

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 4 January 2021

Greetings.

This is the first of my 2021 'Monday Musings' emails.

You may recall that the Word document for last week focused largely on *the Christmas speech of King George VI*. You will find that the attached document for this week turns our attention to *the fragrant garments of the King of Kings*. (The scripture reading below paves the way.)

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

(i) Scripture.

My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty ... Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad ... Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.

Psalm 45. 1-11 (*King James Version*)

(ii) Food for thought.

Five times when Jesus asked, 'Why ... me?'

- (i) 'Why do you tempt me?' (Luke 20. 23).
- (ii) 'Why do you seek to kill me?' (John 7. 19).
- (iii) 'Why do you strike me?' (John 18. 23).
- (iv) 'Why have you forsaken me?' (Mark 15. 34).
- (v) 'Why are you persecuting me?' (Acts 9. 4).

The Son of God.

'Matthew and Mark first notice His Sonship of God at His baptism [Matthew 3. 17; Mark 1. 11]. Luke goes farther back, and notices it at His birth [Luke 1. 35]. But John goes back farther still, even to the immeasurable, unspeakable distance of eternity, and declares His Sonship 'in the bosom of the Father' [John 1. 18].

(J. G. Bellett, '*The Son of God*', chapter 1, page 10.)

'The gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mark 1. 1).

In Mark's Gospel, Jesus is identified as the Son of God:

- (i) by God (Mark 1. 11; 9. 7).
- (ii) by Himself (Mark 12. 6; 13. 32; 14. 61-62).
- (iii) by demons (Mark 3. 11; 5. 7).
- (iv) by man (Mark 15. 39).

King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

In the Ramasseum (the mortuary temple of Ramasses II, near Luxor in Upper Egypt) there are fragments of a gigantic granite statue of the enthroned Pharaoh. The statue is estimated to have been towards 20 metres (65 feet) high and to have weighed over 1000 tons.

It is claimed that 'The inscription on its shoulder and upper arm reads "King of kings and Lord of lords".'

(Dave Aeilts, '*Patterns of Evidence*', 22 June 2018.)

Whether that claim is correct or not, we rejoice to know that nothing will ever topple or destroy Him who has 'on His robe and on His thigh ... a name written, "King of kings and Lord of lords"! (Rev. 19. 16).

'Over the house'

The phrase 'Over the house' was used 'to identify the most senior representative of the administration that he served. This was the highest status that could be achieved under a given ruler. For example, it was the status that was given to Joseph when Potiphar made him overseer of his house (Gen. 39. 4). Later, Joseph once again received this status when the Pharaoh of Egypt appointed him Vizier over Egypt (Gen. 41. 39-44). Ultimately, Joseph had his own steward who managed his affairs and served "over his house" (Gen. 43. 19-24). In this latter case, it is clear that the individual was uniquely privy to the actions and wishes of the individual he served ...

Similar language is used in the New Testament when the angel announced to Mary that she would give birth to Jesus, who would be called the Son of the Most High, who would be granted the throne of His father David, and who would reign "over the house" of Jacob forever (Luke 1. 33). In the Book of Hebrews, He again is described as a great high priest who is "over the house" of God, thus encouraging believers to draw near with confidence (Heb. 10. 21)'.
(Brian Rickett, 'New Discovery of another First Temple Seal in Jerusalem'.)

Lazarus and Jesus.

Both Lazarus and the Lord Jesus were 'raised again' (John 11. 23; 20. 9).

(i) 'Where have you laid him' was the question posed to the weeping mourners by the Lord Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11. 34). Our Lord's question preceded the raising of Lazarus.

(ii) 'Tell me where you have laid Him' was the request made to the Lord Jesus by the weeping mourner at the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea (John 20. 15). Mary's request followed the raising of the Lord Jesus.

(i) Lazarus's return to life was only temporary. Lazarus would die again. He was, if you like, only out on parole, required to report back to both Death and the tomb in due course.

(ii) Our Lord didn't leave His tomb on short-term release! The apostle Paul expressed it clearly: 'Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him' (Rom. 6. 9). 'Behold, I am alive for evermore', is the triumphant exclamation of the Risen Lord.

(i) Lazarus rose with the same kind of natural and mortal body he had before, a body which didn't (and, indeed, couldn't) pass through his grave-clothes, let alone through the walls of his rock tomb. He emerged from the tomb with his face-cloth still in place.

(ii) Our Lord burst out into an altogether different dimension, leaving His grave-clothes behind Him, lying unwanted in the otherwise empty tomb. His face-cloth lay neatly wrapped up and folded in a place by itself.

(i) After the removal of the stone, Lazarus walked out (or, more likely in the circumstances, shuffled out) of his tomb through the very same door through which, four days before, he had been carried in.

(ii) Our Lord did not emerge through the door through which He had been carried in. He rose some time before the angel rolled the stone aside, sat himself on it, and announced, 'He is not here; for He has risen' (Matt. 28. 2, 6).

(For further comments, see the lower section of page 4 of the attached Word document.)

'Jesus Christ ... hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light' (2 Tim. 1. 10).

'So wrote the greatest Christian of them all just before he went out to meet his executioner'.

(A. W. Tozer, 'The Knowledge of the Holy', chapter 7.)

He loved us, loosed us and lifted us.

'As Christ also loved us' (Eph. 5. 2); 'and loosed us from our sins by His blood' (Rev. 1. 5 RV); 'you have lifted me up' (Psa. 30. 1), 'and made us sit together in heavenly places' (Eph. 2. 6).

Some of the 'less' things which become more precious to us as the days go by.

'What will it mean to live with Him in a thornless paradise, and be like Him, sharing a tearless society with a tombless landscape in full view, while enjoying the timeless pleasures beside the tideless sea which is described in the Scriptures as clear as crystal?'

(C. J. Rolls, 'Romance of the Ages', Chapter 7).

A clean heart and an upright life.

'To God a man must present a clean heart; to men he must present an upright life'.

(William Barclay, 'Daily Study Bible', on Heb. 12. 12-17.)

Self-control.

The biblical proverb says, 'A fool uttereth all his anger: but a wise man keepeth it back' (Prov. 29. 11 RV).

Clearly, a sharp tongue doesn't signify a sharp mind.

'He that swears to his own hurt, and changes not' (Psa. 15. 4).

People with good intentions make promises; people with good character keep them. If you can't keep your word, then keep your words to yourself!

'Oh, be careful, little eyes, what you see'.

Alypius, a friend of Augustine of Hippo, didn't want to go to the gladiatorial games. But, Augustine records, 'although he had been utterly opposed to such spectacles and detested them, one day he met by chance a company of his acquaintances and fellow students returning from dinner; and, with a friendly violence, they drew him, resisting and objecting vehemently, to the amphitheatre, on a day of those cruel and murderous shows ...

When they got to the arena, and had taken what seats they could get, the whole place became a tumult of inhuman frenzy. But Alypius kept his eyes closed and forbade his mind to roam abroad after such wickedness.

Would that he had shut his ears also! For when one of the combatants fell in the fight, a mighty cry from the whole audience stirred him so strongly that, overcome by curiosity ... he opened his eyes and ... as soon as he saw the blood, he drank in with it a savage temper, and he did not turn away, but fixed his eyes on the bloody pastime ...

He was now no longer the same man who came in ... and he took away with him the madness that would stimulate him to come again'.

(Augustine, 'Confessions' (translated by A. C. Outler), Book VI, Chapter 8, Section 13.)

Well did David resolve, '*I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes*' (Psalm 101. 3).

'My times are in Thy hand' (Psa. 31. 15).

'If our times were in our own hand, we would have deliverance too soon; if they were in our enemy's hand, we should have deliverance too late; but 'my times are in Thy hand'; and God's time is ever best'.

(Thomas Watson, 'God's Anatomy Upon Man's Heart', Use 5, Caution; 'when to deliver'.)

Detailed notes. [See the attached Word document, 'The King's Garments'.](#)

(iii) Go on, smile.

Shortly before kick-off, the coach of an under-nines soccer team went over to one young player.

'You do understand', he said, that you mustn't argue with the referee if he sends you off, and that you mustn't hit one of the other team even if he fouls you?'

'Yes, sir', the boy replied. 'I understand'.

'Excellent', said the coach. 'Now go and *explain it to your mother!*'

John had booked his holiday. As he was about to leave his house, he phoned the seaside hotel to ask for its exact location.

'Oh, that's easy', he was told. 'It's only a stone's throw from the beach'.

'Yes, but how will I recognise it?' John persisted.

'You can't miss it', came the reply. '*It's the one with all the broken windows*'.