

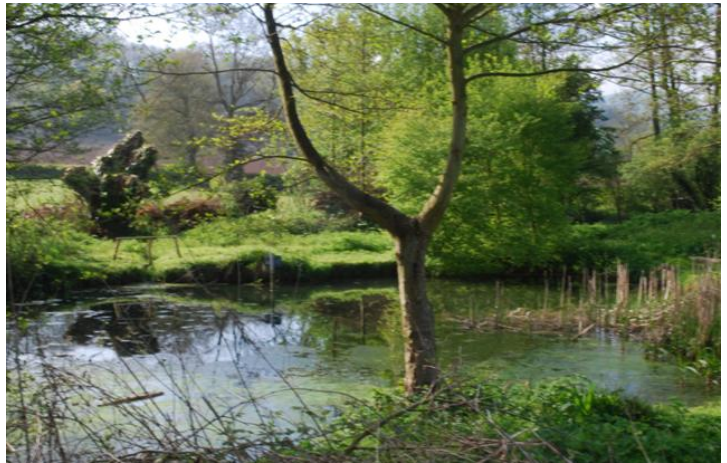
Malvern Mashal 33

Be lifted up ye everlasting doors . . . and the King of Glory shall come in

When I met up with Derek Williams, the Catholic evangelist I was due to co-lead the weekend with, we agreed that rather than “divvying up” meetings beforehand (who would lead what, and which themes and topics we would take up) we decided to look to the Lord, to each other and to what was happening in the meeting to discern which way to direct proceedings.

It was a high risk strategy, but one that offered the Lord the maximum chance to work by His Spirit. It obviously helped a great deal that we are both experienced conference leaders, and that Derek is a gifted Bible teacher.

To our delight, it worked brilliantly.* There was a beautiful integration throughout the weekend of worship, deep crying out in intercession, powerful snippets of teaching, many exquisitely beautiful prophetic songs, and much wonderful impartation from the Lord and ministry to one another.



Raise up Eliakim!

A few minutes before setting off from Malvern for the conference, the Lord drew my attention to Isaiah 22. Three things in particular stood out:

- The nation was facing a great peril. Although Hezekiah had encouraged Judah to take "sensible" precautions, people had not cried out to the Lord as they should have done, despite the urgency of the situation. (Isaiah 22:8-14).
- A highly placed official, who, in our terms, was in charge of the Cabinet, was going to be deposed. (22:15-19)
- God declared that He was going to raise up Eliakim (whose name means 'God raises, or "God sets up or "God shall arise.") Effectively, Eliakim would serve as lord chamberlain, or Prime Minister of the nation. (22:20-24)

I sensed the Lord was calling us to pray about these issues both spiritually and at national governmental level.

I was struck by the fact that the man referred to in Isaiah 22 (Eliakim) was also heavily involved in the action during Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem, which was the focus of my workshop on Intimidation at Hastings.

Because all of us are aware of people who have experienced serious intimidation at work, at home or, in church situations, even if we have not experienced it at first hand ourselves, I will send out teaching on this important but painful issue on a subsequent occasion.

God moved in power

People had prepared themselves very thoroughly for this weekend, with the result that, just as in Hastings, there was no need whatsoever for any warm-ups. We were taken to a very high place of worship and intercession from the very first minute, when an academic young lady, who has just completed a PhD on 'The Common Good,' was overcome by the Spirit. This helped to release others too.

As we prayed prayers of deep repentance and release on our nation, the Spirit swept through, and was soon leading us by very clear pictures and visions to intercede for situations where people are experiencing extreme intimidation. It was extremely moving and powerful.

The Lord had told me beforehand to make sure that we allowed long periods of silence for Him to work in. This happened particularly on the Saturday night, when we also pressed in deeply to receive an impartation of His power. This continued on the Sunday morning, ending with a glorious 'fire tunnel,' in which everyone was deeply touched by the Lord as He moved in great love and power among us.

The Seamless Garment

On the Sunday morning Derek and I ministered together on the theme of the Seamless Garment. I taught on key aspects of Jesus' intense life of prayer, and Derek came up with a teaching on the seamless garment (see below).** We certainly found ourselves modelling the union of prayer, worship music and intercession; music was being improvised all the time I was speaking, and incredibly beautiful songs were "given in the Spirit for the situations we were interceding for. This was very much a feature of the whole weekend.

As Derek spoke about Joshua meeting the Captain of the Lord's Armies (Joshua 5v13) and falling to the ground, he stopped more or less in mid sentence as many people in the room fell to their knees in the Lord's presence. The leader of the host community commented afterwards that she found this a very beautiful experience of God's glory.

The group meshed together so well that we really hope this will be the launch pad for something ongoing in the heart of the Catholic Church in this land. It was lovely to meet new people, one or two of whom are on the way to becoming "old" new friends!

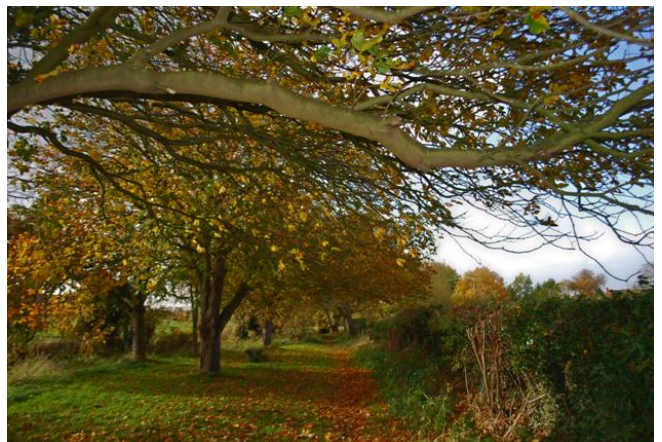
Pray blessing too on the important work being done at the House of the Open Door, (www.houseofthependoor.org) – and also for the Lord to continue to lead Richard Williamson in the wonderful work that he and many other classical musicians linked to him are doing with Epiphany. (They were meeting in Poynton at the same time as us).

After much travelling recently, principally to Holland and Hastings, I am anticipating being rather more home-based for the coming season. He has always 'toggled' my life between intense times of coming 'in' deep with Him, and then going 'out' on specific missions. May the Lord be as much in this coming phase as He has been in the other!

With our love,

Robert & Rosalind

x



* For example, flowing a deep time of cleansing from the opening verses of Psalm 24

'Who may ascend the hill of the Lord...he who has clean hands and a pure heart,'

we pondered what the Psalmist meant when he said,

'Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.'

The reference here seems to be to the fact that the doors to the city were designed rather along the lines of a portcullis, which is attached by pullies above the gate, and which can be let down more rapidly than trying to close a door against invaders. In this case, the portcullis is in the down position, and the people who are preceding the ark order it to be raised.

Once it has been lifted up, and has reached the head (or top) of the gate, the cry goes up, "Be lifted up, ye everlasting doors." In other words, let there be nothing that gets in the way of the mighty Conqueror, the King of glory, whose presence is with the ark, from taking His rightful place in our hearts.

At a literal level, the gates of Jerusalem opened outward. Since there was plenty of headroom for the Levites to carry in the ark, it wouldn't be necessary from a purely physical point of view to raise the lintels of the gates. Spiritually speaking it is quite a different matter. Martin Luther translated it, "Open wide the portals" – that is, "Give a hearty welcome to the Lord!"

It is vital that we raise the bar, or, in structural terms, the 'lintel' in the whole way we do church in these days to make room for the King of Glory. May the Lord open the doors of our heart and have free reign in them – especially in any that we have unintentionally closed or half closed – and may that be true as we meet in larger congregations too.



The administration of an ancient city was transacted at the city gates, so in those days the gates were what the city hall is to citizens in the western world today. David was commanding the whole city – and particularly the leaders – to welcome the Lord and give honour to the One who is called, five times in Psalm 24:7-10, "the King of Glory."

When Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, of course, the whole city did not receive Him and praise Him. This psalm would had been sung that morning at the temple, but the leaders would not have thought of applying it to Jesus of Nazareth.

Instead of accepting Him and honouring Him, they rejected Him and sent Him to Golgotha to be crucified. However, through His death and resurrection, Jesus won the battle against Satan and sin, and when He ascended back to heaven and entered the heavenly Zion (Heb 12:18 ff), He was received as the victorious Lord of Hosts and the King of Glory. Jesus will return to the earth and fight a battle against the armies of the world and be victorious (Rev 19:11 ff; Is. 63:1-3).

He will deliver Jerusalem from her enemies (Zech 12-14) and establish His kingdom on earth. Then His people will receive Him in Jerusalem, as the Lord of Hosts, and the King of Glory – and "the Lord shall be king over all the earth" (Zech 14:9). Meanwhile, we can triumph in life through Jesus Christ (2 Cor 2:14) and be "more than conquerors" through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 8:31-39).

As children of God, we belong to three worlds: the world of creation around us, the world of the new creation within us (2 Cor 5:17), and "the world to come" of the wonderful final creation that will be our home for eternity (Rev 21-22). (From The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament © 2001-2004 by Warren W. Wiersbe.)

The Seamless Garment

(Notes I made from Derek Williams's teaching)

Leviticus 13:45

In Leviticus we often find the Lord speaking to Moses. A lot of this is the Lord pointing to what He is going to do when He comes. If you had leprosy in Israel you had to rip your garments. (The word 'leprosy' in Hebrew means any kind of skin infection). Whilst lepers had to shout 'unclean', one exception is made: "He who wears a special garment (that is the Chief High Priest) shall not bare his head or rend his garment." (Lev. 21:10) *His* head must be covered – and his garment was to be a seamless one.

Joshua Chapter 5

The only thing separating the Israelites from the Promised Land is the River Jordan, which was in flood. They camped at one of several places in Israel called Gilgal, which sounds like the Hebrew word galal – to roll. (It can also mean a circle or turning point). This is where they celebrated the first Kosher Passover they had had in 40 years – and they did so on the same day of the year as they used to celebrate it before leaving the land of slavery. They knew that they were at the turning point, on the entrance to the promised Kingdom. As the manna stops, from now on they would eat the fruit of the Kingdom rather than the manna of Heaven.

On the first night at the conference someone was given a strong prophecy that there are 'big changes coming'. We may have been in the desert for a long time, but it is important not to keep eating the manna when the fruit of the Kingdom is in our grasp, and when God is wanting us to live as a community. He wants us to see Victory in a way that we have never done before. Just as this new phase began for Israel with a mighty miracle, (the Jordan stopping in mid-flood) it may well do so in our lives too.

When the Commander of the Lord's armies appeared before him, Joshua fell prostrate in worship before Him. Had this "only" been an angel, he would have told Joshua not to worship him. But this was the King of Kings Himself appearing. Joshua says "What has my Lord got to say to me?" rather as Elizabeth asks questions of Mary in Luke 1:43 (Why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?)

Joshua is told "Take off your shoes. This is Holy Ground. Walk around Jericho in silence, *thirteen* times in all before you praise the Lord and see His great deliverance. (yes, the maths is right!)"

So we have three concepts:

- a garment that is rent,
- a garment that is seamless,
- and a turning point.

In 2 Kings 2 the Lord is about to take Elijah up to Heaven in a whirlwind on their way from Gilgal. This is another turning point for Israel. Shortly after this, both Ahab and Jezebel die, and Elisha comes in with a double ministry from Elijah, marking the beginning of a different era. Speaking to the young people in the church, Pope Benedict declared, "*You are the prophets of a new age of the Holy Spirit*". This is a new dawn for the Church – so we dare not allow ourselves to remain stuck in the desert!

Then the High Priest tore his robes" (John 19:23 and Matthew 26:65)

The Roman soldiers took Jesus' robes and divided them up between them – including 'the seamless tunic'. We have seen already that sinners are expected to rend their garments – but the Most Exalted High Priest was to wear a seamless garment. On this occasion, however, the High Priest tore his clothes. God is turning everything upside down. But Jesus' garment is not rent, because He has always got the anointing.

God worked providentially in the hearts of the soldiers, who say to each other, "Let's not tear this garment but roll dice for it" – which brings us back to the root word for Gilgal, which is "rolling". The Cross is the ultimate turning point in History.

A few days later an angel comes along and "rolls the big stone away" from in front of the tomb. There is a new thing taking place. A new era.

Before the power of the Spirit came the disciples were divided, but in Acts 4:32 we see that they were together in one heart and mind. They are now a seamless garment. May the Lord bring about work yet deeper unity in the Body of Christ.

In 2 Chronicles 30:8-9, we are invited to "Come to the Sanctuary that He has established forever. For when you turn to the Lord, your brethren and your children will find mercy." Peter repeats this concept in Acts 2:38-39:

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call.

Go deeper with the Lord yourself and it will impact others. St Francis was right with God and his life is still impacting the world. Patrick was empowered by God and a result Ireland was converted. The Lord will not turn His face away if we yield and return to Him with all our heart. In Judah the Power of God brought about this level of unity. "Come into the Sanctuary which He has consecrated forever . . . and serve Him". One person walking in holiness, or in sin for that matter, as Achan illustrates, affects everyone else. May God's mercy set many of our children free from Satan's power.

The fear of the Lord was on the early church, and everyone was of one mind to carry out the command of the Lord. Be prepared for God's grace to increase substantially in your life – and in the ministry that you bear for Him.

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