Righteousness

Thursday 12th December 2024

Photo by Andreas Fischinger on Unsplash - Gerechtigkeitsbrunnen in Bern, Schweiz

Scripture: Psalm 145.1-4. 8-13

1 I will exalt you, O God my King, *and bless your Name for ever and ever.
2 Every day will I bless you * and praise your Name for ever and ever.
3 Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; *there is no end to his greatness.
4 One generation shall praise your works to another * and shall declare your power.
8 The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, * slow to anger and of great kindness.
9 The Lord is loving to everyone * and his compassion is over all his works.
10 All your works praise you, O Lord, * and your faithful servants bless you.
11 They make known the glory of your kingdom * and speak of your power;
12 That the peoples may know of your power * and the glorious splendour of your kingdom.
13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; * your dominion endures throughout all ages.

To reflect

Righteousness – the noun of the adjective Righteous. Righteous – a word that means acting in accord with divine or moral law, free from guilt or sin, or morally right or justifiable or in slang genuine or excellent.

Righteous behaviour is described in today's Psalm, God's moral law but also how we are to respond in the 'righteous' manner. Righteousness and righteous appeared in the readings from Baruch, Malachi, the Song of Zechariah (Canticle from the Gospel of Luke) and Philippians. Baruch speaks of God's righteousness – the robe of righteousness that comes from God, that mercy and righteousness come from God, and that Jerusalem will be given the name" "Righteous Peace, Godly Glory" by God forever. The Song of Zechariah connects the promise of God to Abraham to being able to worship without fear, being holy and righteous in God's sight. Malachi speaks of refining and purifying people, until they are in the righteous state to make offerings to God. In Philippians it speaks of people growing in knowledge and faith of God "so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God."

These are different ideas of righteousness – what does righteousness mean to you?

Morning Hymn *by Charles Wesley*

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
Christ, the true, the only light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise,
Triumph o'er the shades of night:
Day-spring from on high, be near:
Day-star, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn
Unaccompanied by thee,
Joyless is the day's return,
Till thy mercy's beams I see;
Till thy inward light impart,
Glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine,
Pierce the gloom of sin, and grief,
Fill me, Radiancy Divine,
Scatter all my unbelief,
More and more thyself display,
Shining to the perfect day.

To Listen (these and other suggestions can be found on a Spotify playlist at https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0F5bU2sf4OiOtQY3q78Rf2?si=a99cbbf61e7d4587)

- 'Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God' by Kerensa Briggs, one performance is by the Pembroke College Girls Choir. This is a contemporary setting of Matthew 6.33-34: *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.*
- 'Christ whose glory fills the skies' by Charles Wesley, one version is by the Scottish Festival Singers, a setting of the poem above.