

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 27 April 2020

(i) Scripture.

'I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new'.

Revelation 21. 3-5 (*King James Version*)

(ii) Food for thought.

As I said last Monday, 'During the current pandemic, it is all too easy for our fear of a microscopic virus to loom large, and for our vision of the glory of our Lord Jesus to grow fainter'. And so, again today, we will attempt to capture a few more brief glimpses of His glory.

'Knowledge paints **the portrait of Jesus**, and when we see that portrait then we love Him ... If we know but little of the excellences of Jesus, what He has done for us, and what He is doing now, we cannot love Him much; but the more we know Him, the more we shall love Him'.
(C H Spurgeon, *'Morning and Evening'*, 4 August.)

From heaven. On one occasion, the Saviour spoke of Satan '*falling*' from heaven (Luke 10. 18), and the town clerk of Ephesus is on record in as having spoken of the image of the Greek goddess Artemis which supposedly '*fell down*' from heaven (Acts 19. 35). But the Lord Jesus didn't '*fall down*' from heaven; in matchless grace, He '*came down*' from heaven' (John 6. 38).

The Lord Jesus and John the Baptist. (i) 'Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John' (Luke 1. 13); (ii) 'you will ... bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus' (Luke 1. 31).

(i) John was born to Elizabeth *after* it seemed humanly possible (Luke 1. 7), and (ii) Jesus was born to Mary *before* it seemed humanly possible (Luke 1. 27). (i) Zacharias failed to believe (Luke 1. 20) that God could do again *what He had done in the past* (as witness Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Manoah's wife), whereas (ii) Mary believed (Luke 1. 38) that He could do *what He had never done before!*

The Lord Jesus and the apostle Paul. The apostle explained to the elders of Ephesus, 'Behold, I go bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Spirit witnesses in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me' (Acts 20. 22-23). Apart then from the Spirit's general forewarning of imprisonment and afflictions, Paul had no idea what lay ahead of him at Jerusalem.

But our Lord knew full well all that lay ahead of Him there! (Matt. 16. 21; John 18. 4). Yet, knowing all, 'He set His face to go to Jerusalem' (Luke 9. 51).

'When we see **Jesus setting His face** to go to Jerusalem, striding on to the cross as men march to the consummation of their dearest hopes or struggle upward to the summit of their most cherished ambitions, we feel and know that here courage, fortitude, strength of will have reached the absolute limit of possibility, that such words need an expanded meaning to cover the case. If we would be men indeed, we must learn of Christ'.

(Robert Law, *'The Emotions of Jesus'*, pages 137-139.)

The Lord Jesus and the poor widow. Our Lord appreciated (and audibly acknowledged) the fact that the widow had given 'all that she had', Mark 12. 44. He knew that within a few days He would give *all that He had!*

The question of Pilate: 'What have you done?' (John 18. 35) The author of the Gospel knew full well that, if the Lord Jesus had answered Pilate's question fully, Pilate would have been there *a very long time indeed!* (John 21. 25)

But what had Jesus '*done*'? (cf. Acts 1. 1). Most certainly, unlike every other man who has ever lived, He '*did no sin*' (1 Pet. 2. 22). In contrast, as Peter told Cornelius and his household, He '*went about doing good*' (Acts 10. 38). And what is more all the '*good*' which He did, He '*did well*' (Mark 7. 37).

The Creator. 'Little did they dream, as they bound the fatal wood upon His shoulder, by whose power that tree was made to grow, and from whom the beings who bore Him to the death drew their existence. So completely was Jesus bent upon saving sinners by the sacrifice of Himself, He created

the tree upon which He was to die, and nurtured from infancy the men who were to nail Him to the accursed wood. Oh the depth of Jesus' love to sinners!
(Octavius Winslow, *The Foot of the Cross*, chapter entitled 'Bearing the Cross'.)

The self-same One who had readily **'come down'** from the heavenly glory (John 6. 38), resolutely refused to 'come down' from the shameful cross (Matt. 27. 40, 44).

'In due time'. He had claimed that no-one would take His life from Him; that He would lay it down of Himself (of His own accord) (John 10. 18). The Jews had come with their stones *too early* to kill Him (John 8. 59; 10. 31.); now the soldier came with his spear *too late* (John 19. 30-34). The Saviour died at the precise moment when God's clock struck (Rom. 5. 6).

Two finished works. In creation, God 'finished' all the work and then rested Himself (Gen. 2. 1-2). In redemption The Lord Jesus 'finished' all the work (John 19. 30) and now we can rest.

Jesus the 'bearer'. The great 'sin-bearer' of the past (Heb. 9. 28), is now the great 'burden-bearer' (Psa. 55. 22; 1 Pet. 5. 7), and will one day be the great 'glory-bearer' (Zech. 6. 13).

He 'is able': (i) to save (Heb. 7. 25); (ii) to succour (Heb. 2. 18); (iii) to sympathise (Heb. 4. 15); and (iv) to subdue, (Phil. 3. 21.)

He is: (i) 'our life' (Col. 3. 4); (ii) 'our peace' (Eph. 2. 14); and (iii) 'our hope' (1 Tim. 1. 1).

Three 'great' offices. Truly, He is the 'great prophet', Luke 7. 16, the 'great high priest', Heb. 4. 16, and the 'great king', Matt. 5. 35.

Detailed notes. [See the attached Word document, 'He shall be great'](#).

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

The joys of growing old:

'Grandpa, I'm really proud of you', the young lady said. 'What's to be proud of?' the old man asked. His granddaughter replied, 'Well, I noticed that whenever you sneeze, you always put your hand in front of your mouth'.

'Of course', Grandpa explained, *'How else can I catch my teeth?'*

And, still on the subject of teeth ...

'While working for our local church, we have a ministry that delivers lunches to elderly shut-ins. I used to take my four-year-old daughter with me on my afternoon rounds. She was unfailingly intrigued by the various appliances of old age, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs. One day I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass.

As I braced myself for the inevitable barrage of questions, she merely turned and whispered, *"The tooth fairy will never believe this!"*

How about hearing?

An elderly man cross-questioned his wife about a recent, large expense. 'I bought a new hearing aid, dear', she explained. 'And how much did that cost?', he enquired nervously. 'Fourteen hundred pounds', she replied quietly.

Her husband almost exploded. 'Fourteen hundred pounds!! Why ever did you pay so much for a hearing aid?'

'Ah', she added, 'but this is the most wonderful hearing aid on the market. Now I can hear everything that people are saying, even from the other side of the room'.

'OK, I admit that is impressive', her husband conceded. 'What kind is it?'

'It's half past five', she said, glancing at her watch. *'Why?'*

(You might also like to have a look at the attached 'Hearing music' picture.)

And how about eyesight?

'Soon after our last child left home for college, my husband was resting next to me on the couch with his head in my lap. I carefully removed his glasses. "You know, honey", I said sweetly, "without your glasses you look like the same handsome young man I married".

“Honey”, he replied, “*without my glasses, you still look pretty good too!*”
(Quoted from Valerie L. Runyan, ‘*Reader’s Digest*’.)

And to close ...

‘I was visiting my granddaughter last night when I asked her if I could borrow a newspaper.
“Gramps, this is the 21st century,” she said. “I don’t waste money on newspapers. Here, use my iPad”.

Well, I can tell you this ... *that poor fly never knew what hit him*’.

**STOP FOCUSING
ON HOW
STRESSED YOU
ARE AND
REMEMBER
HOW BLESSED
YOU ARE**