

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 3 January 2022.

Greetings.

This is the first Monday 'Musings' of 2022.

In the previous Musings email (that on the 20th of December 2021), I forewarned you that this week's Musings would be 'short'.

I am, accordingly, attaching today's 'short' Musings.



Those of you who were in receipt of the Musings at the close of 2020 and who have memories as elephants may recall that, at that time, I attached a document entitled, 'Put your hand ...'.

For the benefit especially of those (i) with not-so-good memories or (ii) who have been added as recipients during the past twelve months, I am today attaching a [slightly updated version of that document](#) (together with the [audio recording of the words which are quoted at the beginning of the document](#)).

For most of us, little has changed since the original document was distributed on the 28th of December 2020. In any case, the message conveyed there remains as necessary and as true as ever.

For Christ is the first and the last;
His Spirit will guide us safe home;
**We'll praise him for all that is past
And trust him for all that's to come.**
(Joseph Hart)

It remains only for me to wish each of you a spiritually prosperous New Year.

Happy reading.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

(i) Scripture.

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand ...
I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'

Isaiah 41. 10, 13 (*The New King James Version*)

(ii) Food for thought.

Divine invitations to the thirsty.

(i) *God* says, 'Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters' (Isa. 55. 1).

(ii) *The Lord Jesus* says, 'If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink' (John 7. 37).

(iii) *The Holy Spirit* says, 'Come ... let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely' (Rev. 22. 17).

To go or not to go?

'Jesus said to them, "I am not going up to this feast" ... but, after His brothers had gone up to the feast, then He also went up, not publicly but in private (John 7. 8, 10).'

'Jesus' brothers have been egging Him on to return to Jerusalem (John 7. 3-4). If He wishes to become a celebrity, they argue, he must show himself in the capital city on the high feast days. They are thinking like politicians: what will bring you public notice?

'But Jesus says that the "right time" for Him has not yet come (John 7. 8). They can follow their own timetable ('Your time is always here ... you go up to the feast', John 7. 6, 8); He does and says only what the Father gives Him to do and say (John 7. 6; cf. 5. 19). Eventually He will go up to the Feast, but not yet (John 7. 8).

'And when He does go, He goes quietly, without fanfare (John 7. 10), refusing to draw attention to Himself, with all the political fuss that would make.

'One important reason for this self-restraint is provided in verse 7: "The world cannot hate you", Jesus tells his brothers, "but it hates me because I testify that what it does is evil".

(D. A. Carson, 'For the Love of God: Volume 2', 17 December.)

'By means of a tree'.

'It pleased God that as by means of a tree man sinned, so by means of a tree man should be redeemed'.

(Attributed to a ninth century author, Haymo of Halberstadt, by H. Newland, 'Commentary of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians', page 79.)

The Three Trees.

'Between the trees of the first and of the second Paradise (Gen. 2. 9; Rev. 2. 7; 22. 14), there stands, silent and sublime, that other tree, the tree of shame, the accursed tree of the cross (Gal. 3. 13), upon which Christ once hung.

'From this cross, God stretches out His hand to the lost wanderer in the wilderness, longing to bring him back for ever from his own ways to the heavenly homeland. With his origins in Eden and longing for Eden, the sinner may find his place of rest at the cross ... The cross of Calvary is home for the homeless'.

(Erich Sauer, 'The King of the Earth', pages 99-100.)

'My beloved is ... altogether lovely' (Song of Songs 5. 10-16).

'Surely, beyond the maiden's appreciation of her beloved, we can discern Israel's future appreciation of her King and Messiah—our Lord Jesus.

'The day is coming when His nation will confess, as they look back to their rejection of Him at His first advent, that they then saw "no beauty" in Him that they "should desire Him" (Isa. 53. 2). But not only so. For then, at His second advent, they will also exclaim, in striking contrast, "He is altogether lovely" (Song of Songs 5. 16; the word translated "lovely" being closely related to that rendered "desire" in Isa. 53. 2).

"With her eyes and heart ravished by her Beloved, she (Israel) unfolds His loveliness", C. E. Hocking, 'Rise Up My Love', page 339.

'When Nebuchadnezzar dreamt of an imposing image which represented successive gentile world empires, there was marked deterioration from its head "of fine gold" to its feet "part of iron and part of clay" (Dan 2. 32-33).

'But there is no deterioration in our Lord Jesus. Poetically expressed, He is "fine gold" from the crown of His head (Song of Songs 5. 11) to the sole of His feet (verse 15). And not only His head and feet. For His hands also "are as gold rings" (verse 14). And to the believing heart the Saviour's preciousness is yet further enhanced by His sufferings and wounds.

'Well then do we sing with Isaac Watts, "See from His head, His hands, His feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down!"

('Bible Questions', Precious Seed Publications, page 128.)

Two sets of comments on the Tabernacle.

1. 'Marvellous is the progressive order of teaching in connection with the various objects in the Tabernacle. At the brazen altar sin was judged, and by blood-shedding put away. At the laver purification was effected. In the holy place provision was made for prayer, food and illumination; while in the holy of holies the glory of the enthroned King was displayed.

'The same principle of progress is also to be seen in the increasing value of the sacred vessels. Those in the outer court were of wood and brass; whereas those in the inner compartments were of wood and gold. So too the various curtains grew richer in design and embellishment, the inner veil being the costliest and most elaborate. Again, the outer court, being open, was illumined by natural light; the holy place was lit up by the light from the golden candlestick; but the holy of holies was radiated by the Shekinah glory of Jehovah. Thus the journey from the outer court into the holy of holies was from sin to purification, and from grace to glory. ...

'The order in which the Tabernacle and its contents are described is most significant. The first thing mentioned is the ark (Exod. 25. 10) and its covering—the mercy-seat (verse 17), which was Jehovah's throne in Israel's midst. Then comes the table (verse 23) and the candlestick (verse 31), the curtains (Exod. 26. 1), and boards (verse 15) of the Tabernacle proper, with the separating veil (verse 31). Last comes the brazen altar (Exod. 27. 1) and the hangings of the court (verse 9). Thus it will be seen that the order is from the interior to the exterior. It is the order of sovereign grace, God coming from His throne right to the outer door where the sinner was! ...

'It is very striking to note that in the second description of the Tabernacle, where we have the record of its manufacture and erection, there is a notable variation—instead of beginning with the contents of the holy of holies where Jehovah dwelt, we have described the Tabernacle and curtains of the outer court, which the common people saw. Here the order is from without to within—the experimental order, the order in which Divine truth is apprehended by the soul'.

A. W. Pink, 'Exodus', pages 187-188.)

2. 'On first reading of the descriptions God gave, it would seem that there were some things missing ... there were no windows, But remember, this is a scale model of heaven, and there the inhabitants have no need of the "light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light" (Rev. 22. 5).

'There was no floor but the desert sand, perhaps reminding them that they weren't Home yet! There were no seats for the priests, because, like mothers, their work was never done. Thankfully when Christ, our High Priest, "had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1. 3), His work never to be repeated.

'Of course, there were no locks on the door or gate, in spite of the fabulous wealth within. God handles His own security, thank you very much.

'There were no steps to the great altar, for the work of salvation does not allow for human effort. And, interestingly, there were no cherubim on the outer gate, for God welcomes all, sinners though they be, to come and be saved'.

(J. B. Nicholson Jr., 'The Mystery of the Missing Furniture', Uplook Ministries: Taste and See, 27 December 2021.)

(iii) Go on, smile.

Rhys Williams moved from his hometown in West Wales to a big city in England and applied for a position at a prestigious engineering firm.

Mark Robinson, from Oxford, applied for the same job and, as both applicants had the same qualifications, the two men were asked by the company's Department Manager to take a 10-question written test. In the test, both men failed to answer only one of the questions.

After the Manager had reviewed the two completed test papers, he approached Rhys and said, 'Thank you for your interest, Mr Williams, but we have decided to give the job to Mr Robinson'.

'Tell me', Rhys responded, 'and why are you doing that? I happen to know that we both answered nine of the ten questions correctly. Is it because I'm Welsh? Is it that you have something against the Welsh?'

'The truth is, Mr Williams', the Manager replied, 'we didn't make our decision on the basis of your nine correct answers, but on the basis of the question which you failed to answer'.

'I don't get it', Rhys continued. 'How can one person's unanswered question be any better than another person's?'

'That is simple', the Manager explained. 'In answer to question five, Mr Robinson wrote, "I don't know" and you wrote, "Neither do I".'