

## Malcolm's Monday Musings : 9 December 2024

Greetings.

### First.

Last week, I posed a simple quiz question: *'I'm the size of a bull elephant, but I weigh nothing. What am I?'* I promised then to let you have the answer today.

That answer is clearly seen in the lower part of the following photograph.



Yes, the answer is *'a bull elephant's shadow'*.

### Second.

This past Saturday marked the anniversary of the surprise aerial attack by Imperial Japan on the American naval base at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii on 7 December 1941. The man who both led and commanded the Japanese raid was Mitsuo Fuchida. He was later converted and became a Christian evangelist.

For those interested, I provide in the final section below a short article about Mitsuo Fuchida's remarkable experiences. (This article is slightly adapted from part of a document entitled *'Fear not, Joseph'*, which I attached to the 'Monday Musings' email dated 21 December 2020.)

### Third.

I also show immediately below today's main 'Musings' document.

Happy reading.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

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### **(i) Scripture.**

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil...

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord ... And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? ... put forth Thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face.

And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand ...

(i) There came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them: and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword ... (ii) While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them ... (iii) While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword ... (iv) While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: and, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead ...

Then Job ... fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Job 1. 1-22 (King James Version)

## (ii) Food for thought.

### **'You have heard of the endurance of Job' (Jam. 5. 11).**

1. 'The spring and source of all these dealings is not Satan's accusations, but God Himself. God knew what His servant Job needed, and Himself brings forward his case and sets all in movement.

'If He demands of Satan if he had considered His servant Job, it is because He Himself had. Satan is but an instrument, and an ignorant though subtle instrument, to bring about God's purposes of grace. His accusations result really in nothing as against Job, save to disprove their truth ... But, for Job's good, he is left to his will up to a certain point, for the purpose of bringing Job to a knowledge of his own heart (Job 40. 4; 42. 6), and thus to a deeper ground of practical relationship with God. How blessed and perfect are God's ways!'

(J. N. Darby, 'Synopsis of the Books of the Bible', Volume II, page 34.)

2. 'His dearest and most valuable possessions were his ten children; and, to conclude the tragedy, news if brought him, at the same time, that they were killed and buried in the ruins of the house in which they were feasting ... This was the greatest of Job's losses ... and therefore the devil reserved it for the last, that, if the other provocations failed, this might make him curse God ... They all died together, and not one of them was left alive. David, though a wise and good man, was very much discomposed by the death of one son (2 Sam. 18. 33). How hard then did it bear upon poor Job who lost them all, and, in one moment, was written childless! ... They were taken away when he had most need of them to comfort him under all his other losses ...

'The same that gave hath taken away; and may he not do what he will with his own? See how Job looks above instruments, and keeps his eye upon the first Cause. He does not say, "The Lord gave, and the Sabeans and Chaldeans have taken away; God made me rich, and the devil has made me poor", but, "He that gave has taken", and for that reason he is dumb, and has nothing to say, because God did it. He that gave all may take what, and when, and how much he pleases ... Epictetus says excellently, "When thou art deprived of any comfort, suppose a child taken away by death, or a part of thy estate lost, say not 'I have lost it'; but 'I have restored it to the right owner' but thou wilt object" (says he), "he is a bad man that has robbed me"; to which he answers, "What is it to thee by what hand he that gives remands what he gave?" ...

'When our comforts are removed from us, *we must thank God that ever we had them and had them so much longer than we deserved*'.

(Matthew Henry, 'Commentary on the Whole Bible', comments on Job 1. 20-22.)

**3.** 'I had to speak at the funeral of a seventy-year-old woman. *I didn't want to use the language of darkness*, so I went in and said, "Praise the Lord for the seventy years that this woman was with us! *Isn't God good? He gave her to us for such a long time. Let's thank Him for that*".

'The whole atmosphere changed. Even the husband said, "Thank You, Lord for giving my wife to me for so long". He eventually asked us all to sing a chorus. It was hardly a funeral song, but ... he was so glad for the revelation that the Lord had given his wife seventy years that he wanted to make a celebration'.

(Juan Carlos Ortiz, 'Disciple', pages 72-73.)

**David's four mentions of the shadow of God's wings.**

(i) **Hiding:** 'Hide me under *the shadow of Thy wings*' (Psa. 17. 8).

(ii) **Trusting:** 'The children of men put their trust under *the shadow of Thy wings*' (Psa. 36. 7).

(iii) **Sheltering:** 'In *the shadow of Thy wings* will I make my refuge' (Psa. 57. 1).

(iv) **Rejoicing:** 'In *the shadow of Thy wings* will I rejoice' (Psa. 63. 7).

**'God so loved the world' (John 3. 16); 'love not the world' (1 John 2. 15).**

'When we are told that God loves the world, His love is to be admired because the world is so bad ... What God forbids in 1 John 2. 15 is something quite different.

'God loves the world with *the holy love of redemption*; He forbids **us** to love the world with *the squalid love of participation*.

'God loves the world with the *self-sacrificing love* that costs the Son His life; **we** are not to love the world with the *self-seeking love* that wants to taste all the world's sin ...

'God's love for the world *is to be admired for its unique combination of purity and self-sacrifice*; **ours** *incites horror and disgust for its impurity and rapacious evil*'.

(D. A. Carson, 'For the Love of God', Volume 1, meditation for 3 December.)

**'The deceitfulness of sin' (Heb. 3. 13).**

'Remember:

(i) Sin will *take you farther than you wanted to go*.

(ii) Sin will *keep you longer than you wanted to stay*.

(iii) Sin will *cost you more than you wanted to pay*'.

(S. Farrar, 'Finishing Strong', page 90.)

**'Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem ... he carried away also the gold shields which Solomon had made' (2 Chron. 12. 9).**

'On the way up from Egypt, Shishak took the fortified cities. On the way back, he "took away the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house; he took everything" (2 Chron. 12. 9).

'One category of treasure is mentioned. He took "the gold shields which Solomon had made". There were "two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred shekels of gold went into each shield. He also made three hundred shields of hammered gold" (1 Kings

10. 16-17). Gone! So, what did Rehoboam do? He “made bronze shields in their place” (2 Chron. 12. 10) ...

‘One generation pays the price for quality; the next generation settles for no more than appearance. In society, product development has been replaced by brand image ... It happens in the church, too. *The first generation has the truth in their hearts, the next may only have it on their bookshelves*’.

(J. B. Nicholson Jr, ‘*How brazen can you be?*’, Taste and See, Uplook Ministries, 20 November 2024.)

**Seven of the believer’s present blessings.**

(i) ‘Being **now** justified by His blood’ (Rom. 5. 9).

(ii) ‘Through whom we have **now** received the reconciliation’ (Rom. 5. 11 R.V.).

(iii) ‘**Now** being made free from sin’ (Rom. 6. 22).

(iv) ‘There is, therefore, **now** no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus’ (Rom. 8. 1).

(v) ‘**Now** in Christ Jesus you... are made nigh by the blood of Christ’ (Eph. 2. 13).

(vi) ‘Which in time past were not a people, but are **now** the people of God’ (1 Pet. 2. 10).

(vii) ‘**Now** are we children of God’ (1 John 3. 2 R.V.)

***‘In whom we trust that He will still deliver us, you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many’ (2 Cor. 1. 10-11).***

**1.** ‘Paul believes that deliverance comes through intercessory prayer. The verb (translated, ‘helping together’) means “to work together with” or “to cooperate”—in this case, by their prayers on his behalf ...

‘Paul does not hide behind the facade of a superman who pretends that he can survive quite well on his own without help from anyone else. He has no qualms about expressing his desperate need for their prayers. Paul is firmly convinced of prayer’s power because he knows that God listens, responds, and delivers’.

(D. Garland, ‘2 Corinthians: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture’, page 82.)

**2.** ‘Intercession for someone is a collaboration with them in the work... In praying for them, we are doing more than what spectators do at a hockey or football game. We are not just showing our support for their heroic efforts. We are actually participating in the struggle with them ...

‘We participate in the battle when we pray. We become co-workers through our intercession. In this way, the exciting work of resisting the Evil One and advancing the kingdom is not just happening far away “on the mission field”. No, we have been helping in the struggle through our prayers. God receives more praise—and we feel the thrill of participating in the victory’.

(K. Guenther, ‘Co-workers through prayer’, accessed at <https://sendublog.com/2022/04/25/co-workers-through-prayer/>.)

**3.**

‘Thou art coming to a King,  
Large petitions with thee bring,  
For His grace and power are such,  
None can ever ask too much’.

(John Newton, the hymn, 'Come, My Soul, Thy Suit Prepare'.)

**'Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him' (Psa. 42. 5, 11; 43. 5).**

'Sometimes we need to talk to ourselves just like the psalmist did. Some days we need to speak to our heart and remind it of the goodness and faithfulness of God.

'Scripture can also help us talk to God ... We have days when we don't know what to pray—days when our hearts are so heavy that we can't muster the strength to hope. But God has given us words to pray. We can never go wrong praying scriptures. The Bible, especially the Psalms, is filled with cries of disappointment and discouragement ...

'In Psalms 42 and 43, the struggling writer pens words of pain and promise. He reminds himself of where his hope must be focused. This is a reminder for us too ... Take a deep breath and read the words of Psalm 42 verse 5, Psalm 42 verse 11 or Psalm 43 verse 5 out loud ... they will help lighten the shadows'.

(A. Lee, 'Ten Bible Verses to Combat Seasonal Depression', accessed at ... <https://www.crosswalk.com/slideshows/10-bible-verses-to-combat-seasonal-depression.html>.)

**The Epistle to the Romans: comments by William Tyndale.**

'Forasmuch as this epistle is the principal and most excellent part of the New Testament, and most pure gospel, and also is a light and a way in unto the whole scripture, I think it meet that every Christian man ... exercise himself therein evermore continually as with the daily bread of the soul. No man verily can read it too oft or study it too well. For the more it is studied, the easier it is; the more it is chewed, the pleasanter it is; and the more it is searched, the more precious things are found in it, so great treasure of spiritual things lieth hid therein'.

(W. Tyndale, 'A Prologue upon the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans', printed in 'Doctrinal Treatises and Introductions to Different Portions of the Holy Scriptures by William Tyndale', 1848, page 484.).

**'Him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that ... through the prophetic writings has been made known' (Rom. 16. 25-26).**

'In these verses reference is made to the apostle's dual stewardship, that (i) of the "gospel" and (ii) of the "mystery". The epistle begins with a reference to the Old Testament scriptures (Rom. 1. 2) and ends with a reference to the New, 'the prophetic writings', in which the truth relative to the mystery ['the mystery of Christ and the church', W. Kelly; 'that the Gentiles are fellow heirs', Eph. 3. 6] is unfolded'.

(J. M. Davies, 'The Christian's Statue of Liberty', comment on Rom. 16. 25-26.)

**The 'fulness' of the Godhead in Ephesians.**

(i) The Fulness of God (Eph. 3. 19).

(ii) The Fulness of Christ (Eph. 4. 13).

(iii) The Fulness of the Spirit (Eph. 5. 18).

**'Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified and slain' (Acts 2. 23).**

'Just when man showed his hatred to God in slaying His Son, God has shown His love to man in giving Him to put away the sin shown in slaying Him ...

'If man crowned his iniquity, in rejecting, in the Person of Jesus, not only the authority, but also the goodness of God, the same act which perfectly manifested the sin which was in the heart of man ... accomplished at the same time all that the justice of God required with regard to that sin, whilst manifesting also His perfect love to man'.

(J. N. Darby, 'Collected Writings', Volume 7, pages 82 and 93.)

**Jesus 'on'.**

(i) He dwelt 'on the earth' to glorify God and to finish His work (John 17. 4).

(ii) He was set 'on the pinnacle of the temple' when tempted by the devil (Matt. 4. 5).

(iii) He sat 'on the well' to meet a needy sinner (John 4. 6).

(iv) He walked 'on the sea' to encourage and succour His disciples (John 6. 19).

(v) He wrote 'on the ground' with His finger when in dispute with His foes (John 8. 6).

(vi) He rode 'on an ass's colt' in fulfilment of the Scriptures (John 12. 15).

(vii) He was hanged 'on a tree' when dying for the sins of others (Acts 5. 30; 10. 39; Gal. 3. 13; 1 Pet. 2. 24).

(viii) He is now 'on the right hand' of God in exaltation and victory (Col. 3. 1; Heb. 1. 3; 8. 1; 10. 12; 1 Pet. 3. 22).

(ix) He will come 'on the clouds' at His second advent (Matt. 24. 30; 26. 64 R.V.).

**On further reflection; Jacob's changed assessment of his life's experiences.**

(i) 'Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me: Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me"' (Gen. 42. 36).

(ii) 'Jacob blessed Joseph, and said, "The God who has been my shepherd all my life long to this day ... bless the lads" (Gen. 48. 15).

One glad day, you and I will be able to look back if we wish and trace the manifold (though often undetected) ways in which the Lord 'has been our shepherd all our lives long'.

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

Henry was recounting to his colleague James how he and his wife Ethel had argued furiously the night before.

'It only ended', he explained, 'when Ethel came crawling to me on her hands and knees'.

'Wow, did she say anything?' James asked.

'Oh, yes', Henry replied. 'Come out from under the bed, you coward'.

## Mitsuo Fuchida.

On 7 December 1941, Imperial Japan launched its infamous<sup>1</sup> attack upon the American naval base and Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor. It was that act of aggression which brought both Japan and the United States into the Second World War.<sup>2</sup>

The man who led and commanded the Japanese air raid was 39 year-old Mitsuo Fuchida.<sup>3</sup>



As the senior commander he was the first over Pearl Harbor and the last to leave it.

Later Fuchida wrote about that morning at Pearl Harbor: 'Seating myself in the first plane, I led the whole squadron of 360 planes into Pearl Harbor, and having established that the main force of the American Pacific fleet, comprised of eight warships, was at anchor . . . I gave the order, "*Whole squadron, plunge into attack!*"'

Fuchida was one of Japan's most experienced pilots and took part in most major battles. One Japanese news cameraman had unofficial nicknames for all the senior officers. Fuchida's was '*Hitler*', which gives you some idea of the sort of man he was ... he even grew a toothbrush moustache out of admiration for Germany's Führer.

Just before the Battle of Midway he had an operation for appendicitis. He struggled up from the sick bay to the deck of the aircraft carrier to wave off his fellow pilots. An American plane dropped a bomb which broke both his legs but had he not been on the deck he would have burned alive with the other 30 men trapped down below in the sick bay. He was blown into the sea and rescued.

By the end of the war, he was the sole survivor of the seven commanders and 32 squadron leaders whom he had led at Pearl Harbor.

On August 5th 1945, he was in Hiroshima attending a week-long military conference. An urgent order came through ordering him to leave and report to Tokyo. The next day the atom bomb was dropped.

In all, there were six events during the war where he survived in what we might call 'unusual circumstances'.

With Japan's defeat, Fuchida became a bitter, disillusioned man. He took up farming, which gave him time to think, and to ask himself why he had survived a war which had cost the lives of almost all his comrades.

It was then the period of the Cold War (a period of enormous tension between the Communist world and the Western World) and it looked as if another war might start. Fuchida wrote a book titled '*No more Pearl Harbor*', during the writing of which it struck him that the mess the world was in was due to human nature. 'But who or what can change people?' he asked.

It was at this point that he was called to give evidence at 'war crimes' trials which the Americans were conducting. As he passed through Tokyo railway station, a missionary gave him a tract headed, 'I was a prisoner of Japan'. In this tract the American author, Jacob De Shazer, described how he had read the Bible while a prisoner of war and how he had turned to Christ as a result.

Almost in spite of himself, Fuchida bought a Bible and, when reading Luke's account of the crucifixion of our Lord, he read the Saviour's prayer: 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do'. He thought back to the many men he had killed in battle with his heart full of hatred.

In his own words: 'Right at that moment I seemed to meet Jesus for the first time. I understood the meaning of His death for my wickedness, and so in prayer I requested Him to forgive my sins and change me. That ... day I became a new person ... Jesus became my personal Saviour'.

Media reaction was not slow in coming. '*Pearl Harbor hero converts to Christianity*' was one typical headline.

Men who had fought for Japan wanted him to give up what they called 'this crazy idea'. One even attacked him with a knife claiming that Fuchida had embraced Christianity only to impress the American conquerors.

But time proved them wrong.

Fuchida decided to serve the Lord full time, and so turned down a well-paid job advising the new Japanese government on defence issues.

He travelled widely as an evangelist, particularly in the United States. He became good friends with Billy Graham and spoke at many of his rallies. When he gave his testimony in the States, Fuchida often had difficult and emotional encounters with those who had lost loved ones, either in the war with Japan and sometimes in the very Pearl Harbour attack he had led. He always pointed them to Christ'.<sup>4</sup>

Often, he would say: 'I would give anything to retract my actions at Pearl Harbor, but it is impossible. Instead, I now work at striking the death blow to the hatred which ... causes such tragedies. And that hatred cannot be uprooted without *Jesus Christ ... He is the only answer*'.

At one point, he returned to Pearl Harbor to make a documentary film in which he is seen over the spot where an American battleship sank and became a permanent tomb for hundreds of men. When the American film company Twentieth Century Fox produced the film, 'Tora! Tora! Tora!' in 1970, Fuchida supplied Japanese technical information and attended the London premiere.

Eventually he settled back in Japan, serving the Lord and working alongside Jacob De Shazer, the missionary whose own story was the starting point in Fuchida's conversion.





**Mitsuo Fuchida and Jacob De Shazer**

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed 7 December, 'a date which will live in infamy'.

<sup>2</sup> The attack led to the United States' formal entry into World War II the next day.

<sup>3</sup> To my knowledge, the best biography of Mitsuo Fuchida is 'God's Samurai: Lead Pilot at Pearl Harbor', by Gordon W. Prange; published by Potomac Books. I highly recommend this book; many of the facts set out in my main text are drawn from this book. I have also consulted numerous relevant online resources. Mr Fuchida himself wrote a short autobiography entitled '*Pearl Harbor to Golgotha*' in 1953.

<sup>4</sup> J. John, '*Heroes of the Faith: Mitsuo Fuchida*', accessed at ...  
<https://canonjohn.com/2022/02/26/heroes-of-the-faith-mitsuo-fuchida/>.