from their gaze for three hours by an impenetrable pall of darkness, God poured out upon Him the vials of His righteous judgement against sin. He bruised Him and put Him to grief (Isa. 53. 10); He brought Him into the dust of death (Psa. 22. 15); He forsook Him; He made Him to be sin for us (2 Cor. 5. 21)'.
(H. P. Barker, 'Christ in the Minor Prophets', pages 99-100.)

Boldness.

(i) To draw near to God (Heb. 10. 19).

(ii) To speak the Word (Acts 4. 31).

(iii) In the day of Review (1 John 4. 17).

Ephesians: 'exceeding'.

(i) 'The exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power' (Eph. 1. 19).

(ii) 'That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus' (Eph. 2. 7).

Ephesians: divine patterns of forgiveness and love.

(i) 'Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you' (Eph. 4. 32).

(ii) 'Walk in love, as Christ also has loved us' (Eph. 5. 2).

Ephesians: 'all saints'.

(i) 'Love to all saints' (Eph. 1. 15).

(ii) 'Comprehend with all saints' (Eph. 3. 18).

(iii) 'Supplication for all saints' (Eph. 6. 18).

The Christian's hope.

(i) a living hope (1 Pet. 1. 3).

(ii) a blessed hope (Titus 2. 13).

- (iii) a *good* hope (2 Thess. 2. 16).
 - (iv) a *firm* hope (Heb. 6. 19).
 - (v) a *purifying* hope (1 John 3. 3).
 - (vi) an *encouraging* hope (Heb. 10. 25).
 - (vii) a *stimulating* hope (1 Cor. 15. 58).
 - (viii) a *comforting* hope (1 Thess. 4. 13-18).
- (Reproduced from the attached 'Comfort for the sorrowing' document.)

A new set of clothes.

'You have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him' (Col. 3. 9-10).

These words of the apostle have been paraphrased: 'Now you're dressed in a new wardrobe. Every item of your new way of life is custom-made by the Creator, with His label on it. All the old fashions are now obsolete'. (*The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language*.)

Lessons from two 'Empress' stories.

1. The Empress of China: the importance of trials.

In 2700 B.C. Emperor Whing Tee asked his wife Ce Ling Shee to try to find out what was damaging his mulberry trees. The Empress first noticed that a drab-coloured moth was laying tiny eggs on a Mulberry leaf, each hatching into a caterpillar that ejected a thread for three days which it wrapped around its body until it formed a cocoon. She dropped the cocoon into hot water and saw a single thread begin unwinding itself. She had discovered silk. The Empress observed the fineness and beauty of the silk thread. She unbound it completely and found it to be ½ mile long from that single cocoon. And she thought that these fine threads might be made into cloth.

Soon a loom was developed on which they could be woven. ... Like so many serendipitous events, the discovery of silk came while trying to solve a problem. ... Nothing like silk had ever appeared before in fine fabrics. It brought about a world of revolution in fashions'.

(R. J. Morgan, *'Nelson's complete book of stories, illustrations, and quotes'*, page 744.)

I am unable to vouch for the accuracy of that account. But I do know that sometimes what seem to be troubles and problems (such as the damaging of the Emperor's mulberry trees in the story) can result in great good and blessing. Our God specialises in bringing beautiful endings out of our 'various trials' (1 Pet. 1. 6-7). Be assured, He never wastes a single 'grievous' trial. He transforms all for our good and for His glory.

2. The Empress of Russia: the importance of a comma.

Maria Feodorovna, the Empress of Russia and wife of Emperor Alexander III in the late 19th century, was known for her philanthropy. I have read that she once saved a prisoner from exile in Siberia by transposing a single comma in a warrant signed by her husband.

As the story goes, on the bottom of the warrant, the Emperor had written: 'Pardon impossible, to be sent to Siberia', but the Empress altered the punctuation so that the instruction then read: 'Pardon, impossible to be sent to Siberia'. And the prisoner was set free.

Again, I am unable to vouch for the accuracy of that report. But I like to think that, in the spiritual realm, something not dissimilar has happened to me ... that, when **the law of God** wrote my 'warrant', reading: *'Pardon impossible, to be condemned'*, **the gospel of God** took God's pen of grace, inked with the very blood of Christ, and moved the comma, so that my warrant then read: *'Pardon, impossible to be condemned'*. And I was free! (John 5. 24; Rom. 8. 1)

[See the attached 'Comfort for the sorrowing - the return of the Lord Jesus' document.](#)

(iii) Go on, smile.

How to walk and when to run.

1. Brian was having difficulty adjusting to his new job and his boss often accused him of being unproductive.

One day, Brian's boss entered the office and found Brian with his feet up and drinking coffee.

'Brian!' yelled his boss. 'Why is it that whenever I come here I always catch you doing nothing?'

'That's easy', Brian replied. 'It's because *you walk so quietly!*'

2. Jeremy was a children's worker in his local church. One day, when out walking, he noticed little Oliver from the Children's Meeting trying to reach a doorbell on a house across the street. The boy was very short and the doorbell too high for him to reach.

After watching Oliver's efforts for some time, Jeremy crossed the street and called out, 'Ollie, can I help you?'

'No', little Oliver responded.

But big-hearted Jeremy walked up behind him, placed his one hand on Oliver's shoulder, and, leaning over, rang the doorbell with his other hand. Crouching down to the boy's level, Jeremy smiled and asked, 'Is there anything else I can do, Ollie?'

To which little Oliver replied, 'Yes, Mr Jeremy ... *run like the wind!*'

The importance of italics.

'When, from the later 17th century onwards, the King James Version began to be printed in roman type, the typeface for supplied words was changed to italics ... This was intended to de-emphasise the words'.

(David Norton, 'A Textual History of the King James Bible: Cambridge University Press'), page 162.)

I have read of one 'preacher, who, thinking that the words printed in italics in the Authorised Version were intended to be emphasised, severely taxed ... his listeners, in a public reading of the following sentence from the Bible (1 Kings 13. 27), by loudly stressing the last word:

"And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled ***him***"!

(Ian Macpherson, 'The Burden of the Lord', pages 142-143.)

The importance of commas.

Contrast the attached pictures: (i) 'With commas', and (ii) 'Without commas'.

