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## 2013 11 - The Beauties of The Lord

### Introduction

Some months ago at the beginning of our remembrance meeting we sang: “Amidst us our Beloved stands”, and the last line of the hymn read: “let every saint Thy beauties see”. A brother prayed and a second hymn was sung of “Heaven’s Beloved One”. It was then brought to our attention that while the word “beloved” is mentioned in both hymns, yet two different perspectives had been brought before us. In one it was from our perspective, “Our Beloved”, and the other was from God’s perspective, He is the Beloved of Heaven. Also in the first hymn writers had connected the thoughts of the Beloved and His beauties.

I could not help but think of the young lady in the Song of Solomon who was asked: “What is thy beloved more than another beloved”, and after having reviewed his loveliness she said: “He is altogether lovely”, she saw his beauty (Song of Sol. 5:9-16). At the baptism of our Lord, God said: “This is my beloved Son” (Matt. 3:17), and who can tell what beauties God saw in Christ. The following is a very frail attempt to muse on some of the beauties of the Lord.

### The beauties of the Lord can be viewed in His responses to accusations

- 1) His response to the accusation of: “Do you not care”?
  - a) It had been an exhausting day of speaking, working miracles, and the Lord was wearied. While going across the lake in the boat God gave His Beloved sleep (Psa. 127:2). While He was asleep a storm arose with such ferocity that the boat began to fill with water and the disciples were in jeopardy (Lk. 8:23). In their fear they awakened the Lord and accused Him of not caring! Their words were so searing and censuring: “Carest Thou not that we perish?” (Mk. 4:38). How beautifully He responds for He sees them as twelve frightened men for whom, humanly speaking, they were going to drown. His beauty is seen in what He does first. He removes that which caused their alarm. Rising He “rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still”. Now having removed that which caused their fear He rebukes them asking: “Why are ye so fearful?” (Mk. 4:39-40). The beauty of the chronological order of his activity and rebuke.
  - b) There was a day when Martha invited Jesus and His disciples into her home (Lk. 10:38-42) where she lived with her brother Lazarus and sister Mary. Now the vast majority of women would be in a bit of a fluster if thirteen men suddenly arrived close to meal time. Understandably, Martha began rushing to make meals, organize the cooking, getting plates, etc. all ready and she was cumbered, in a state of distraction. Then she looked and here was Mary sitting listening to Christ the Teacher while she had so much to do. This was too much, and speaking to the Lord said: “Dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?” (Lk 10:40). The Lord had been silent to this point of time for it was not His house, and He must allow the house to follow its own rules, but when He is drawn into it He must respond. The answer in this case is to correct priorities. Getting a meal for unexpected guests was not the most important thing. Being instructed in divine truth is that which would have long term personal blessings.
- 2) His response to wrong accusations:
  - a) Envy and hatred know no boundaries when it comes to defaming an individuals character or their works. A demonic who was blind and dumb had been brought to the Lord for healing (Matt. 12:22). There can be no doubt that the Pharisees were hovering like vultures to see if the Lord would heal and the Lord does something they could not do, he healed the man! They could not deny it but made the accusation He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils (Matt. 12:24). The response of the Lord was very brilliant for in effect He said: “If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?” They were stumped. He did not argue with them but with the wisdom of God silenced them. There is no record of them accusing Him of this ever again. How beautiful and controlled was this response.

- 3) His response to true accusations which were meant to discredit:
- a) There are few things worse than having the truth twisted. The flesh always sees things twisted and in the case of Luke 15:2 they saw the Lord with the publicans and sinners. That which they ignored was the fact that these people came to Him. The scripture says: “Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him” (Lk. 15:1). It does not say He drew near to them to eat with them, they came to Him. Neither were the Pharisees interested in why they came to him, all they saw with their distorted vision was that He was eating with them. What way would I respond to such a situation? I would be giving all sorts of reasons why there was nothing wrong, but the Lord ignored such fleshy retorts. Instead he told a triple parable which stung like a scorpion. This triplet of parables had a two fold sting. He said if any of them had a sheep, irrespective of how many good ones, would they not search for the lost sheep? And being Jews would they not search for a lost coin? These people were lost and He was there seeking to find them. However, the other side of the lesson is that when one comes back to fellowship with God as the prodigal son did in returning to the father, the son of the flesh has no joy in it but was disgruntled. What a picture of the Pharisees. How beautiful was His response.

#### **The beauties of the Lord can be seen in His different responses in the rejection of kingship**

There are two recorded instances when the Lord rejected kingship.

- a) The first was when the devil “Shewed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world” and said: “All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them” (Lk. 4:5-6).
- b) Later after having fed five thousand the people wanted to make Him king (Jn. 6:15).

Each time His response was different. When the offer came from the Devil with its temptation to worship him, the answer was sharp and a dismissing of him. When it was the attempt by men, then the Lord did not answer with a sharp rebuke but sent them away. The people were caught up in the idea of possibilities, this is what Satan tempted the Lord with, possibility thinking. Let it be clear, the Lord never imagined anything. His mind was always on: “whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report” (Phil. 4:8). He was a realist not an imaginative idealist. Satan offered Him getting the kingdoms without suffering, the people imagined getting bread without work. They were being blinded by Satan but did not realize it. No harsh words would be said to them, but with Satan, there was no deception by an outside force, he knew exactly what He was doing. This was the continuing activity of the evil one to thwart the purposes of God, and by nullifying the loyalty of Christ to God, and as such demanded censuring and humiliation. The perfection of the Lord is seen in how He dealt with these propositions.

#### **The beauties of the Lord can be seen in when and why He sent forth the disciples**

The Lord sent forth His disciples on two occasions. He sent them out for missionary service (Matt 10:5), and on another occasion He sent them out to cross the lake in the boat (Matt. 14:22). In both situations He sends but with two different purposes and censuring results. In the sending them out in two's it was for companionship and the blessing of humanity through the expansion of His ministry. When they came back to report they would learn several major lessons. One would be the importance of prioritizing, and another was when they went out preaching they learnt that His power was with them, even though they had not His physical person. It was the elementary steps of preparation for the days after He was gone. When the Lord sent them across the lake they again learnt a lesson. This time it was not that His power was with them even though He was absent, but that in the storms of life when danger is real, and all human efforts have failed, He will be there ready to comfort. How beautiful this is for He was preparing them for days which lay ahead.

### The beauties of the Lord in the resurrections He performed

There were times when the Lord brought all the disciples into situations where they all could see what was happening, and at other times only Peter, James, and John. The disciples came with the Lord to Bethany where Lazarus had lived, died, and was buried. Not only were the disciples there but also many people who had come to sympathize with the two sisters. This was a very public affair, possibly much more public than the widow of Nain's son's resurrection. At this grave the Lord groans twice (Jn. 11:33, 38). When at the grave He cried with a loud voice (kraugazo, megas> voice <phone): "Lazarus come forth" (Jn. 11:43). This is in sharp difference to the other cases.

- a) The raising of Jarius's daughter. It was a private affair. The only ones present being the father and mother with Peter, James, and John (Lk. 8:51). In neither this or the widow of Nains' son's resurrection was there any groaning or public prayer.
- b) With the little girl He called (phoneo, an elevated tone of voice, authoritative) saying: "Maid, arise" (Lk. 8:54).
- c) Concerning the son he said (epo, spoke): "Young man, I say unto thee Arise" (Lk. 7:14).

His tone of voice was different in each case. We also see the beauty of the Lord in the injunctions or actions which followed each resurrection.

- a) With Lazarus the injunction was: "Loose him and let him go". (Jn. 11:44)
- b) With Jarius's daughter the Lord spoke to the parents that "something should be given her to eat". (Mk. 5:43)
- c) With the widow's son there is no reference to the Lord speaking but it was His actions that are emphasized: "He delivered him to his mother". (Lk. 7:15)

How beautiful this is. He who knew what it was to be bound in, straitened, knew the feelings of Lazarus; he who knew what it was to have the need of food, knew the needs of the child; and He who knew a widow's dependence on a son, knew the need of the widow of Nain.

### The beauties of the Lord in His activity and waiting

There are times when the Lord waited before He acted, and at other times He responded immediately. He waited at the wedding at Cana of Galilee (Jn. 2:1-11), the prompting of the other sons of Mary and Joseph in prodding Him to go up to the feast at Jerusalem and make himself known (Jn. 7:2-4), and when He did not go to Bethany when Lazarus was sick or died (Jn. 11:6). In each of these cases the Lord did not act immediately, yet when Jairus came to Him (Mk. 5:23-24), or the Jews on behalf of the centurion (Lk. 7:3-6), He responded immediately. Why is it that on some occasions He waits and at other times responds immediately? It must be remembered that the Lord was moving in perfect fellowship with God, in God's timing, and not according to man and apparent immediate needs. Therefore, the Lord will not be put under pressure to act by his mother (Jn. 2:3), nor by his brethren (Jn. 7:3), nor by circumstances and friendship (Jn. 11:3).

The beauty of the Lord is seen in why He waited. At the wedding when they had no wine, the Lord was inactive until His hour had come, the hour when man aware of their non resources, then they would fully know that this was a sign. It was intensified by the fact that these were waterpots that were filled, not jars that had contained wine, it had been water. In John 7:2-3 He would not go to the feast when prompted because the Lord saw in this another attempt by Satan to show himself openly, this being very similar to the temptation to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple (Matt. 4:6). He would not go to heal Lazarus nor rush to the funeral because the greater glory to God and a superb sign of who He is necessitated His waiting. He was perfect in His "apparent delays" and in His immediate responses.

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Every aspect of the life of our Lord is beautiful, like a piece of glorious orchestral music being played, with each instrument in its own place and timing, so the Lord was in His life. May the Holy Spirit open our eyes to see more of the beauties of our Beloved so that the next time we sing, “My Redeemer Oh what beauties, in that lovely name appear”, our thoughts presented here will lead to a more worthy worship and adoration of He who is the “Altogether lovely”.

*. . . Rowan Jennings*