

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 25 January 2021

Greetings.

This is my 'Monday Musings' email.

In the document attached to *last* week's 'Musings', we considered the grim events which led to 'The Fall' of man in the Garden of Eden. In the document attached to *this* week's 'Musings', we gladly turn our eyes to another Garden and to the One who there reversed the disastrous decision of 'the first man' (1 Cor. 15. 45, 47).

Without wishing to spoil anyone's reading of this week's attached document, I can reveal that it more or less concludes with the following passage:

In the Garden of Eden, the first man had faced a momentous choice. He had to decide whose will he would do; God's will or his own will. And, sadly, in effect, Adam said to God, 'Not as you will, but as I will' ... 'Not your will, but mine be done'!

Yet, having once made his decision, Adam had proceeded to do something else. He had proceeded to confirm and ratify his decision by performing an action at a tree.

But, here in another Garden (that of Gethsemane), 'the second man', our Lord Jesus, reverses the decision made by the first man, saying, 'Not as I will, but as you will' ... 'Not my will, but yours be done'. But, as had been the case with Adam long before, He proceeds to confirm and to ratify His decision by performing an action at a tree.

As we know all too well, the first man's decision and action led to the most devastating and dire consequences, not only for himself, but also for all those linked to him by descent, bringing condemnation and death on the entire human race.

But, praise God, the second man's decision and action has secured the most blessed and glorious consequences for everyone who is linked with Him by faith, bestowing justification and life on every last one of His people.

Happy reading!

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

(i) Scripture.

Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin ... As through one man's offence judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Romans 5. 12, 18-19 (The New King James Version)

(ii) Food for thought.

'Before Abraham was, I am' (John 8. 58).

The Lord Jesus is both pre-existent ('before Abraham') and self-existent ('I am').

The humanity of the Lord Jesus.

'The First Epistle of John was written to show the necessity of the full humanity of Jesus for faith (1 John 1. 1; 2. 22; 4. 2-3), and the Epistle to the Hebrews to insist upon the necessity of the full humanity of Jesus for salvation (Heb. 2. 9-18)'.
(H. D. McDonald, 'Jesus – Human and Divine', page 19.)

Seven things which people said about 'this man' in the Gospels and Acts.

(i) 'The centurion ... said, "Truly this man was the Son of God"' (Mark 15. 39).

(ii) 'The Pharisees and scribes murmured ... "This man receives sinners and eats with them"' (Luke 15. 2).

- (iii) 'Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, "I find no fault in this man" (Luke 23. 4).
- (iv) 'The other malefactor answered, "... this man hath done nothing amiss" (Luke 23. 41).
- (v) 'The officers answered, "Never man spoke like this man" (John 7. 46).
- (vi) 'The chief priests and the Pharisees ... said, "... this man does many signs" (John 11. 47).
- (vii) 'Paul said, "... through this man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts 13. 38).

'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory' (John 1. 14).

According to the later Jewish rabbis, the 'Divine Presence' (the so-called 'Shekinah') was one of the key 'items' which, although evident in the Temple of Solomon, was missing from the Temple which stood in Jerusalem from the days of Zerubbabel until a little after the time when the Lord Jesus was here. (*)

But, although Herod's Temple lacked the glory cloud which was the visible symbol of the 'Divine Presence' (1 Kings 8. 10-11), there was a time when One stood in the courtyard of that very Temple and 'spoke of the Temple of His body' (John 2. 21), having recently 'manifested His glory' (John 2. 11). Alas, very few recognised the 'Divine Presence' then in their midst.

(*) Source: 'Five phenomena constituted the difference between the First Temple and the Second Temple, in that they were not in the Second Temple. And these are: (i) The Ark of the Covenant, and the Ark cover upon it, and the cherubs that were on the Ark cover; (ii) fire; and (iii) the Divine Presence; and (iv) the Divine Spirit; and (v) the Urim and Thummim', 'The Babylonian Talmud', Tractate Yoma, 21b; accessed at ...

<https://www.sefaria.org/Yoma.21b.7?lang=bi>).

Galilee and Judea.

Galilee provided the Lord Jesus with a place to live (Luke 2. 39-40 and Matt. 9. 1 {'His own city'}) and Judea provided Him with a place to die (Matt. 16. 21; Luke 9. 31; 13. 33).

The centurion at Capernaum (Matt. 8. 5-9).

'He came to him beseeching him, not as Naaman the Syrian came to Elisha, demanding a cure ... but with cap in hand ... We read of many that came to Christ for their children, but *this is the only instance of one that came to Him for a servant*'.

(Matthew Henry, 'Commentary on the Whole Bible', Matthew 8. 5-13, 2, I, (2).)

Creation and salvation.

To Him who can save, to create was a small matter. To create cost Him only His word (Psa. 33. 6, 9); to save cost Him His very life (John 10. 11, 15).

Genesis 3. 15: God's promise, not "to", but "for", Adam.

'There was no promise given to Adam before he fell. He needed none; he was happy in his innocence and then present condition. And after he had sinned ... the Lord did not give a promise to Adam (for He could not, in the state of sin in which he was, without dealing lightly with sin; neither could He leave Adam without promise, unless He cast him into remediless despair). What God does is to bring in "the seed of the woman" ... There was not a word of promise to Adam personally: the promise was made to the "seed of the woman" in pronouncing the curse on the serpent - "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This was a promise for Adam, one on which his soul might rest, one faith could lay hold of - no promise to Adam in his sin, but a promise of blessing in and to Christ'.

(J. N. Darby, 'Wilderness Grace', Collected Writings, volume 12, page 277.)

Three things said about 'this man' in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

- (i) 'This man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses' (Heb. 3. 3).
- (ii) 'This man ... has an unchangeable priesthood' (Heb. 7. 24).
- (iii) 'This man ... sat down on the right hand of God' (Heb. 10. 12).

'In the latter days ... nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore' (Isa. 2. 2-4).

George Blake, the notorious British spy who betrayed the West to Soviet Russia in the mid-twentieth century, said, 'I justified it in my mind by believing that I was helping, in a small way, in building a new society in which there would be equality, social justice, no longer any war, no longer any national conflict — that was my dream, as it were. I think it's quite conceivable that, in time, all nations will live in that kind of world'.

(Robert D. McFadden, 'George Blake, British Spy Who Betrayed the West, Dies at 98', an article in The New York Times, 26 December 2020.)

Little did George Blake realise it but he spoke beyond himself (cf. John 11. 51). For the time will indeed come 'when all nations will live in that kind of world'. But this will be brought about, not by Communist world domination, but by our Lord Jesus Christ following His Second Advent, concerning

which time 'great voices in heaven' will proclaim, 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever' (Rev. 11. 15).

The word of God.

God's word holds the key to:

- (i) Salvation (2 Tim. 3. 15; James 1. 18).
- (ii) Wisdom (Psa. 19. 7; 111. 10).
- (iii) Spiritual profit and growth (2 Tim. 3. 16-17).
- (iv) Holiness (Psa. 119. 11).
- (v) Hope (Rom. 15. 4).
- (vi) Peace (Psa. 119. 165).

Genesis 3. 17-19.

'On account of the sin of the first man, a whole cluster of words was added to man's vocabulary, and each of these words comes into play when the Gospel writers describe our Lord's Jesus experiences during His passion.

Genesis 3 records, 'cursed is the ground because of you; in sorrow you shall eat of it ...thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you ... in the sweat of your face you shall eat bread ... for you are dust, and to dust you shall return' (man, that is, was to die). Sin drew behind it, then, (i) sorrow, (ii) sweat, (iii) thorns, (iv) a curse, and (v) death, as sure as a sewing needle draws thread.

And, in connection with our Lord's Passion Week, we discover references (i) to His sorrow (Matt. 26. 37-38), (ii) to His sweat (Luke 22. 44), (iii) to the thorns which the soldiers wove and which they put on His head (Matt. 27. 29), (iv) to the curse which He became for us (Gal. 3. 13), and (v) to the death which He died for us (Matt. 27. 50; Rom. 5. 6, 8; 6. 10 etc.)'.

((Reproduced from page 4 of the attached Word document.)

Romans 5. 18-19.

'The first action involved Adam and it was as a result of his one offence that judgment came upon all men to condemnation ... By [our Lord's] one act of righteousness on the cross, the remedy for the ruin of man was established. Whereas the one offence resulted in judgment and condemnation, the righteous act of Christ provided for those who believe the justifying which results in life ... The obedience of Christ is not a reference to what marked Him in life ...; it is a reference to the culmination of His life, His one act of righteousness. His obedience took Him to the cross, but it is the final voluntary sacrifice that the apostle sets forth by way of contrast to Adam's one act of disobedience'.

(Fred E. Stallan, 'Basis of Justification—The work of Christ', in 'Romans' (What the Bible Teaches).

Detailed notes. [See the attached Word document, 'Gethsemane'.](#)

(iii) Go on, smile.

A couple were celebrating their golden wedding anniversary. Their domestic tranquility had long been the talk of the town. A local newspaper reporter was sent to enquire why it was that during their long and happy marriage they had never had an argument.

'Well, it dates right back to our honeymoon', explained the husband.

'We visited the Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona.

We were young and adventurous, and took a mule ride down to the bottom of the Canyon.

We hadn't gone very far when my wife's mule stumbled.

My wife looked directly into the mule's eyes and quietly said, "That's once".

We had proceeded a little farther when the mule stumbled again.

My wife looked directly into the mule's eyes and quietly said, "That's twice".

We hadn't gone farther than another half-mile when the mule stumbled a third time.

My wife said nothing; instead, she promptly removed a pistol from her jacket pocket and shot the mule.

I told her that *I didn't agree with what she had done.*

She looked directly into my eyes and quietly said, "That's once".'