

Thought For The Day Advent 23rd December

Christmas is nearly here and so advent is drawing to a close. Here is the last in this series of Thoughts for the Day. Enjoy and I hope you have a wonderful last two days of Advent and Christmas!



Luke 1: 67- end

His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
because he has come to his people and redeemed them.
He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David
(as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),
salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us—
to show mercy to our ancestors
and to remember his holy covenant,
the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,
and to enable us to serve him without fear
in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,
to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,
because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven

to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace.”
And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the wilderness
until he appeared publicly to Israel.

Thought:

The passage known as the Benedictus (because of the way the passage begins in Latin) is the one piece of Scripture that is used in morning prayer in the Church of England every day. In theory, a priest in the Church of England should say morning prayer every day and, therefore repeat the Benedictus every day.

So, to say I know this passage of Scripture well puts it mildly!

And yet I love saying it. Over and over again.

I love its message of hope. It helps me to face each day in the strength of God. Because it's a passage that talks about what God is doing, what he has done, what he has been doing since the beginning of time almost and what he is doing now. And it tells you what you are meant to be doing as well.

At one level, of course, these are the words of Zechariah to his infant son, John the Baptist. So, it's John the Baptist's dad telling him what he is going to do when he grows up.

But after you have read it a few times you soon get the idea that this is what we are all called to do:

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.

We are all called to be prophets. We all go before Jesus to prepare for his coming again among us. We share with others what we know of the salvation that God offers to all his people. We share with others the wonderful news that God loves them, forgives them their sins and desires to draw closer to them.

A new dawn has indeed broken over us. Jesus Christ, the light of the world, is shining on all of us who are sitting in darkness and under the shadow of death. He shines upon us and guides our feet in the ways of peace.

It's a great message to get you going in the morning.

And as Christmas finally begins, it's a great message for all Christians as we go about the world soaking in this special atmosphere that Christmas brings and enjoying being with the special people many of us will be with. Spread the good news! God loves us, He forgives us, He desires to be with us and in the light He

shines upon us in His Son Jesus Christ we can truly walk in the paths of peace.

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