

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 20 July 2020

(i) Scripture.

Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews' ... the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, 'Do not write, "The King of the Jews", but, "He said, 'I am the King of the Jews"'. Pilate answered, '*What I have written I have written*'.

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. They said therefore among themselves, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be', *that the scripture might be fulfilled* which says: 'They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots' ...

Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, *that the scripture might be fulfilled*, said, "I thirst!" ...

When they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear ... these things were done *that the scripture should be fulfilled*, 'Not one of His bones shall be broken', and again another scripture says, 'They shall look on Him whom they pierced'.

John 19. 19-37 (New King James Version)

(ii) Food for thought.

'What I have written I have written' (John 19. 22).

In the verses which follow Pilate's unyielding response to the chief priests, we read three times of things being done or said '*that the scripture might be fulfilled*' (John 19. 24, 28 and 36-37).

It seems to me as if that day it was not only Pilate, but God Himself who was asserting, '*What I have written I have written!*' For, as the Lord Jesus had said, 'the scripture cannot be broken' (John 10. 35; cf. Isa. 46. 10).

The Sin-bearer.

Three biblical passages speak of our Lord *bearing* sin/sins:

(i) 'He shall bear their iniquities ... He bore the sin of many' (Isa. 53. 11-12).

(ii) 'Inasmuch as it is appointed for man to die once, and after this judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time' (Heb. 9. 27-28).

(iii) 'Who His own self bore our sins in His body on the tree' (1 Pet. 2. 24).

In her hymn 'There is life for a look at the crucified One', Amelia Hull did well to ask:

'Oh, why was He there as the bearer of sin,
If on Jesus thy guilt was not laid?'

Notes to Heb. 9. 27-28:

(a) '*Men and women die once*, by divine appointment, and in their case death is *followed by judgment*. *Christ dies once*, by divine appointment, and His death is *followed by salvation* – for all His people'.

(F. F. Bruce, '*The Epistle to the Hebrews (NICNT)*', on Heb. 9. 27-28.)

The connection is clear: *Man dies once, and will be judged; Christ died once, and will return.*

(b) 'Reference to the "many" is not ... to be understood as limiting the effects of Christ's sacrifice to those who accept it in faith. The implied contrast ... is rather between the one sacrifice and the great number of those who benefit from it'.

(Paul Ellingworth, '*The Epistle to the Hebrews (NIGTC)*', page 487.)

'Life by His death'.

'As Christian came up to the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble; and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more. Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said, with a merry heart, "*He hath given me rest by His sorrow, and life by His death*" ... Christian gave three leaps for joy, and went on singing: "... Blest cross! Blest sepulchre! Blest rather be the Man that there was put to shame for me!" (John Bunyan, '*Pilgrim's Progress*', Part I, The Third Stage.)

'He is Lord of all' (Acts 10. 36).

'There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry: "*Mine!*"

(Abraham Kuyper, '*Inaugural address at the dedication of the Free University of Amsterdam*', quoted in '*Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader*', edited by James D. Bratt, page 488.)

'In Him all things consist ('hold together')' (Col. 1. 17).

'The phrase "all things" refers to every created thing in the universe (see v. 16), and the verse affirms that Christ keeps all things existing—in him they continue to exist ... If Christ were to cease his ongoing activity of sustaining all things in the universe, then everything except the triune God would instantly cease to exist'.

(Wayne Grudem, 'Bible Doctrine', chapter 8: 'God's Providence. A. Preservation'.)

'That in all things he might have the preeminence' (Col. 1. 18).

'Leonardo da Vinci was one of the world's finest painters, and his masterpiece was "The Last Supper", which has been called "the most perfect composition in the history of painting in all ages". It was painted on a wall in the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie, and the artist put all his talent into it. Even the cup on the table was painted to perfection, an ornate golden vessel richly set with jewels. When he completed the picture he first admitted a few friends to see it. "What a wonderful cup!" they exclaimed, "How it sparkles! Such a cup was never painted before". The genius immediately splashed some dark colour over the glittering goblet and made it look an ordinary cheap vessel. The glory of Christ, and not the beauty of the cup, must be the central object of his life's work. In all things He must have the pre-eminence'.

(Archie and W. Fraser Naismith, 'God's People and God's Purpose', page 114.)

Eyes fixed (Heb. 12. 2).

We run with endurance the race set before us with our eyes fixed on Him who, for the joy set before Him, once endured the cross with His eyes fixed on us.

'For us' and 'to us'.

'Remember this, the more vile Christ made Himself for us, the more dear He ought to be to us'.

Thomas Brooks, 'Young Men Exhorted to Come to Christ', page 3.

Paradoxically, Christians (i) are 'sojourners' yet (ii) not 'sojourners'.

(i) 'Sojourners' ... 'I beseech you as strangers ('sojourners' - *παροικος*) and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul' (1 Pet. 2. 11). We are temporary residents *in relation to this world*, we are just passing through! But ...

(ii) 'Not sojourners' ... 'You are no longer strangers and foreigners ('sojourners' - *παροικος*), but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God' (Eph. 2. 19). Though we are 'Gentiles in the flesh' (Eph. 2. 11), we are not temporary residents *in relation to the people of God*; we possess full citizen rights.

'If in God's dealings with men anterior to Calvary the Gentile was considered a stranger, outside of the family and a foreigner without any personal rights, now by divine grace they were fellowcitizens with all the saints of this era ... They were of the same household of God, of the same spiritual family'.

(Albert Leckie, 'What the Bible Teaches: Ephesians', on Eph. 2. 19.)

Giving glory to God.

We can glorify God by:

(i) Our faith: Abraham 'wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong in faith, *giving glory to God*', (Rom. 4. 20).

(ii) Our thanksgiving: 'one of them, seeing that he was healed, turned back, *glorifying God* with a loud voice, and fell on his face at His feet giving him thanks ... and Jesus answering said, "... Were not any found to return and *give glory to God* save this stranger" (Luke 17. 15-18).

(iii) Our fruit-bearing: 'In this is *my Father glorified*, that you bear much fruit' (John 15. 8).

(iv) Our confession of known sin: 'Joshua said to Achan, "My son, *give glory to the Lord God of Israel* and ... tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me" (Josh. 7. 19).

(v) Our praise: 'Whoever offers praise *glorifies me*' (Psa. 50. 23).

The dust.

Following the fall of man, *the serpent* was condemned to eat dust for the whole of its life (Gen. 3. 14), and *man* to become dust at the end of his life (Gen. 3. 19).

The sand.

We read twice in 1 Kings 4 of sand by the sea:

(i) 'Judah and Israel were many, *as the sand which is by the sea* in multitude' (1 Kings 4. 20), and

(ii) 'God gave Solomon ... largeness of heart, even *as the sand that is on the sea shore*' (1 Kings 4. 29).

Putting these two verses together, perhaps we could say that God gave Solomon a heart large enough to encompass all of His people. Certainly we should each imitate the saints at Colosse, concerning whom Paul gave thanks for '*the love which you have for all the saints*' (Col. 1. 4).

'If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ' (Rom. 8. 17).

'Our adoption shows us the glory of the Christian hope ... *Our Father's wealth is immeasurable, and we are to inherit the entire estate*'.

(J. I. Packer, 'Knowing God', 'A Christian is one who has God as his Father; 3. 2: Christian Hope'.)

The 'seal' and the 'earnest' (Eph. 1. 13-14).

In these verses, Paul spoke of the promised Holy Spirit in two ways:

(i) as having 'sealed' believers (marking them out as belonging to God), and

(ii) as being an 'earnest' (a 'part payment', a 'first instalment') of the believers' inheritance.

It has been well said that, '*The sealing of the Spirit is, I know that I am God's property. The earnest of the Spirit is that I have got property*'.

J. B. Stoney, 'Ministry, New Series', Volume 8, page 464. (The quotation appears in the closing section of the attached Word document.)

Detailed notes. [See the attached Word document, '2 Corinthians 1'](#). In connection with that document, see the attached 'Rock bottom' picture.

(iii) Go on, smile.

1. It was the first day at junior school. The students were all in their seats, waiting for the new teacher, Ellie Ramsbottom, to start.

For her very first lesson, Ellie planned to teach the children an important lesson about self-confidence.

To begin, she wanted to get over to them that they should never think of themselves as unintelligent.

After introducing herself, still standing at the front of the class, she asked, 'If any of you thinks that they aren't smart, please stand up'.

The children all sat looking at each other. Nobody moved.

But, finally, little Noah Jones stood up.

'Noah, do you *really* think that you aren't smart?' Ellie asked.

'Well, no, not really', answered little Noah, 'but *I didn't want you to be standing up on your own*'.

2. William, Jamie and Carl went together on holiday to America. They decided to treat themselves by staying for three days in a large suite on the top floor of a 75-story skyscraper hotel.

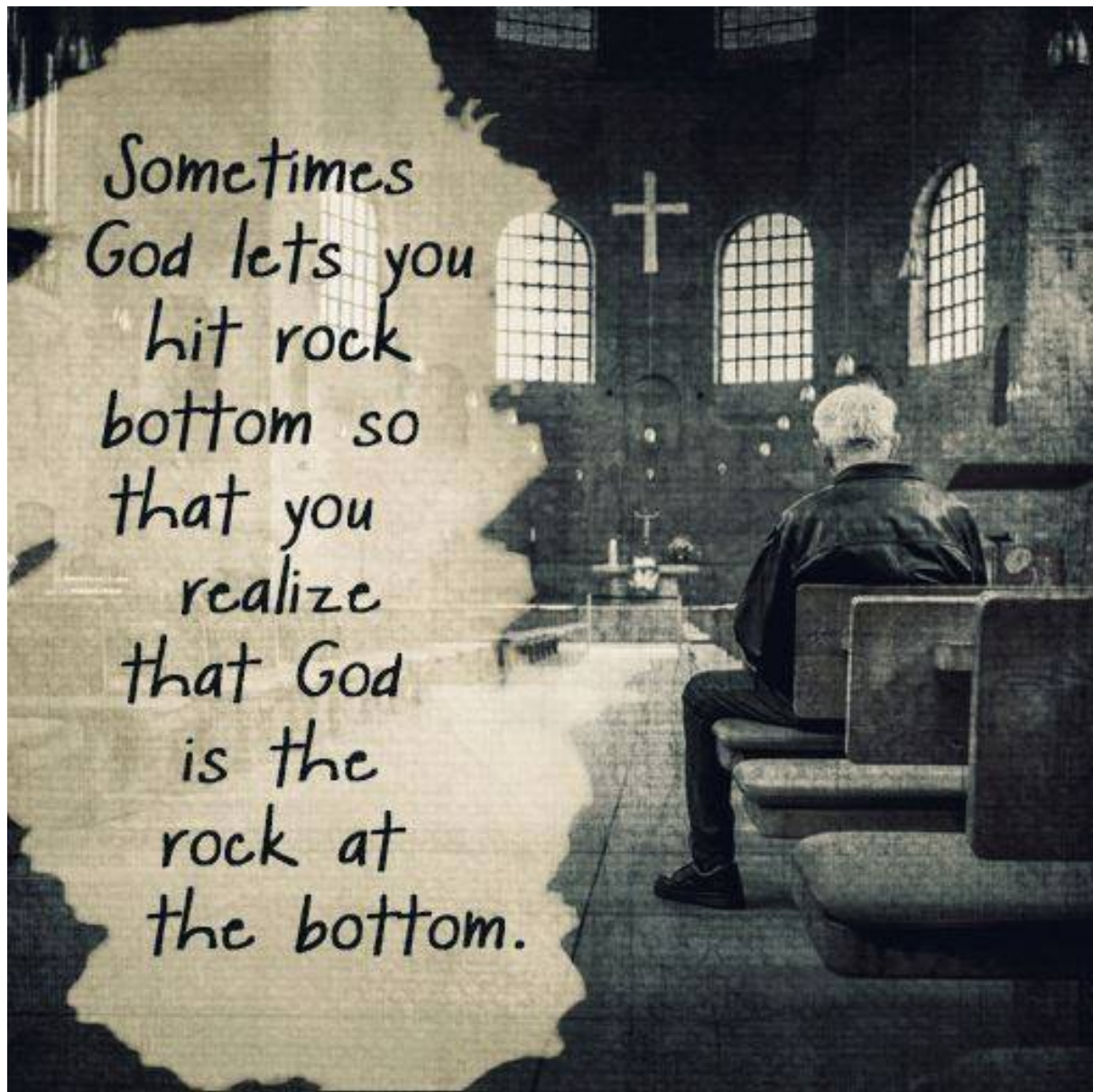
At the end of their second day sightseeing, they arrived back at the hotel to discover that none of the elevators in their hotel were working. They realised that there was nothing else for it but to climb the 75 flights of stairs to get to their suite.

As they set out, William suggested to his friends, 'Let's break the monotony of the climb by concentrating on something else. I'll tell jokes for 25 flights, then Jamie can sing songs for the next 25 flights, and then Carl can tell sad stories for the last 25 flights'. Agreed.

When they reached the 26th floor, William stopped telling jokes. It was now Jamie's turn, and so he began to sing. At the 51st floor, a very hoarse Jamie stopped singing. It was now Carl's turn. 'I'll tell my saddest story first', Carl began gloomily, '*We left our room key in the car ...*'.

3. Remember: If you've got melted chocolate all over your hands, *you're eating it too slowly*.

And, finally, see the attached 'Chocolate' picture.



Warning:
Chocolate
makes your
clothes shrink.