

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 8 November 2021

Greetings.

This is your weekly 'Musings' email from me.

Today (Monday, 8 November) falls between what are regarded here in the UK as two very significant points of '**remembrance**'.

1. Looking *back*, this past Friday, 5 November, '*Bonfire Night*', marks the anniversary of the failed attempt to blow up King James I and the House of Lords during the State Opening of Parliament in 1605.

The 'Gunpowder Plot' had been devised as the prelude to installing a Catholic monarchy in England. Following an all-important tip-off, the authorities searched the cellar beneath the House of Lords, where they discovered one of the conspirators, Guy Fawkes, along with a fuse, matches and 36 barrels of gunpowder—enough gunpowder to reduce the House of Lords to rubble. Guy Fawkes was arrested and, following trial, was sentenced to execution. The plot was foiled and the tradition of marking the day with bonfires started soon after the plot's discovery.

The memory of the 'Gunpowder Plot' is perpetuated in the centuries-old traditional rhyme:

Remember, remember the fifth of November:
Gunpowder, treason, and plot.
I see no reason
Why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.

2. Looking *forward*, this coming Thursday, 11 November, '*Remembrance Day*', recalls the cessation of First World War hostilities, which formally ended 'at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month' of 1918.

'Remembrance Day' (otherwise known as 'Armistice Day' and 'Veterans Day') honours members of the armed forces who died in the line of duty during the two World Wars and later conflicts. The Day is commonly marked by two minutes silence at 11 am.

This coming Lord's Day, 14 November, '*Remembrance Sunday*', also honours those who died for their country and for freedom during the two World Wars and later conflicts. Together with ceremonies at local war memorials in most cities, towns and villages, the 'National Service of Remembrance', held at the Cenotaph in Whitehall, London, provides a physical reminder of those who served and sacrificed.

Along with the laying of poppy wreaths, the phrase 'Lest we forget' often features in services of 'Remembrance'.

Mindful of these repeated calls to 'remember', 'I thought it good' (a term borrowed from the King James Version of Dan. 4. 2) that I should resurrect, expand and 'polish' the 'Remember me' document which I circulated along with the Musings email for 12 October last year ... and that I should provide you with the Revised Version below.

As you might guess, this Revised Version focuses, not (i) on the foiling of a dastardly plot, nor (ii) on the supreme sacrifice made by members of the armed forces over the past century or so, but (iii) on the privilege which you and I enjoy, each Lord's Day, to 'proclaim the Lord's death' ... when we hear the Saviour call to us across almost two millennia,

'This do in remembrance of me'.

Happy reading

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

PS

I suspect that some of you may well find the spiritual food in the attached document rather too much for you to digest in a single meal.

You will find that, following a brief 'Introduction', the contents of the document are broken down into six discrete sections. Given that, stretching from today through to this coming Lord's Day, there are six days, you may wish to work through the six sections 'a day at a time'.

'Remember me'.

Scripture

And when the hour was come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him.

And He said unto them, 'With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer' ...

And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me'.

Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

'But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!' ...

And the Lord said, 'Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren'.

Luke 22. 14-15, 19-22, 31-32 (*King James Version*)

Introduction

In Luke 22, the Lord Jesus used the word 'desire' in two very different settings:

(i) in verses 31-32, He spoke of Satan's 'desire' to sift the apostles collectively as wheat¹ and of His own prayer for Peter that his faith might not fail;² and

(ii) in verse 15, He spoke of His own fervent, earnest 'desire'³ that He might eat the Passover with His disciples:

'With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer'.

Our Lord earnestly 'desired' to eat the Passover meal with His disciples:

(a) partly, because He would not be able to do so again;⁴ and

(b) partly, because it afforded Him the opportunity to institute an entirely new ordinance; namely, the Lord's Supper. This institution would, for future generations, commemorate, not *Israel's* redemption from Egypt⁵ (as did the Passover⁶) but the work of eternal redemption⁷ which He was shortly to accomplish for *all His people*.

But in Luke 22 we read of another of the Saviour's 'desires', expressed in His request that His disciples eat bread 'in remembrance' of Him,⁸ which He followed up with the request that they also drink from the cup 'in remembrance' of Him.⁹

One Jewish writer of long ago wrote, 'the Passover "declared", or "showed forth", that the Lord passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt; the bitter herbs "showed forth" that the Egyptians made the lives of our fathers bitter in Egypt; and the unleavened bread "declared" that they were redeemed; and all these things are called "the declaration", or showing forth"', John Gill, 'Exposition of the Bible, on 1 Cor. 11. 32.

But 'you show the Lord's death', Paul says. More literally, with the NKJV, 'you proclaim the Lord's death'; the word being used throughout the book of Acts and elsewhere in the New Testament, including earlier in 1 Corinthians, of preaching.

And when we break the bread and drink the cup, in a delightful paradox, we silently 'proclaim' the Lord's death. Rightly, we sing the words:

No gospel like this feast,
Spread for Thy church by Thee.
Nor prophet nor evangelist
Preach the glad news so free'.¹⁰

'This do' ('keep on doing this'; the present tense), the Saviour asks, 'in remembrance of me'.

And I want to consider just six of the things which we are able to remember about the Lord Jesus, in each case taking my prompt from a verse of scripture.

In one sense, these six verses of scripture provide me with six 'pegs'.



Six things for us to remember



1. First, I recall the words of David, 'Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God'.¹¹

In these words, David 'repudiated confidence in the most sophisticated physical implements of warfare available, but he affirmed his reliance on the Lord Himself for victory ... The name of the Lord refers to His character, reputation, and nature'.¹²

And in these words of David, I hear the Lord Jesus say to me:

'Remember my name'.

John Newton hit the nail on the head when he opened one of his well-known hymns with the words, 'How sweet *the name* of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear!'

Not, of course, that our Lord was the first to carry the name 'Jesus' ... not by a long way!

We can trace that name at least as far back as to the successor of Moses, whose name Moses had early changed from Hoshea (meaning 'salvation') to Joshua ('the Lord is salvation' or 'the Lord our salvation'); this being the Hebrew form of the name 'Jesus'.¹³

Interestingly, 'Joshua' was also the name of the last High Priest mentioned at the other end of the Old Testament.¹⁴

What is more, 'Jesus' was a very common and popular name in New Testament days; scholars refer to over 100 other men of roughly that period who were known by the name 'Jesus'.¹⁵

But we know that our Lord was called 'Jesus', not (i) because of the past associations of the name, nor (ii) because of its then-present popularity, but (iii) because of its special significance for Him.

Some time before His birth, the angel Gabriel brought this name for Him from heaven; 'The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus".¹⁶ At which time, the angel had informed Joseph concerning Mary, 'She shall bring forth a son, and you will *call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins*'.¹⁷

So that the name 'Jesus' was His in an altogether unique sense.

Often in scripture, as in the famous case of Nabal (the infamous husband of Abigail),¹⁸ a name expressed that which a person revealed of himself—that which could be known of a person. And of no one was this truer than the Lord 'Jesus'.

And He was known to all as 'Jesus':

(a) The demons knew Him as such. We read, for example, that (i) the unclean spirit in the synagogue of Capernaum addressed Him, '*What have we to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? I know who you are — the Holy One of God*',¹⁹ and that (ii) the spirit known as 'Legion', living among in the tombs of Gadara, addressed Him, '*What have I to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God*'.²⁰

(b) Angels also knew Him by the name. One angel, for example, declared to the women at our Lord's then-empty tomb, '*Fear not, for I know that you seek Jesus, who was crucified*'.²¹

(c) But not only demons and angels knew Him by this name, but also, of course, did **men**. For example, as our Lord journeyed towards Jerusalem for the last time, blind Bartimaeus cried out, 'Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me'.²²

In his account of this event, Mark paints the background very graphically. As 'they were in the way, going up to Jerusalem', he records, 'Jesus went before them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid'.²³

'As He (the Lord Jesus) was leaving Jericho', Mark continues, 'Bartimaeus, a blind beggar ... began to cry out ... "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" ... many rebuked him, telling him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" ... Jesus stood still', Mark notes, 'and said, "Call him"'.²⁴

Truly, it had been a remarkable moment when 'the sun stood still' over the Canaanite city of Gibeon in response to the cry of Joshua, when he asked God to grant him more time to conclude his military victory over an alliance of Canaanite kings.²⁵

And yet how much *more* wonderful when, on His way to the cross to accomplish the central act (i) of all history and (ii) of God's eternal programme,²⁶ 'Jesus stood still' at the cry of a poor blind beggar!

'Jesus' was the name written on the placard/notice above His head on the cross: '*Pilate wrote a title (a superscription), and put it on the cross. And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth the king of the Jews*'.²⁷

I said earlier that the angel Gabriel brought our Lord's name for Him from heaven; and he did. But the Lord Jesus took it back there Himself. And it is still His name today.

At His ascension, angels spoke to His disciples of His return, '*Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven*'.²⁸ And when He met persecuting Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus Road, the risen, glorified Lord immediately identified Himself, '*I am Jesus*'.²⁹ And some mighty bombshell that was!

And I cannot help noticing that the New Testament closes with the heart-felt prayer of the apostle John, '*Amen, come, Lord Jesus*'.³⁰

They told me of one that so loved me,
That in Heaven He could not remain;
He came down to seek and to save me.
Oh, tell me His name again.³¹



2. Second, I recall Paul's closing words to the elders of the church at Ephesus, '*Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive*'.³²

In calling on these elders to 'remember' this saying of the Lord Jesus, Paul evidently took it for granted that, although it found no place in the gospel narratives, this specific saying was widely known in the early church.³³

And, when reporting these words of the Saviour, the apostle was fully aware that the Lord Jesus knew far more Himself about the blessedness of giving than any other!

It has been well said: 'This Beatitude is illustrated by the whole life of Jesus with the Cross as the culmination'.³⁴

And I hear the Lord Jesus say to me:

'Remember my words'.

And His words certainly made a tremendous impact on the men of His day.³⁵

The Gospels record how our Lord's teaching left three chief impressions on His hearers:

(i) People in general were astonished because He taught them with authority and not as the Jewish scribes.³⁶

Not for Him the scribal second-hand, parrot-like style of teaching, citing oral tradition after oral tradition and rattling off the sayings of Rabbi after Rabbi.³⁷

In contrast, while the scribes stammered and stuttered their way through a patchwork of quotations from their venerated teachers, He sounded out His own unique – and divine – formulation: ‘**I** say to you’. He used this expression over 50 times of Himself in the Gospel of Matthew alone.³⁸

No Old Testament prophet ever assumed such authority. The prophets forever rested foursquare on their, ‘Thus says the Lord’, an expression which occurs 415 times in the Old Testament.³⁹

(ii) Men were astonished at His wisdom: ‘Where did this man get these things?’ they asked, ‘What wisdom is this which is given to Him’.⁴⁰

They were staggered that the One they knew as ‘*the carpenter*, the son of Mary’ could and should teach as He did.⁴¹ In their eyes, the carpenter of Nazareth was far more likely to make a pulpit than ever He was to occupy one!

He later taught the scribes and the Pharisees, ‘The Queen of the South ... came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon is here’.⁴² Small wonder, therefore, that His opponents time and again failed to entangle and ensnare Him in His words.⁴³

(iii) Men marvelled at His words of grace: ‘All bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth’.⁴⁴

We may ponder:

(a) The words of the prophetic psalm, ‘You are fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into your lips’.⁴⁵

‘Grace’ was poured in (Psa. 45. 2) and ‘grace’ proceeded out (Luke 4. 22)!

(b) The words of the prophet Isaiah, ‘The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary’.⁴⁶

And, in connection with Isaiah’s reference to ‘him who is weary’, we immediately think of the gracious invitation issued by our Lord, ‘Come to me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest’.⁴⁷

But the Saviour’s gracious words were not restricted to the crowds. They were addressed also to needy individuals ... gracious words such as ‘your sins are forgiven’, addressed both to a man and to a woman.⁴⁸

‘Heaven and earth will pass away’, the Lord Jesus proclaimed, ‘but *my words* will by no means pass away’.⁴⁹ It has been well said, therefore, that we have a *firmer foundation for our faith than we do for our feet!*



3. Third, I recall the words of the psalm which David committed to Asaph to commemorate the ark of God being placed in the tent which David had specially prepared for it, ‘Seek the Lord ... remember His marvellous works which He has done’.⁵⁰

And I hear the Lord Jesus say to me:

‘Remember my works’.

I cannot but think (a) of His breath-taking creatorial achievement.

For ‘all things’ (encompassing (i) a vast universe of a billion and more galaxies, (ii) every last rank of exalted angelic being, and (iii) every blade of grass and grain of sand) were created ‘in’, ‘through’ and ‘for’ Him.

‘For in Him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through Him and for Him’.⁵¹

I think also (b) of His many miracles, with our Lord’s sometimes performing more miracles in a single day⁵² than are recorded in a thousand years of Old Testament history.

(i) I hear a crowd, which witnessed one of His miracles, exclaiming, 'We have seen strange ('unusual', 'extraordinary'⁵³) things today'.⁵⁴

(ii) I hear Jesus saying to a healed demoniac, 'tell ... what great things the Lord has done for you'.⁵⁵

(iii) I read that, when Jesus healed the blind and the lame, 'the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful⁵⁶ things that He did'.⁵⁷

(iv) And I read of an occasion when 'the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him'.⁵⁸

Oh yes, His miraculous works were certainly: (i) 'extraordinary, (ii) 'great', (iii) 'marvellous' and (iv) 'glorious'. Not only so, but, in the words with which the apostle John concluded his gospel, 'there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written'.⁵⁹

As He said, 'The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me'.⁶⁰

'It is not that miracles cannot be performed by others, but that the array of His deeds—including the restoration of a man paralyzed for thirty-eight years, the thoroughly attested healing of a man born blind, and, shortly, the resurrection of a man indisputably dead ... speak volumes on His behalf'.⁶¹

Yet you and I know that all such works pale into insignificance in comparison with (c) the work of redemption which He accomplished once-for-all at the cross.

How wonderful the works of God,
Displayed through all the world abroad,
Immensely great, minutely small—
One greater work exceeds them all.

He formed the sun, the earth's great light;
The moon and stars, to rule the night;
But night and stars, and moon and sun,
Are little works compared with one.

But what are hills or skies or seas,
Or streams among the stately trees,
To wonders saints were born to prove—
*The wonders of redeeming love?*⁶²



4. Then, I recall the words of the writer of the Book of Lamentations (in all probability, Jeremiah the prophet): 'Remember my affliction⁶³ ... the wormwood and the gall'.⁶⁴

And I hear the Lord Jesus say to me:

'Remember my affliction'.

We read concerning the Lord Jesus that 'He was oppressed and He was afflicted'⁶⁵ oppressed and afflicted, that is, by men.

'The Egyptians in afflicting Israel [Exod. 3. 7] caused them to suffer griefs and to cry out. Similarly, the Servant [our Lord Jesus] has been afflicted as though by a cruel taskmaster. He, however, does not cry out ... He opens not His mouth. Israel cried out by reason of her bondage, but not the Servant'.⁶⁶

Jeremiah's own affliction and grief were intensified because he knew that, *in the final analysis*, the devastation of Jerusalem and the suffering of his fellow countrymen came, not so much on account of the Babylonian invader from the north but, rather, on account of the visitation of God's judgment on both the place and the people.

'The sins of Judah drew down that fierce anger upon their heads. It was the just recompense for their departure from the Lord. But when He, the holy Sufferer of Calvary, bowed His head beneath the

overwhelming flood of God's wrath, it was for sins not His own; but He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him'.⁶⁷

For our Lord's suffering went far deeper, of course, than that which was inflicted by men.

For the Lord Jesus suffered, not only *from men because He was righteous*, but *from God because I wasn't*, as it is written, 'Christ ... suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous'.⁶⁸

And when I read the familiar words, not now of Lamentations 3, but of Lamentations 1, once more I think of my Saviour:

'Behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which has been brought on me, which *the Lord has inflicted* in the day of His burning anger'.⁶⁹

And I am reminded of the awe-inspiring time when:

- (i) 'the mighty God' was crucified in weakness;⁷⁰
- (ii) 'the light of the world' suffered in darkness;⁷¹
- (iii) 'the holy One' was made sin;⁷²
- (iv) 'the beloved' of God was forsaken by God;⁷³ and
- (v) 'the living One' became dead.⁷⁴

If I may put it this way, in effect, each Lord's Day, the Saviour invites us to 'remember my affliction' ..., to 'remember', that is:

- (i) Gethsemane, with His tears,⁷⁵ His sorrow⁷⁶ and His agony,⁷⁷ and
- (ii) Golgotha, with the full cup of suffering which He drained for us,⁷⁸ when He uttered His 'lone ... loud ... lamentable cry',⁷⁹ 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'

Well, then, do we sometimes sing:

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget
The wormwood and the gall,
Go, spread your trophies at His feet,
And crown Him Lord of all.⁸⁰



5. Again, I recall the words of the daughters of Jerusalem to the Beloved, 'We will *remember your love* more than wine'.⁸¹

'The wine represents the gifts of the king, in contradistinction to his person. That in inward love he gives himself to them, excels in their esteem all else he gives'.⁸²

And I hear the Lord Jesus say to me:

'Remember my love'.

'Remember', He says to me, 'my "vast, unmeasured, boundless, free"⁸³ love for you. Remember that "as the Father has loved me, I also have loved you"⁸⁴.

According to the book of Jonah, on one occasion, 'the king of Nineveh ... *arose from his throne ... laid his robe from him*, and covered himself with sackcloth'.⁸⁵ But such was the love of Christ for us that:

- (i) He *rose up* from a far grander throne, stooping down so low as to be laid in an animal's rough feeding trough.
- (ii) He *laid aside* a far more gorgeous robe, stooping down so low as to be wrapped in swaddling cloths!⁸⁶

But His fathomless love took Him down far lower than that. For 'being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross'.⁸⁷ One modern paraphrase⁸⁸ renders the latter part of that verse, 'He walked the path of obedience *all the way* to

death' ... but it was not merely 'to death', for it was, the apostle makes clear, *in the manner* of His death (namely, '*death on a cross*') that our Lord's humiliation reached rock bottom.

The ancients considered death by crucifixion to be the most obscene and horrific form of execution known to man. It was reckoned 'the most miserable and most painful punishment appropriate to slaves alone'⁸⁹ and 'the most pitiable of deaths'.⁹⁰ One famous Roman lawyer listed crucifixion in first place as the worst of all capital punishments, placing it ahead of death by burning and death by beheading.⁹¹

The death my Saviour died was indeed, as one of the so-called Church Fathers described it, 'the utterly vile death of the cross'.⁹²

'Death on a cross' was very often the chosen means of execution for slaves. In fact, slaves were so routinely crucified that crucifixion become known as the 'slaves' punishment'.⁹³

And so it was that the One who, in His incarnation, assumed the 'form of a servant' ('a slave') *to God*, then stooped so low, when in the world, as to suffer the mode of death deemed suitable for a slave *to man*. And He did this, please remember, out of love for you and me!

The Puritan theologian, John Owen, expressed it well:

'He *parted with the greatest glory, He underwent the greatest misery* ... because He loves His spouse'.⁹⁴

For it was in His self-giving at Golgotha that He demonstrated the *full extent* of His love; 'when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end (*'to the uttermost'*)'.⁹⁵

What a thought. That He loved Himself and His 'own things'⁹⁶ (His throne, all His heavenly glory and splendour) less than He loved us!

We share with Samuel Wesley, the father of John and Charles, the rhetorical question:

'O Lamb of God! was ever pain, *was ever love, like Thine?*'⁹⁷

But we thank Him too that, although the cross displayed the *extremity* of His love, it did not mark 'the end' of that love in the sense of being the *termination* of His love!

For the supreme exhibition of His love certainly did not exhaust His love. He has ceased *dying*, but He has not ceased *loving*. He left His *passion* well and truly behind Him, but He did not leave His *compassion*. And we gladly join with the apostle John in ascribing glory and dominion to 'Him who *loves us*'.⁹⁸

Truly, 'Christ's loving-kindness to His people never changes, and never fails. It is a deep well, of which no one ever found the bottom'.⁹⁹

There is a well-documented incident in the life of the renowned 20th century Swiss theologian Karl Barth. In a Question and Answer session following a lecture which he gave at an American University in 1962, Professor Barth was asked by a student whether he could summarize his life's work in theology in a single sentence. His answer was something along the lines, 'Yes, I can. In the words of a song I learned at my mother's knee: "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so"'.¹⁰⁰ None of us will ever get beyond that!

As one New Testament scholar expresses it, 'No matter how much we know of the love of Christ, there is always more to know'.¹⁰¹ And that brother could plead the highest possible authority for his claim, because none less than the apostle Paul speaks of '*the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge*'.¹⁰²



6. And we praise God that Calvary was certainly not the end of the story. Which is why, as my sixth and last point, I recall the words of Paul to Timothy, '*Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel*'.¹⁰³

And I hear the Lord Jesus say to me:

'Remember my resurrection and exaltation'

For, yes, by the working of God's mighty power, our Lord was indeed 'raised from the dead'.

Towards the close of Ephesians chapter 1, 'Paul heaps word upon word ... in his determination to emphasise the power of God':¹⁰⁴

'The exceeding greatness of His *power*¹⁰⁵ ... according to the *working*¹⁰⁶ of the *strength*¹⁰⁷ of His *might*,¹⁰⁸ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places'.¹⁰⁹

We can rejoice, then, that, if *the cross of Christ* is the measure of God's *love*, *the resurrection of Christ* is the measure of God's *power*.

When the apostle writes to the Corinthians concerning Him who was 'raised from the dead ... according to my gospel', he is at pains to press home on them that, as far as the 'gospel' is concerned, the resurrection of Jesus is not part of the mere embroidery:

'I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and that He was seen of Cephas...'.¹¹⁰

I ask you to bear with me as I quote something which I wrote about those words several years ago:

The first and third statements (that 'Christ died' and 'He rose again') are distinguished from the second and fourth (that 'He was buried' and 'was seen') by (i) the addition of explanatory details ('for our sins' and 'the third day') and (ii) the claim to the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy ('according to the Scriptures').

It was said of the house of Dagon at Gaza that there were 'two middle pillars which supported the temple' (Judg. 16. 29). So too, metaphorically speaking, the gospel stands on two great central pillars; namely, the death and resurrection of Jesus ...

The *second* and *fourth* statements (that He 'was buried' and 'was seen') function as supporting evidence for the *first* and *third* statements. They both tell us what men did. Christ died, and one of the ways we know that He died is that men buried Him. He rose again, and one of the ways we know that He rose again is that men saw Him ...

'He rose again' is literally, 'He has been raised'. The tense Paul used in describing Jesus' resurrection differs radically from that which he used in the other three propositions. In each of the other three cases, the tense¹¹¹ refers to a single act, to a historical event.

There was a moment when He died ... there was a moment when He was buried ... there was a moment when He was seen by Cephas (being the Aramaic for Peter). But, by way of contrast, the tense Paul used to describe Jesus' resurrection indicates that, in this case, although the action was completed in the past, it has a continuing effect—that the result remains until the present¹¹² ...

The main point which Paul wants to press home on the Corinthians is that, as far as the gospel is concerned, the resurrection of Jesus is far from being some minor detail or unimportant ingredient. It ranks of first importance, being one of the two events which form the very foundation of the gospel.¹¹³

It is scarcely surprising, then, that 'well over three hundred verses are concerned with the subject of Jesus' resurrection in the New Testament'.¹¹⁴

When *preaching in a synagogue*, Paul declared that God 'raised Him up from the dead, *no more* to return to corruption',¹¹⁵ and, when *dictating an epistle*,¹¹⁶ he declared that 'Christ being raised from the dead dies *no more*'.¹¹⁷ Rest assured, the Mighty Conqueror of death and the grave faces neither 'death' nor 'corruption'!

We rejoice, therefore, to 'remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead'.

In summary

Among the very many things which God has graciously revealed about the Saviour in His word, you and I should at least make the effort to remember:

(i) His **name**,
(ii) His **words**,
(iii) His **works**,
(iv) His **affliction**,
(v) His **love**, and
(vi) His **resurrection and
exaltation.**

Notes

¹ Note the difference: *Satan* sifts to get rid of *the wheat*. Luke 22. 31; *the Lord Jesus* fans to get rid of *the chaff*, Matt. 3. 12.

² 'Satan could not prevail, with all the power of circumstances at his disposal, against the prayer of Jesus', J. L. Harris, *The Fan and the Sieve*, The Bible Treasury, Volume 16, page 179.

'The prayer and the look [of Luke 22. 61] had availed. The prayer had kept his faith from failing, but the look had broken his heart', J. G. Bellett, *The Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ*, page 53.

³ The word translated 'desire' which Jesus used of Himself in verse 15 ('ἐπιθυμέω') is far stronger than that which He used of Satan in verse 31 ('ἐξαιρέω').

⁴ Luke 22. 16.

⁵ Deut. 7. 8; 'He sent redemption to His people', Psa. 111. 9.

⁶ 'Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the Lord thy God: for in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt', Deut. 16. 1.

⁷ Heb. 9. 12.

⁸ Luke 22. 19; cf. 1 Cor. 11. 24.

⁹ 1 Cor. 11. 25.

¹⁰ Mrs Elizabeth Rundle Charles; the hymn, *The Gospel in the Lord's Supper*, published in her *Women of the Gospels: The Three Wakings and Other Poems*, 1867, page 191.

¹¹ Psa. 20. 7.

¹² Thomas Constable, *Expository Notes*, on Psa. 20. 7.

¹³ Num. 13. 16.

¹⁴ Haggai 1. 1, 12; 2. 4 etc.

¹⁵ "'Jesus" is the sixth most common name used during the Hellenistic and Roman periods in Israel ... a total of 104 names', quoted by Gordon Franz, *The So-Called Jesus Family Tomb 'Rediscovered' in Jerusalem*, accessed at <https://www.lifeandland.org/2009/01/the-so-called-jesus-family-tomb-rediscovered-in-jerusalem/>.

¹⁶ Luke 1. 30-31.

¹⁷ Matt. 1. 21.

¹⁸ 1 Sam. 25. 25.

¹⁹ Mark 1. 24.

²⁰ Mark 5. 7.

²¹ Matt. 28. 5.

²² Mark 10. 47; Luke 18. 38.

²³ Mark 10. 32.

²⁴ Mark 10. 46-49.

²⁵ Josh. 10. 12-13.

²⁶ In all probability, immediately before reaching Jericho and Bartimaeus, the Lord Jesus declared that He had come to give His life as a ransom, Mark 10. 45.

²⁷ John 19. 19; cf. Matt. 27. 37.

²⁸ Acts 1. 11.

²⁹ Acts 9. 5.

³⁰ Rev. 22. 20.

³¹ George Bennard, the hymn 'Oh Tell Me His Name Again', 1962.

³² Acts 20. 35.

³³ It goes without saying that our Lord both said and did much that is not recorded in the Gospels. Compare the closing words of the fourth Gospel: 'There are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written', John 21. 25.

³⁴ A. T. Robertson, 'Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament', on Acts 20. 35.

³⁵ He held crowds spellbound with His teaching. Luke tells us that they 'pressed on Him to hear word of God', Luke 5. 1.

³⁶ Matt. 7. 28-29; Mark 1. 22.

³⁷ Note the following testimonies:

(a) 'Jesus's uniquely authoritative way of teaching is so different from what they are used to hearing from their legal experts. Evidently, scribal authority was tied to traditional sources: one's views were authoritative when tied to convincing citations of previous teachers ... Jesus's teaching assumes a transcendent authority that their teachers rightly do not claim to possess', D. L. Turner, 'Matthew' (BECNT), on Matt. 7. 29.

(b) 'Their astonishment comes because Jesus teaches without footnotes; He teaches on the basis of His own authority. He does not justify what He teaches by appealing to a patchwork of previous statements by revered teachers', T. G. Long, 'Matthew' (Westminster Bible Companion), on Matt. 7. 29.

(c) 'The Scribes, who used to say, when they delivered anything to the people, "our Rabbins", or "our wise men say" so and so. Such as were on the side of Hillell made use of his name; and those who were on the side of Shammai made use of his name; scarce ever would they venture to say anything of themselves, but said, the ancient doctors say thus and thus. Almost innumerable instances might be given, out of the Talmud, in which one Rabbi speaks in the name of another', John Gill, 'Exposition of the Entire Bible', on Matt. 7. 29.

(d) 'The scribes, like parrots, mechanically repeated what they had learned from the rabbis', A. T. Robertson, 'Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew', on Matt. 7. 29.

(e) 'Whereas scribal rulings were based on the tradition of earlier interpreters of the law, Jesus has in Matt. 5. 17-48 set himself up as an authority over against that interpretive tradition, on the basis not of formal training or authorization but of his own confident, "I tell you"', R. T. France, 'Matthew' (NICNT), on Matt. 7. 29.

³⁸ From Matt. 5. 18 to Matt. 26. 64.

³⁹ From Exod. 4. 22 to Mal. 1. 4.

⁴⁰ Mark 6. 2. Separately, the Jews marvelled, 'How does this man know letters ('have learning'), having never studied?' John 7. 15. The Saviour had undergone none of the extensive study and training necessary to gain professional qualifications as a religious teacher in Israel.

⁴¹ Mark 6. 3.

⁴² Matt. 12. 42.

⁴³ For example, Matt. 22. 15-22; Luke 20. 27-40.

⁴⁴ Luke 4. 22.

⁴⁵ Psa. 45. 2.

⁴⁶ Isa. 50. 4. His was a tongue ever filled with the appropriate word to help and sustain the weary on account of an ear filled first with the word which had come from God. Cf. John 7. 16, 46; 8. 28; 12. 49; 14. 10.

⁴⁷ Matt. 11. 28.

⁴⁸ Luke 5. 23; 7. 48.

⁴⁹ Matt. 24. 35.

⁵⁰ 1 Chron. 16. 12; cf. Psa. 105. 5; Psa. 111. 4.

- ⁵¹ Col. 1. 16 (New Revised Standard Version); cf. 'All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made', John 1. 3; 'the Son, whom He has established heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds', Heb. 1. 2.
- ⁵² See, for example, the sabbath day miracles at Capernaum recorded in Mark 1. 21-34. 'Mark implied that this was a typical day of ministry for Jesus', Thomas Constable, *op. cit.*, on Mark 1. 21-34.
- ⁵³ The Greek word, 'παράδοξος' – 'unexpected, uncommon' according to the Grimm-Thayer 'Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament'.
- ⁵⁴ Luke 5. 26.
- ⁵⁵ Mark 5. 19.
- ⁵⁶ That which causes astonishment; see G. Bertram, the Kittell/Friedrich 'Theological Dictionary of the New Testament', Volume III, pages 37-40.
- ⁵⁷ Matt. 21. 15.
- ⁵⁸ Luke 13. 17.
- ⁵⁹ John 21. 25.
- ⁶⁰ John 10. 25; cf. John 10. 38; 14. 11.
- ⁶¹ D. A. Carson, 'The Gospel according to John', page 393 ... referencing the sign/miracles recorded in John chapters 5, 9 and 11.
- ⁶² Joseph Hart, 'How wonderful the works of God'; I have quoted the version printed in the 'Praise!' hymnbook; hymn number 307. (Earlier versions can be viewed at ... https://hymnary.org/text/how_wondrous_are_the_works_of_god.)
- ⁶³ A common Hebrew word (עניי), indicating, 'that which bows me down, that which causes me to bend over, to stoop low'; see W. J. Dumbrell, 'New International Dictionary of the Old Testament Theology and Exegesis', Volume 3, page 455.
- ⁶⁴ Lam. 3. 19.
- ⁶⁵ Isa. 53. 7 (the same root word as in Lam 3. 19).
- ⁶⁶ E. J. Young, 'The Book of Isaiah', on Isa. 53. 7.
- ⁶⁷ H. A. Ironside, 'The Lamentations of Jeremiah', on Lam. 1. 12; accessed at ... <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/eng/isn/lamentations-1.html>.
- ⁶⁸ 1 Pet. 3. 18.
- ⁶⁹ Lam. 1. 12.
- ⁷⁰ Isa. 9. 6; 2 Cor. 13. 4.
- ⁷¹ John 8. 12 and 9. 5; Matt. 27. 45.
- ⁷² Mark 1. 24 and Acts 3. 14; 2 Cor. 5. 21.
- ⁷³ Matt. 3. 17 and Eph. 1. 6; Matt. 27. 46.
- ⁷⁴ Rev. 1. 18.
- ⁷⁵ Heb. 5. 7.
- ⁷⁶ Matt. 26. 37-38.
- ⁷⁷ Luke 22. 44.

78 How true the words:

Death and the curse were in our cup,
O Christ, 'twas full for Thee!
But *Thou hast drained the last dark drop*—
'Tis empty now for me.
That bitter cup—love drank it up;
Now blessings' draught for me.

(Mrs Anne Ross Cousin, the hymn, 'O Christ, what burdens bowed Thy head'.)

79 An expression lifted from I. Y. Ewan, 'The Caravanserai', page 150 ... the poem 'Azazel' (verse 5).

80 Edward Perronet, 'All hail the power of Jesus' name!' – the verse quoted is verse 7 of the original 8 verses. See ... <https://www.hymnologyarchive.com/all-hail-the-power-of-jesus-name>.

81 Song of Songs 1. 4.

82 Franz Delitzsch, 'Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament: Song of Songs', page 23.

83 Quoted from the hymn, 'O the deep, deep love of Jesus', by Samuel Trevor Francis.

84 John 15. 9.

85 Jonah 3. 6.

86 Luke 2. 7.

87 Phil. 2. 8.

88 The Good News Bible, also known as Today's English Version.

89 M. Tullius Cicero, 'Against Verres: the Fifth Book of the Second Pleading', Section 169.

90 'Θανάτων τὸν οἴκηστον' ... Flavius Josephus, 'The Wars of the Jews', Book 7, Chapter 6, Section 4. (Josephus was a Jewish historian who lived shortly after the days of our Lord and who personally witnessed many crucifixions.)

91 The Roman jurist Julius Paulus: 'In the Sententiae compiled from his works. the crux [the cross] is put at the head of the three summa supplicia. It is followed, in descending order, by crematio (burning) and decollatio (decapitation)', Martin Hengel, 'Crucifixion: In the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross', page 33.

92 'Asking not only life for a murderer but also death for an innocent man, indeed *the utterly vile death of the cross*', Origen, 'Commentary on Matthew', on Matt. 27. 22; quoted in Martin Hengel, *ibid.*, page xi.

93 'The former, as traitors of their country, he nailed to the cross ... I shall not urge this act any farther ... because it is not fitting that a *punishment designed for slaves* should insult over Roman blood, though deservedly shed', Valerius Maximus, 'Memorable Deeds and Sayings', Book 2, Chapter 7, Section 12 (dated 30 AD); accessed at ... <http://www.attalus.org/translate/valerius2b.html>.

94 John Owen, 'Of Communion with God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost', The Works of John Owen, Volume 2, page 139.

95 John 13. 1; 'εἰς τέλος', 'to the highest degree'.

96 Phil. 2. 4.

97 Samuel Wesley, Sr., the hymn, 'Behold the Saviour of Mankind', 1700. 'The manuscript for this hymn barely escaped the flames when Mr Wesley's Epworth rectory burned on February 9, 1709. Samuel's son John was also rescued that day, as a brand plucked out of the burning. John later published this hymn in 'A Collection of Psalms and Hymns', titled 'On the Crucifixion'; source: <https://hymnary.org/hymn/CYBER/448>.

98 Rev. 1. 5 (note the present tense).

99 J. C. Ryle, 'Expository Thoughts on the Gospels; St. Luke: Volume 1', page 144.

100 See <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/rogereolson/2013/01/did-karl-barth-really-say-jesus-loves-me-this-i-know/> & <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/rogereolson/2013/01/quick-follow-up-to-the-karl-barth-jesus-loves-me-series/>.

101 Leon Morris, 'Expository Reflections on the Letter to the Ephesians', page 107.

¹⁰² Eph. 3. 19.

¹⁰³ 2 Tim. 2. 8 (literal translation).

¹⁰⁴ J. Armitage Robinson, '*St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*', page 40.

¹⁰⁵ The Greek word, 'δύναμις'.

¹⁰⁶ The Greek word, 'ἐνέργεια'.

¹⁰⁷ The Greek word, 'κράτος'.

¹⁰⁸ The Greek word, 'ἰσχύς'.

¹⁰⁹ Eph. 1. 19-20.

¹¹⁰ 1 Cor. 15. 3-5.

¹¹¹ The aorist tense.

¹¹² 'This perfect tense marks a change from the aorist or point tense in the preceding sentences simply stating past facts, and lays stress on the continuous results and efficacy of Christ's Resurrection; as the Risen One He remains alive', W. E. Vine, '*1 Corinthians*', page 204.

¹¹³ '*Studies in First Corinthians*' (Precious Seed Publications, 2016), pages 235-236; reproduced with permission.

¹¹⁴ Gary R. Habermas and J. P. Moreland, '*Immortality: The Other Side of Death*', page 245 (note 62 to Chapter 4).

¹¹⁵ Acts 13. 34.

¹¹⁶ Rom. 16. 22.

¹¹⁷ Rom. 6. 9.