



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

"come just as you are"

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

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Prayer

Lord, since Your Word says all things are possible to the one who believes, I am asking You to help me renew my mind to believe I can do anything You ever ask me to do with my life. Help me to truly understand that there is absolutely nothing impossible to me when I believe. I so regret the times I've listened to voices of doubt and unbelief who talked me out of the great victories You had in store for me. With the assistance of the Holy Spirit, I will shut my ears to the voices of unbelief from this moment forward. I release my faith today to believe that ANYTHING is possible for me to do, as long as You are the One asking me to do it, in Jesus' name. Amen....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

Matthew 24:36 (AMP)

36 But of that [exact] day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

"Daily Devotional"

Charles Stanley

Chapel Flock.....text a prayer..... request telephone number.....

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1 THEN JOB said to the Lord, 2 I know that You can do all things, and that no thought or purpose of Yours can be restrained or thwarted. 3 [You said to me] Who is this that darkens and obscures counsel [by words] without knowledge? Therefore [I now see] I have [rashly] uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. 4 [I had virtually said to You what You have said to me:] Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak; I will demand of You, and You declare to me. 5 I had heard of You [only] by the hearing of the ear, but now my [spiritual] eye sees You. 6 Therefore I loathe [my words] and abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. 7 After the Lord had spoken the previous words to Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job has. 8 Now therefore take seven bullocks and seven rams and go to My servant Job and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept [his prayer] that I deal not with you after your folly, in that you have not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job has. 9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the Lord commanded them; and the Lord accepted [Job's prayer]. 10 And the Lord turned the captivity of Job and restored his fortunes, when he prayed for his friends; also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. 11 Then there came to him all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before, and they ate bread with him in his house; and they sympathized with him and comforted him over all the [distressing] calamities that the Lord had brought upon him. Every man also gave him a piece of money, and every man an earring of gold. 12 And the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; for he had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. 13 He had also seven sons and three daughters. 14 And he called the name of the first Jemimah, and the name of the second Keziah, and the name of the third Keren-happuch. 15 And in all the land there were no women so fair as the daughters of Job, and their father gave them inheritance among their brothers. 16 After this, Job lived 140 years, and saw his sons and his sons' sons, even to four generations. 17 So Job died, an old man and full of days.

Chapter 42

Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that you can do everything, and that no thought can be withheld from thee (Job 42:1-2).

Pretty important: "I know God can do everything." Secondly, "I know that you can't hide a single thought from God."

The Bible says concerning Jesus that He didn't need anyone to come and tell Him of other people because He knew man and He knew what was in man. You can't hide any thoughts from God. The Bible tells us that some day our very thoughts are to be judged, for God is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of a man's heart. We are going to be judged not so much by what we do but by what motivated us to do the things that we did. Now you may be doing many right things but with a wrong motivation. Jesus said, "Take heed to yourself that you do not your righteousness before men to be seen of men" (Matthew 6:1) to be looked upon by men as righteous and holy, and therefore you're doing your deeds in order to get this accolade of man is wrong. God's going to judge the motivation. Our works are to be tried by fire and many of them will be burned like wood, hay and stubble. Those that remain will be rewarded for, but much of our works, done out of wrong motivation, will not endure the testing of fire. God is a searcher of the thoughts, the intents of a man's heart.

So Job says, "Lord, I know that I can't hide any thought from You."

Who is he that hides the counsel without knowledge? therefore I have uttered what I (Job 42:3)

Now Job is confessing. I have uttered what I did not understand; things that were too wonderful for me, which I did not know (Job 42:3). I've been talking, Lord, out of my hat. I don't even know what I was talking about.

Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, declare thou unto me. For I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now my eye seeth thee (Job 42:4-5).

And so Job, the discovery of God. "God, I've heard of You. I've been talking about things that I've heard, but now I see. My eye seeth Thee." It's always a glorious day in our lives when God is moved from our heads to our hearts. From just a knowledge to an experience. "I've heard of Thee, God, with my ears. I've heard people talk about You. I've talked about You. But, God, I was talking about things I didn't really know, I didn't really understand, I didn't really see. I've heard about You with the hearing of my ears, but now I really see You." And what a difference it makes when our eyes are open and we actually begin to see God. "Blessed are the pure in heart, they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). And how glorious when our eyes behold, when the spiritual eyes are opened and I really begin to have a real experience with God in my life. And the scriptures are suddenly opened up. A whole new dimension of spiritual life is open to me as I am born again by the Spirit and come into the spiritual dimension. No longer just hearing about God, but now actually seeing, comprehending God. And in the discovery of God there comes the resultant discovery of self. Wherefore I abhor myself, I repent in dust and ashes (Job 42:6). Daniel spoke about when God gave to him this revelation when he saw the glory of God in this revelation, he said, "Then was my comeliness turned into ugliness within me" (Daniel 10:8). When Peter saw Jesus, he said, "Depart from me. I am a sinful man" (Luke 5:8). When Isaiah saw the Lord, he said, "Woe is me, I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell amongst people of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5). Seeing God gives you the greatest insight on yourself you've ever had. So many times a person is, "Oh, I'm pretty good. I'm, you know..." Once they see God, that's all it takes to bring a man down to his knees begging for mercy, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." When I can see me as God sees me, a sinful, hopeless wretch, no longer looking at myself, deceiving myself, justifying myself, but seeing me as God sees me. But that can't happen until I first see God. "Lord, I've heard of You, now I see You, now I see me. I abhor myself."

And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, the LORD turned to his friends, to Eliphaz the Temanite, and he said, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against your two friends: for you have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my

has. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that which ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job (Job 42:7-8).

Now, let me say that God doesn't like you going around saying false things about Him. He doesn't appreciate that at all. Or going around speaking for Him things that He has not said. Now there are many people who are guilty of spreading false concepts about God. God does not look kindly upon that at all. And He told Eliphaz, "You guys haven't been speaking right about Me. Now, you offer, and you ask Job to pray for you. I'm going to listen to him; I won't listen you because you have not spoken things that are true about Me. And so you'd better get Job to pray for you."

So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: and the LORD also accepted Job. And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came there unto him all of his brothers, and all of his sisters (Job 42:9-11),

Where were they, I wonder, when he was in affliction?

and all of them that had been his acquaintance before, and they did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first, Jemima (Job 42:11-14);

Which means "a dove."

and the name of the second was Kezia (Job 42:14);

Which is a sort of a spice.

and the name of the third was Kerenhappuch (Job 42:14).

Which means "a horn of paint." Now I don't know why they would call a girl "a horn of paint."

And in all of the land there were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them an inheritance along with their brothers. And after this Job lived for a hundred and forty years (Job 42:15-16),

Now if Job indeed was a contemporary to Abraham as is thought, 180 years is not unusual. Abraham lived to be 180 years old. This was actually just about two generations after the flood. And so longevity was still common in those days. And so after this experience, Job lived for another 140 years.

and he saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even to four generations. (Job 42:16)

So he had his great great grandkids all around him.

So Job died, being old and full of days (Job 42:17).

The interesting story of Job. A story that deals with the problems of pain, the problems of suffering. Why do the righteous suffer? Why are the ungodly oftentimes prosperous? And yet, though it deals with the issues, it doesn't come up with any firm answers. Righteous people often suffer, and what we know is we don't know the reason. Good people often experience pain; we don't know the reason. Godly people sometimes die young; we don't know the reason. Righteous people are often sick; we don't know the reason. Sinners are many times prosperous; we don't know the reason. Now because we don't know the reasons, we should not draw false conclusions as Job did. "It doesn't pay to try to live right. It doesn't pay to try to be good, because you're going to get afflicted anyhow." Those were wrong conclusions that Job drew from his experiences.

What we need to realize is that this present suffering is not worthy to be compared with the glory that is going to be revealed in us when Jesus comes for us. So if we do experience hardship or suffering or disappointment, you can't compare it with the glory that God is going to bestow upon us eternally. "For this present suffering, which is but for a moment, worketh an exceeding eternal weight of glory" (II Corinthians 4:17). Now, it is important that we remember that as God deals with us He always has eternity in mind. I always have today and tomorrow in mind. And I am oftentimes concerned with my present comfort, with my present ease, with my present prosperity. God is interested in my eternal comfort, in my eternal prosperity and He's dealing with me over the eternal things, where I am so often only thinking in the time things. But when God is working in your life, He's always got eternity in mind, for He wants you to enjoy the blessings of His kingdom forever.

Now, there may be things right now that are stumbling you and could drag you into the pit. And so God, because He loves you and wants you to be with Him eternally, will oftentimes take away something that could deter you or turn your mind from Him or to deter you from the path that He wants you to walk. And it isn't that God doesn't love you, it isn't that God is angry with you, it isn't that God is actually punishing you. God is looking out for your welfare because He knows so much better than you know about your life and about the world around you and about your weaknesses, and God is trying to shield you and protect you.

I can remember when my boys were small. They were fascinated with my shaving. And I would lather up my face and say, "Ho, ho, ho." You know. And they used to love to watch me shave. And as I would change the blades in the razor, they tried to grab the blade and I slapped their hands. And I said, "No, you can't play with that." "Oh, we want to play with it, Daddy." "No, you can't." "Ohhhhhh, mean Daddy." No, I wasn't mean. I love them. I knew the dangers of their playing with the razorblade; they didn't. It looked like it would be fun to take that and cut things with it. That would be a lot of fun. What they didn't realize is that they would be cutting their fingers, their hands. I knew that. I restrained them.

I think that many times we're yelling at God and angry with God, "Oh, God, I wanted that. Oh, Lord, You know I wanted that." You know, "Why don't You let me play with that?" And God knows that it could hurt you. God knows that it could destroy you. And God is always, always looking at you with the eternity in mind. And He deals with us with eternity in mind and thereby we do not always understand the present inconveniences or deprivations. But God, looking at the eternal, is working in you His eternal purposes. And if you keep that in mind, then you won't be troubled when you see the ungodly prospering, because you know they're going to be cut down in a moment. Then you won't be troubled when you may be going through a hard experience, because you know that God is working in your life in more exceeding, abundant reward in the kingdom. That is why we are told, "Count it all joy when you have these tribulations" (James 1:2). "Oh, praise the Lord, I had the worst tribulation this week!" God's working; He must love me, putting me through the fire. Better that I go through the fire now, better that I be purified now that I might have remaining works rather than to watch all of my works go up in a puff of smoke and enter into heaven by the skin of my teeth. God loves you and God has eternity in His mind and He's dealing with you in light of eternity.

Father, we thank You for Your dealings with us. Forgive us, Lord, for our complaints, for our folly, for the foolish charges that we make against Thee. God, they are done out of the rashness of our own immaturity, our own lack of understanding. Help us to know Thy ways. Lead us in Thy paths. Lord, may we also have eternity in mind. In Jesus' name. Amen.

(Through The Bible c 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible commentaries,1979-1986)

07 - Faith Is Finding God for Ourselves: Tozer

GOD IS NOT LOOKING for carbon copies of Abraham to believe Him and obey Him in this twentieth century. He is not looking for carbon copies of Enoch, or Noah, or Moses, or David.

God is looking for persons exactly like you and me. The old heroes of faith named in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews have long ago gone to their reward, as the writer has reminded us:

And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets. ... They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—the world was not worthy of them. ... These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect. (Heb 11:32, Heb 11:37-40)

It is plain to see from this text that God had us in His heart and in His thoughts. Even as the Old Testament saints were passing on to be forever with the God they loved, God had us in mind, too. Those heroes of the faith died, but God did not die with them. The eternal character of God has never changed and it never will. God continues to be God. He continues to be in control throughout His universe. He assures us He is the God of the living. He is still yearning, loving, calling men and women everywhere. He is still gladly responding to the prayers of His believing people. Best of all, He is still seeking and wooing those of our day who are ready and willing to become His new heroes in the faith!

God has a design for each of us

I wonder if we are consistently holding to this assurance of God's presence and God's blessing in our Christian churches today. God does want to speak to all of us who will listen! I repeat: God is not looking for an exact replica of Abraham or Noah or David. He wants to bless, equip and use our individuality—every one of us who by faith make up His believing people in our own generation.

You cannot study the Book of Hebrews long without discovering that faith in God is neither an ordinary nor an imaginary quality. Godly faith is dynamic and powerful! The accomplishments of faith are rightfully attributed only to God, of course. But it is satisfying to know that the people He blesses and uses may be as different in personality as night is from day.

This is an important lesson for us to learn. God does not intend that we who believe and trust Him shall all be alike—all poured into the same mold. No! It is actually one of the snares of Christian experience to think that we must copy one another.

Each one of us is different

God knew very well what He was doing when He created us to differ in personality, temperament and disposition. It has been well demonstrated that variety is the very hallmark of God's creation throughout the universe.

As humans, we do not understand how it can be, but biologists tells us they can examine thousands upon thousands of leaves in the forest and never find two exactly alike! In the Chicago church where I ministered for many years, we had identical twins—Irene and Ilene. We watched them grow and develop. Although they were called identical, they exhibited traits and expressions that were different. For that reason, most of us could tell them apart and call them by their right names.

We have come to realize and accept the fact that there are no two people exactly, identically alike in our world. And the point I am making is that God, the all-knowing divine artist, has formed each one of us out of His inexhaustible variety. He works in His wisdom and love to bless and honor the many differences—as well as the similarities—in men and women.

God accepts us no matter where we fall within the range of varying human personalities. He desires to manifest Himself to us and through us, no matter how different we may be. May I give you an illustration?

When the time comes around for the annual decorating of your Christmas tree, you get out the string or strings of lights that have been carefully packed since the year before. You wrap those

lights as artistically as possible around your tree. You make sure you have a good mixture of red, green, yellow, blue and maybe white lights.

It is not likely you ever stop to worry whether you need more than one kind of electricity to light the bulbs of different colors. The same power, the same amount of power flows through each. Only the glass or the coating on the glass differs. The power flowing through the filaments creates the light.

The same source of illumination

God makes all of us different from one another, but by His Spirit He will bring divine illumination and power to our beings. That is something we understand. That is why we are glad we are not all alike. We can read and talk about Wesley and Moody and A. B. Simpson and Billy Sunday, about Holy Anne and Sophie the scrubwoman. It is God's planned variety and not similarity that makes beauty and interest in our world.

We should thank God for giving us our own individual personalities and temperaments and abilities. We should never waste time and energy trying to fashion ourselves after someone else, no matter how much we admire that person. God does not expect us to become identical copies of our spiritual heroes.

Actually, I have learned something very important about our efforts to become someone else. If I am tempted to copy someone whom I admire as a Christian believer, I will probably succeed only in copying his or her eccentricities and not that person's spirituality at all.

It is futile to try to assume another person's good characteristics. In only these respects should we all try to be alike: We should love God more than anything or anyone else, we should hate sin and iniquity even as Jesus hated them, and we should be willing always to obey God through the leading of His Word and His Spirit. Apart from that, it is perfectly natural for us to be ourselves, that is, different from each other.

God is the same today

I see another lesson in this Hebrews text. God has never in the past done anything good in response to faith that He is unwilling to do again. Let me turn that around and say it this way: Everything good that God has done in the past in response to faith, He is willing to do again. We need only believe and obey.

How subtle is unbelief! You read the biography of one of God's great saints and suddenly you are overcome with discouragement. You find you are comparing yourself very unfavorably with the one you have been reading about. Let me pass on some advice. Do not stop reading about God's great men and women. But keep in mind that faith and obedience, not their abilities or temperaments or dispositions, are what matter. God knows how best to use us for His glory and as His witnesses.

Faith came like a dove to the heart of Abraham—but not only to Abraham. Faith came to the rascal Jacob as well. Faith came to Moses, it is true. But faith came also to Samson. Faith came to Sarah. Faith came as well to Rahab. I think of a simple little song we used to sing:

Let not conscience make you linger,

Nor of fitness fondly dream,

All the fitness here required

Is to feel your need of Him.

I feel good about that advice! I am not to compare myself with Abraham or Luther or Billy Graham and wonder how I can qualify as a good and useful Christian. If I truly feel my need of God, I can approach Him and expect Him to work through my uniqueness. Be careful!

This problem of personal identity not infrequently troubles the faithful minister. The congregation has called him as their pastor and teacher, but the members have a hard time forgetting the saintly predecessor who died or who was called to another ministry. They find it hard to make room for the new minister—mainly because he is not enough like the former one. His voice is different. So are his gestures. His hair is not gray. His wife is not as friendly.

Be careful! God blesses people for their faith and obedience, not because they are old or young, bald or gray, pleasant voiced or raspy. God expects each one of us to let Him use us in helping people to a walk of spiritual blessing and victory. Not necessarily must we have had a long record as heroes in the faith to qualify.

A personal testimony

I do not look upon myself as especially notable. But I am invariably blessed when I discover God has used me to help someone else in the Christian faith. I was addressing a group of Lutherans on the life of fullness in the Holy Spirit. During a brief time of testimony after one of my messages, a young man who said he was a pastor told the group he carried in his Bible a copy of a small piece I once wrote: "The Prayer of a Minor Prophet."

I remember writing that piece. I wrote it from my heart, letting it express my own feelings about the responsibilities of a man genuinely called into the ministry of God's holy Word. In his words to the group, the young man said, "When I get discouraged, when there is trouble facing me, I open my Bible and read once more that prayer of one of God's prophets." He then expressed gratitude that in God's timing his path and mine had crossed.

Do you suppose that young man, as he read my "prayer," thought of A. W. Tozer as some kind of a hero of the faith? That would have been a very inflated idea—far beyond the assessment held by Mrs. A. W. Tozer, for instance! Most of us are inclined to quote other people, particularly those we consider to be good examples. Probably it is a good thing that we do not know them as well as their families do! Otherwise we would have to be more cautious about our quoting them and holding them up for veneration.

We can be today's people of faith

My emphasis is this: Just as those who lived in the past had the privilege of being God's people of faith then, so do we in our own day. It is good to come to the understanding that while God wants us to be holy and Spirit-filled, He does not expect us to look like Abraham or to play the harp like David or to have the same spiritual insight given to Paul.

All of those former heroes of the faith are dead. You are alive in your generation. A Bible proverb says that it is better to be a living dog than a dead lion. You may wish to be Abraham or Isaac or Jacob, but remember that they have been asleep for long centuries, and you are still around! You can witness for your Lord today. You can still pray. You can still give of your substance to help those in need. You can still encourage the depressed.

I hope you have not missed something good from God's hand because you felt you did not measure up to Gideon or Isaiah. In this your generation, give God all of your attention! Give Him all of your love! Give Him all of your devotion and faithful service! You do not know what holy, happy secret God may want to whisper to your responsive heart.

Three simple things

Do you respond to this great possibility by asking, "How can I know?" I answer with an emphasis upon three simple things reinforced in the Word of God for those who will discern God's highest will.

First, be willing to put away known sin. Next, separate yourself from all of the attractions of the world, the flesh and the devil. Finally, offer yourself to your God and Savior in believing faith. God has never yet turned away an honest, sincere person who has come to know the eternal value of the atonement and the peace that is promised through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The only person who is incurably sick is the one who thinks he or she is well. The only person who will never be cleansed and made whole is the one who insists he or she needs no remedy. The person who comes in faith to God and confesses, "I am unclean, I am sin-sick, I am blind," will find mercy and forgiveness and life in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The doubters are still asking, "How can that be?" It can be because our Lord Jesus Christ is the Savior, the Cleanser. He is the Purifier, He is the Healer. He is the Sight-giver and the Life-giver. He alone is the Way, the Truth and the Life!

God expects us to live in faith and victory so that we may leave our Christian testimony to a new generation that undoubtedly will need it desperately. "These all died in faith,"

the writer to the Hebrews says. When it is our time, will we be able to meet our God knowing that we pleased Him? "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

A bright future

God is the Faithful One. We are to love Him and serve Him because He is God—not because of the gracious things He does for us or for the rewards He promises us. Our motives should be both right and genuine. But God does not expect us to forget or ignore the gracious future promises He has made to us.

It is a glorious truth that if we believe God and honor His Word, if we walk by faith in love and obedience, there will be eternal rewards for each of us in that great coming day. The rewards will differ. Wisdom and knowledge and love reside in Him who is our God. He will make the right judgments for His people.

But I for one will not be surprised if some of God's faithful people serving Him today should rise as high and shine as brightly as the heroes of faith listed in the Book of Hebrews. I say that in all truthfulness because I do not think all of the heroes of faith are dead and gone.

If we will take God at His Word, if we will believe Him and trust Him wholly in this ungodly and unfriendly world, if we will walk with Him as those men and women of faith walked in the long-ago past, God Himself will list us among His heroes of faith when the final records are opened.



Charles Spurgeon; New Park Street Chapel....

Magnificat

"Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a song; arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam." Judges 5:12

Suggested Further Reading: Psalm 108:1-5

Wake up, my love, for thou must strike the key-note and lead the strain. Awake and sing unto thy beloved a song touching thy well-beloved. Give unto him choice canticles, for he is the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. Come forth then with thy richest music, and praise the name which is as ointment poured forth. Wake up, my hope, and join hands with thy sister—love; and sing of blessings yet to come. Sing of my dying hour, when he shall be with me on my couch. Sing of the rising morning, when my body shall leap from its tomb into its Saviour's arms! Sing of the expected advent, for which thou lookest with delight! And, O my soul, sing of that heaven which he has gone before to prepare for thee, "that where he is, there may his people be." Awake my love—awake my hope—and thou my faith, awake also! Love has the sweetest voice, hope can thrill forth the higher notes of the sacred scale; but thou, O faith—with thy deep resounding bass melody—thou must complete the song. Sing of the promise sure and certain. Rehearse the glories of the covenant ordered in all things, and sure. Rejoice in the sure mercies of David! Sing of the goodness which shall be known to thee in all thy trials yet to come. Sing of that blood which has sealed and ratified every word of God. Glory in that eternal faithfulness which cannot lie, and of that truth which cannot fail. And thou, my patience, utter thy gentle but most gladsome hymn. Sing today of how he helped thee to endure in sorrows' bitterest hour. Sing of the weary way along which he has borne thy feet, and brought thee at last to lie down in green pastures, beside the still waters.

For meditation: The songs of the Christian should arise from a thankful heart (Colossians 3:16) stirred up by the word of Christ.

Sermon no. 340

15 October (Preached 14 October 1860)

Charles Spurgeon; Morning and Evening.....

Morning

"But who may abide the day of his coming?"

Malachi 3:2

His first coming was without external pomp or show of power, and yet in truth there were few who could abide its testing might. Herod and all Jerusalem with him were stirred at the news of the wondrous birth. Those who supposed themselves to be waiting for him, showed the fallacy of their professions by rejecting him when he came. His life on earth was a winnowing fan, which tried the great heap of religious profession, and few enough could abide the process. But what will his second advent be? What sinner can endure to think of it? "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." When in his humiliation he did but say to the soldiers, "I am he," they fell backward; what will be the terror of his enemies when he shall more fully reveal himself as the "I am?" His death shook earth and darkened heaven, what shall be the dreadful splendour of that day in which as the living Saviour, he shall summon the quick and dead before him? O that the terrors of the Lord would persuade men to forsake their sins and kiss the Son lest he be angry! Though a lamb, he is yet the lion of the tribe of Judah, rending the prey in pieces; and though he breaks not the bruised reed, yet will he break his enemies with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. None of his foes shall bear up before the tempest of his wrath, or hide themselves from the sweeping hail of his indignation; but his beloved blood washed people look for his appearing with joy, and hope to abide it without fear: to them he sits as a refiner even now, and when he has tried them they shall come forth as gold. Let us search ourselves this morning and make our calling and election sure, so that the coming of the Lord may cause no dark forebodings in our mind. O for grace to cast away all hypocrisy, and to be found of him sincere and without rebuke in the day of his appearing.

Evening

"But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou redeem him not, then shalt thou break his neck."

Exodus 34:20

Every firstborn creature must be the Lord's, but since the ass was unclean, it could not be presented in sacrifice. What then? Should it be allowed to go free from the universal law? By no means. God admits of no exceptions. The ass is his due, but he will not accept it; he will not abate the claim, but yet he cannot be pleased with the victim. No way of escape remained but redemption--the creature must be saved by the substitution of a lamb in its place; or if not redeemed, it must die. My soul, here is a lesson for thee. That unclean animal is thyself; thou art justly the property of the Lord who made thee and preserves thee, but thou art so sinful that God will not, cannot, accept thee; and it has come to this, the Lamb of God must stand in thy stead, or thou must die eternally. Let all the world know of thy gratitude to that spotless Lamb who has already bled for thee, and so redeemed thee from the fatal curse of the law. Must it not sometimes have been a question with the Israelite which should die, the ass or the lamb? Would not the good man pause to estimate and compare? Assuredly there was no comparison between the value of the soul of man and the life of the Lord Jesus, and yet the Lamb dies, and man the ass is spared. My soul, admire the boundless love of God to thee and others of the human race. Worms are bought with the blood of the Son of the Highest! Dust and ashes redeemed with a price far above silver and gold! What a doom had been mine had not plenteous redemption been found! The breaking of the neck of the ass was but a momentary penalty, but who shall measure the wrath to come to which no limit can be imagined? Inestimably dear is the glorious Lamb who has redeemed us from such a doom.

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 810-812)

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