

## Malcolm's Monday Musings : 2 August 2021

Greetings.

This is my 'Monday Musings' email.

**First**, the solution to last week's (not-so-easy) riddle: Heman.

At least one brother had his thinking cap on last Monday and emailed me the solution that lunchtime! Full marks, John M.

*[For those of you who failed to solve the riddle, here are the relevant Bible references:*

*'My father was a bad man; the love of money was his downfall (1 Chron. 6. 33 with 1 Sam. 8. 1-3).*

*But my grandfather was made of different stuff. He was a very good man, totally free from the love of money. Nobody could point a finger at him, even when challenged to do so (1 Chron. 6. 33 with 1 Sam. 12. 2-5).*

*Speaking about myself, I was appointed to a very responsible position in Israel, answering directly to the king (1 Chron. 15. 16-17; 1 Chron. 25. 6).*

*God blessed me with quite a large family (seventeen children in all), who assisted me in fulfilling the role I had been given (1 Chron. 25. 1, 4-5).*

*Ironically, although my remit on a very important day in the life of the nation [the bringing of 'the ark of God' to Jerusalem] spoke clearly of 'joy' (1 Chron. 15. 15-16), my name is associated with probably the saddest song in the Bible (Psalm 88 – title and contents).]*

**Second**, another (not-so-easy) riddle. (This time, the Bible references are all in the New Testament – in order.)

*If you are at the first, you should be at the second, you will be at the third, and you won't be at the fourth.*

*If you aren't at the first, you could be at the second, you won't be at the third, and you could be at the fourth.*

These are four what? And where are the New Testament references? (A clue: the first reference is in one of our Lord's parables.)

Happy head-scratching.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

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### (i) Scripture.

When you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk ...

I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of me'.

In the same manner, He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me'. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

1 Corinthians 11. 20-26 (*The New King James Version*)

### (ii) Food for thought.

**Five things for us to commit to the Lord.**

(i) Commit yourself and your service to Him: 'He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day' (2 Tim. 1. 12).

(ii) Commit your soul to Him: 'Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator' (1 Pet. 4. 19).

(iii) Commit your spirit to Him: 'Into Thine hand I commit my spirit' (Psa. 31. 5).

(iv) Commit your way to Him: 'Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him' (Psa. 37. 5).

(v) Commit your works to Him: 'Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established' (Prov. 16. 3).

### **Prayer and 'God, who knows the heart', Acts 15. 8.**

God isn't constrained by the words we pray. He is able to bypass what is on our lips and respond to what is in our hearts. Take the case of Augustine's conversion in the fourth century.

Augustine lived in Carthage in North Africa (present-day Algeria) but, as a godless and heretical young man, he was allured by the attractions of Rome. His Christian mother Monica, who longed passionately for Augustine's conversion, did all she could to persuade Augustine not to go, following him even to the harbour, from where he planned to sail. But he deceived her and set sail at night for Rome. From Rome, he moved to Milan, where (largely as a result of the preaching of Bishop Ambrose) he was converted.

In his 'Confessions', written sometime after, Augustine records the events of the night of his departure for Rome:

'That night I slipped away secretly, but she (Monica) remained to pray and weep. And what was it, O Lord, that she was asking of you with so many tears, but that you would not allow me to sail? But you, in the depths of your counsels and hearing the real point of her desire, did not grant what she then asked, that you might make me what she had always been asking'.

(*'The Confessions of St. Augustine'*, Book 5, Chapter 8, Paragraph 15.)

Monica, who had been parted from her son for a season, later had the joy of knowing that this had happened that she might receive him for ever. (Cf. Philemon 15).

We are at our most effective in prayer when we simply tell God what is on our hearts and resist the temptation to dictate to Him precisely how He must go about granting our requests.

### **Three of the Lord's habits.**

(i) Nazareth and Jesus' Habit of Weekly Public Worship: "And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read" (Luke 4. 16).

(ii) The Wilderness and Jesus' Habit of Private Prayer: "Great crowds gathered to hear Him and to be healed of their infirmities. But He would withdraw to desolate places and pray" (Luke 5. 16 [cf. Luke 21. 37]).

(iii) The Mount of Olives and Jesus' Habit of Following God's Will: "He came out and went, as was His custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed Him" (Luke 22. 39)'.  
(Wayne Stiles, *'The Habits of Jesus'*.)

### **The Lord's sevenfold care for each of His people.**

(i) He keeps his or her feet (1 Sam. 2. 9).

(ii) He counts his or her steps (Job 31. 4).

(iii) He lifts his or her head (Psa. 3. 3).

(iv) He bottles his or her tears (Psa. 56. 8).

(v) He holds his or her hands (Isa. 41. 13).

(vi) He records his or her thoughts (Mal. 3. 16).

(vii) He numbers his or her hairs (Matt. 10. 30).

### **The Lord Jesus and heaven.**

'Outside Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, there is a bronze open book. Inscribed in that book are the words of Robert G. Lee:

"Jesus Christ ... Heaven's bread for earth's hungry, Heaven's water for earth's thirst, Heaven's glory for earth's shame, Heaven's grace for earth's guilt, Heaven's hope for earth's despair, Heaven's love for earth's hate, Heaven's peace for earth's strife, Heaven's forgiveness for earth's sins, Heaven's life for earth's death".

(Denis Lyle, *'The Pre-eminence of Christ'*.)

### **The 'headships' of the Lord Jesus.**

(i) 'Head over all things' (Eph. 1. 22).

(ii) 'Head of all principality and power' (Col. 2. 10).

(iii) 'Head of every man' (1 Cor. 11. 3).

(v) 'Head of the church' (Eph. 5. 23; cf. Col. 1. 18).

(vi) 'Head of the corner' (Acts 4. 11; cf. Matt. 21. 42; 1 Pet. 2. 7).

### **The sevenfold authority of the Lord Jesus.**

(i) Authority in His teaching (Matt. 7. 29; Luke 4. 32).

(ii) Authority to lay down His life and take it again (John 10. 18).

(iii) Authority over demons (Luke 4. 36).

(iv) Authority over all men (John 17. 2).

(v) Authority to forgive sins (Matt. 9. 6).

- (vi) Authority to execute judgment (John 5. 27).
- (vii) Authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28. 18).

**'Into the depths of the sea', Micah 7. 19.**

'Sheila O'Gahagan was a factory girl in Ireland. Broken down in health, she was advised to try the effect of a holiday by the seaside. In her heart of hearts, she was perplexed by a problem that struck much deeper than that of her health—the problem of her sins.

One day she sat, with her Bible on her knee, looking out on the waves breaking on the Giant's Causeway, and came upon the passage in Micah: "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea". As she surveyed the horizon, she said to herself: "My sins are all cast into the depths of the sea".

A few months later she died, and the following verse was found in her desk:

*"I will cast in the depths of the fathomless sea  
All thy sins and transgressions, whatever they be;  
Though they mount up to heaven, though they sink down to hell,  
They shall sink in the depths, and above them shall swell  
All the waves of my mercy, so mighty and free:  
I will cast all thy sins in the depths of the sea".*

(Psa. 103. 12; Isa. 38. 17; 44. 22; Mic. 7. 19).  
(A. Naismith, '1200 Notes Quotes and Anecdotes', number 1019.)

**Rebukes administered by the Lord Jesus.**

- (i) Demons rebuked (Mark 1. 25; 9. 25).
- (ii) Sickness rebuked (Luke 4. 39).
- (iii) The elements rebuked (Luke 8. 24).
- (iv) Peter rebuked (Mark 8. 33)
- (v) James and John rebuked (Luke 9. 54-55; when the 'sons of thunder', Mark 3. 17, became the 'sons of blunder').
- (vi) The church at Laodicea rebuked (Rev. 3. 15-19).

**Jesus and questions about 'this' in the Gospel of Mark.**

- (i) 'What new doctrine is this?' (Mark 1. 27).
- (ii) 'Who then is this?' (Mark 4. 41).
- (iii) 'Where did this man get all this?' (Mark 6. 2).

**Christ – the Light, the Sun and the Star.**

'Christ is spoken of as the Light of the World (John 8. 12), as the Sun of Righteousness to Israel (Mal. 4. 2), and as the Bright and Morning Star to the Church (Rev. 22. 16).  
(W. Scott, 'Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ', page 46.)

**Jesus, 'the light of the world' in John chapters 7-10.**

'This section falls into four major parts, conveniently defined by its chapter divisions:

- (i) John 7 – Jesus teaches at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem;
- (ii) John 8 – Jesus forgives the woman taken in adultery;
- (iii) John 9 – Jesus heals the man born blind;
- (iv) John 10 – Jesus reveals himself as the Shepherd of the sheep and teaches at the Feast of Dedication.

Jesus is revealed in this part of John's Gospel as 'the Light of the world' [explicitly in John 8. 12 and John 9. 5], and each of these four chapters is dedicated to a different aspect of the way in which He communicates His good news to the world.

Two important Jewish festivals are involved – the Feast of Tabernacles at the start [John 7. 2], and the Feast of Dedication at the end [John 10. 22]. Each of these festivals involved a special lamplight illumination of the temple.

1. ... One of the features of [the Feast of Tabernacles] was a magnificent ceremony of the illumination of the temple. It involved the lighting of four golden, oil-filled lamps in the Court of Women. It is said that these huge menorahs were over twenty metres high.

They shed a brilliant light over Jerusalem through the night, acting as a symbol of the pillar of fire that once guided Israel on their journey to the promised land.

2. The climax of this section of John is reached in a ... celebration of the Feast of the Dedication ('Hanukkah', 'Feast of Lights'), which was not one of the biblical feasts but still of great historical importance to the Jews. The Maccabees added it to their calendar in the second century BC to celebrate the cleansing and rededication of the temple.

The festival lasted eight days and nights, and it involved the lighting of the lamps on the special nine-branched 'Hanukkah Menorah': one on the first night, two on the second, and so on until a total of

eight had been reached. The additional light was for practical purposes of illumination. Every home had a light in the window ...

Thus, [John 7-10] is bracketed at the beginning and end by two festivals, each of them lasting a week and each involving the illumination of the city. It is to these festivals that Jesus comes as the Light of the world'.

(John C. Lennox, 'Determined to Believe?' pages 205-206. Emphases mine.)

### **'The resurrection of the Lord Jesus', Acts 4. 33.**

- (i) It furnished the display of God's power (Eph. 1. 19-20).
- (ii) It provided the declaration of Jesus' divine sonship (Rom. 1. 4).
- (iii) It spelt the defeat of Satan's realm (Rev. 1. 18).

### **Spiritually bankrupt, so they 'came'.**

- (i) The ancient Egyptians: 'they came to Joseph the following year and said to him, "We will not hide from our lord that our money is all spent"' (Gen. 47. 18).
- (ii) A woman with a discharge of blood: 'who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had ... heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment' (Mark 5. 25-27).
- (iii) The prodigal son: 'when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want ... and he arose, and came to his father' (Luke 15. 12, 14, 20).

### **In a nutshell:**

#### **1. The Offerings.**

'We have, then, in these sacrifices, Christ in His devotedness unto death [the burnt-offering]; Christ in the perfection of His life of consecration to God [the meat/cereal-offering]; Christ, the basis of the communion of the people with God, who feeds, as it were, at the same table with them [the peace-offering]; and finally, Christ made sin for those who stood in need of it, and bearing their sins in His own body on the tree [the sin-offering]'.

(J. N. Darby, 'Synopsis of the Books of the Bible', Volume 1, page 188, 'Leviticus'.)

#### **2. The Feasts of Jehovah.**

'There are seven feasts mentioned in Leviticus 23, each of which has a counterpart of significance in the New Testament.

- (i) The Feast of the Passover is typical of Christ our Passover sacrificed for us, in the benefit of His death for us (1 Cor. 5. 7).
  - (ii) The Feast of the Unleavened Bread is representative of the outcome of faith in Him who died for us—namely, the purging out of the leaven of wickedness from the life (1 Cor. 5. 6-8; Tit. 2. 14).
  - (iii) The Feast of the Firstfruits proclaims the resurrection of Christ in His triumph over death (1 Cor. 15. 23; 1 Thess. 4. 13-18).
  - (iv) The Feast of Pentecost points to the coming of the Holy Spirit and His formation of the Church (Acts 2. 1-4; 1 Cor. 12. 12-13).
  - (v) The Feast of Trumpets denotes the Coming of Christ, when His redeemed will be gathered to Himself (1 Thess. 4. 16; 1 Cor. 15. 51-52).
  - (vi) The Feast of the Day of Atonement embodies the outcome of Christ's atonement for the nation of Israel, and the consequent blessing to all (Lev. 16; Zech. 12. 10-13).
  - (vii) The Feast of the Tabernacles leads our thoughts on to the time when Christ shall tabernacle with men in His Millennial glory (Zech. 14. 16-21).
- (F. E. Marsh, 'One Thousand New Bible Readings', page 163.)

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

Hamish arrived at the Accident and Emergency department of the hospital with both of his ears badly burned.

'How did this happen?' the doctor asked.

'I was ironing my shirt when the phone rang', Hamish explained, 'and *I answered the iron by mistake!*'

'Nasty, but what about the other ear?' the doctor inquired.

'Oh, simple', Hamish said, '*that happened when I called for the ambulance*'.

Graham was on a hiking holiday in rural West Wales. Late one evening, Graham found that he was well and truly lost.

Making his way through the darkness, at last, he came upon a farmhouse and knocked on the door. After several minutes, Farmer Williams opened the upstairs window and shouted down, 'Beth wyt ti'n eisiau? What do you want?'

'I'm afraid that I have got myself lost', Graham shouted up, 'Would it be possible for me to spend the night here?'

“No problem, my friend”, Farmer Williams called back, “You are very welcome to *spend the night there*”  
... *and closed the window.*