

## Malcolm's Monday Musings : 13 February 2023

Greetings,

This week's 'Musings' are below

Yesterday marked the anniversary of the death of Fanny Crosby on 12 February 1915.

As many are aware, Fanny Crosby (known also by her married name, Mrs Frances Jane van Alstyne) wrote very many hymns, poems, and gospel songs, including: 'Blessed Assurance', 'All the Way My Saviour Leads Me', 'To God Be the Glory', 'Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour', 'Safe in the Arms of Jesus', 'Rescue the Perishing', and 'Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross'.

I have particularly enjoyed the following two personal anecdotes which she told in her autobiography, *Memories of Eighty Years*, published in 1906:

1. 'Among the great number of hymns that I have written—eight thousand perhaps—it is not always possible for me to remember even the best of them. For this reason, I have made laughable mistakes. One morning, for example, at Northfield the audience sang "Hide Me, O My Saviour, Hide Me". ... Turning to Mr Sankey, I asked, "Where did you get that piece?" He paid no particular attention to my question ... and at that moment the bell called us to dinner—so both of us forgot about the hymn.

But it was again used at the afternoon service, and then I was determined to know who wrote it. "Mr Sankey", I said, "Now you must tell me who is the author of 'Hide Me, O My Saviour'".

"Really", he replied, "don't you recall who wrote that hymn? You ought to remember, for *you are the guilty one*".

(Page 169.)

2. 'One day someone was talking about wealth; and he said, "If I had wealth I would be able to do just what I wish to do, and I would be able to make an appearance [i.e. 'an impression'] in the world".

*I replied, "Take the world, but give me Jesus".* This remark led me to write the hymn having that title.

"Take the world, but give me Jesus,  
All its joys are but a name;  
But His love abideth ever,  
Through eternal years the same".

(Page 178.)

God willing, we will continue with the Elijah studies next Monday, 20 February.

Happy reading,

Malcolm

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### (i) Scripture

I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to Him who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'

But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you.

And when He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

John 16. 4-11 (*English Standard Version*)

### (ii) Food for thought.

***The cross in Isaiah 53.***

'Late in the 1880s a boy in his teens who was learning short-hand made a virtue, as he thought, of the necessity of attending a church service by taking down the sermon in shorthand. To begin with, he was much more interested in this exercise than in what the preacher was saying. But the preacher had chosen part of Isaiah 53 as his text, and as he went on, the boy found himself *captivated by the vision of Christ's incomparable grace that was unfolded*.

"As the preacher reached his end, the hearer resolved to make his beginning, as a disciple of Him who is still despised and rejected of men" ... When that boy grew up, he became a distinguished Old Testament scholar, Dr Henry Wheeler Robinson, and one of his books is entitled, "*The Cross in the Old Testament*".

'It is in one of the divisions of that book, called 'The Cross of the Servant', that he gives us this piece of autobiography'.

(F. F. Bruce, '*Jesus: Past, Present & Future: The Work of Christ*', page 109. Professor Bruce's quotation comes from page 81 of H. Wheeler Robinson's, 'The Cross in the New Testament'.)

**'God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us' (Rom. 5. 8).**

'In his book, "In Search of England", H. V. Merton tells of a hill in Hampshire on which stands a gallows. He asked why it was there. The answer was that there was in a nearby town a Charity whose rule was that it should continue only as long as that gallows stood on the hill. *While the gallows lasted, the Charity endured*'.

(C. K. Barrett, '*Luminescence: The Sermons of C. K. and Fred Barrett*', Volume 1, page 116. The account referred to by Professor Barrett is found in H. V. Merton, '*In Search of England*', pages 12-13.)

You and I know that, *because the benefits accruing from the work once accomplished on a (loosely speaking) 'gallows' ('the cross of Christ') endure, God's love (His 'charity') continues to be shown towards sinners to this day.*

**'When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin' (Isa. 53. 10).**

'When He suffered for *righteousness*' sake, He was representing *God before man*; but when He suffered for *sin*, He was representing *man before God*'.

(J. N. Darby, '*Are you praising with Christ?*', Collected Writings, Volume 16, page 265.)

**The malefactor (Luke 23. 40-43).**

'Dr Alexander Smellie said of the thief who repented and trusted Jesus, "In the morning, the penitent thief was out of Christ: at noonday, he was in Christ: in the evening, he was with Christ".

(A. Naismith, '*1200 More Notes, Quotes and Anecdotes*', page 233.)

**The ascension of the Lord Jesus: 'up, up, and away'.**

(i) 'After the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God' (Mark 16. 19; cf. 1 Tim. 3. 16);

(ii) 'While He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven' (Luke 24. 51);

(iii) 'When He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up' (Acts 1. 9; cf. Acts 1. 2);

(iv) 'He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens' (Eph. 4. 10; cf. Eph. 4. 8);

(v) 'I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away' (John 16. 7).

**The Lord's entrance into heaven according to the Epistle to the Hebrews.**

(i) As our Forerunner: 'Within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus' (Heb. 6. 20);

(ii) As our Redeemer: 'He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption' (Heb. 9. 12);

(iii) As our Representative: 'Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us' (Heb. 9. 24).

**Six believer's possessions according to the Epistle to the Romans.**

(i) 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God' (Rom. 5. 1).

(ii) 'We have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand' (Rom. 5. 2).

(iii) 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the **reconciliation**' (Rom. 5. 11).

(iv) 'You have received the Spirit of **adoption**, whereby we cry, Abba, Father' (Rom. 8. 15).

(v) 'Ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit' (Rom. 8. 23).

(vi) 'We through ... encouragement of the scriptures might have hope' (Rom. 15. 14).

**'An inheritance ... reserved in heaven for you' (1 Pet. 1. 4).**

'Our inheritance! Not as to Balaam, whose eyes were opened to see the goodness of Jacob's tents, and Israel's tabernacles, where he had no portion! [Num. 24. 5; Deut. 23. 4.]

'Not as to Moses, who had only a discovery, instead of possession, and saw the land which he never entered! [Deut. 34. 1, 4.]

'But as heaven was opened to blessed Stephen, which he was shortly to enter, and the glory showed him which should be his own possession ... [Acts 7. 55-56.]

'Have the gales of grace blown me into such a harbour? ... There are none of those waves in that harbour, which now so toss us up and down. Today we are well, tomorrow sick; today in esteem, tomorrow in disgrace; today we have friends, tomorrow none ... But there is none of this inconstancy in heaven ...

'O healthful place, where none are sick! O happy land, where all are kings! O holy assembly, where all are priests!

(Richard Baxter, 'The Saints' Everlasting Rest', pages 15, 25, 57, 64.)

**'Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee' (Psa. 2. 7)..**

'The words ... are quoted three times in the New Testament:

(a) in Acts 13. 33, where it serves as a kind of proof-text to justify the resurrection of Jesus;

(b) in Hebrews 1. 5, where the author infers that because Jesus alone is the Son of God, He is superior to the angels; and

(c) in Hebrews 5. 5, where it is cited to prove that just as Aaron did not take on the high priesthood by himself, but was called by God to the task, so also Jesus was appointed by God to His high priesthood.

So, Psalm 2. 7 is variously taken (a) to support the resurrection of Jesus, (b) to provide evidence of Jesus' superiority over the angels, and (c) to demonstrate that when Jesus became high priest He did not take on the job Himself, but was appointed by God.

(D. A. Carson, 'For the Love of God', Volume 1, meditation for 10 November.)

**Jesus: 'the first and the last' (Rev. 1. 11; 2. 8; 22. 13).**

'His title, "the First" does not imply that He had a beginning, any more than "the Last" implies that He will have an end. These terms could not possibly signify that He belongs to the order of created beings.

'On the contrary, they are the terms which three times in Isaiah Jehovah uses of Himself (Isa. 41. 4; 44. 6; 48. 12). They therefore declare, in respect of the Son, what is true of the Father, (i) His unoriginated and unending self-existence, (ii) His divine power as the originating cause of all creation, and (iii) His absolute supremacy over all'.

(W. E. Vine, 'The First and the Last', Collected Writings, Volume 4, page 225.)

**'In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven' (Luke 10. 20).**

'It is a wonderful thing to be allowed to perform effective service in the name of Christ here on earth; it is even more wonderful to be able while still here on earth to be sure of heaven.

'The Greek word for "written" carries the connotation of "being enrolled in the citizen-lists of a city". It reminds a believer that if in the deepest sense he is 'homeless' on earth, he is already a citizen of heaven (see Phil. 3. 20).

(David Gooding, 'According to Luke', page 200.)

**'The mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God,' (Eph. 3. 9).**

'The Church is not Israel, nor has it taken Israel's place. Israel has its own promises and hopes which are not to be confused with those of the Church. ...

'The existence, calling, and glory of the Church is "the mystery", Eph. 3. 4, which in other ages was not made known to men, but from "the beginning of the world hath been hid in God", Eph. 3. 9. The mystery consists not in that Gentiles will be blessed, for the Old Testament promised them blessing in Messiah's kingdom, but that Jew and Gentile should be united in one body, all differences swallowed up in the pre-eminent grace that made both alike members of the body'.

(Bernard Osborne, *'The Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God'*, Treasury of Bible Doctrine, page 386.)

### **Peace.**

'The only city on earth where God placed "His Name" is called Jerusalem, the City of Peace (2 Chron. 12. 13). One of His winsome titles is "the God of Peace" (Heb. 13. 20). His Son, the One chosen to rule the whole universe, is called the "Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9. 6).

'The grand purpose of Calvary was that He might make "peace through the blood of His cross" (Col. 1. 20). Yes, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53. 5).

'No surprise, then, that the message sent to the human race from the heart of God is called "the gospel of peace" (Rom. 10. 15).

(J. B. Nicholson Jr, *'Approaching A City In War Time'*, Taste and See, Uplook Ministries, 23 January 2023.)

### **'One thing'.**

(i) Desired: King David. 'One thing have I desired' (Psa. 27. 4).

(ii) Lacking: the rich, young ruler. 'One thing you lack' (Mark 10. 21).

(iii) Necessary: Martha of Bethany. 'One thing is needful' (Luke 10. 42).

(iv) Known: the man born blind. 'One thing I know' (John 9. 25).

(v) Done: the apostle Paul. 'One thing I do' (Phil. 3. 13).

### **'Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt. 6. 33),**

'If a person from another planet were to come and see how (some) Christians live, he would think that Jesus had said something like this:

"Seek ye first what you are going to eat, what you are going to wear, which house you are going to buy, which car you are going to drive, which job you are going to take, who you are going to marry—and then, if any time is left, and if it's not too uncomfortable, please do something for the Kingdom of God".

(Juan Carlos Ortiz, *'Disciple'*, page 23.)

Ouch!

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

#### **Sharp-eyed**

1. Elaine Rogers marched up to the receptionist at the eye clinic where she had surgery the day before. 'I'm telling you', she complained angrily, 'that someone here stole my beautiful pendant necklace while I was having my surgery yesterday'.

The surgeon, Mr Griffiths, came out to the reception area and tried to calm the lady down. 'I assure you that no one on my staff would ever do such a thing', he said, 'I can vouch for everyone of them. Why do you think it was taken here?'

'Because', Mrs Rogers said, 'when I arrived home after my procedure yesterday, I noticed that my lovely necklace had been swapped for another one and that the one which I came home wearing was cheap-looking and ugly'.

'I think, Mrs Rogers', explained Mr Griffiths gently, 'that *your cataract operation was a resounding success*'.

2. From his bedroom window, elderly Bernie Graham witnessed a burglary. He was later called to testify at the trial of the chief suspect

The defence lawyer asked Bernie, 'Mr Graham, you say that you saw my client commit the burglary?'

'Yes, I did', replied Bernie, 'I saw him break into the house across the road and then come out with a big sack ... as clear as day'.

Continuing his cross-examination, the lawyer said, 'Mr Graham, 'this happened very late in the evening and it was dark. Are you certain that it was my client that you saw committing this crime?'

'Yes', Bernie said, 'No question about it'.

'Now, Mr Graham', the lawyer followed up, 'you are over 80 years old and, if I may say so, as likely as not, your eyesight is probably not as good as it used to be. Will you please tell the Court, just how far can you see at night?'

'I'm not sure', Bernie answered, 'On a clear night, *I can see the moon ... how far is that?*'