

12th March 2022

Psalms

**“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart,
be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.”**

Bible, Psalm 19:14 (AV)

I referenced the Psalms yesterday and chose verses from Psalm 139 as my “Prayer for Today”. Why? Because, more often than not, the Psalmist puts things into words better than I can. If he prays – as in the verse from Psalm 19 above – that his words and meditations are acceptable to his Lord, I can assure him that they are more than acceptable to me.

When I worked as a hospice chaplain, I had a small supply of *Gideon’s* Bibles which I could make available to patients and family members. Often, I would read a passage at a bedside and leave the little bible as a mark of the occasion, with the hope that Scripture might continue to provide comfort. These bibles contained just the Psalms and the New Testament. To be honest, most often I read from the Psalms.

For what I found there – and find still – was the Psalmist reflecting, honestly and openly, on the whole of the human condition. From praise to devastation, self-recrimination to special-pleadings, fearfulness to joy, rambling thoughts to concise ideas. There are prayers and hymns, metaphors and rantings, deep theology and honest rawness. The Psalms cover everything in the relationship between the human and the divine, in all the questions of life we might ever have. In the worst of days, I return to reading the Psalms – and sometimes out loud. In the best of my days, I read the Psalms – and sing them in their metrical form. I was brought up on the Psalms. I’m sustained by the Psalms. I trust the Psalms to speak for me when I have no words of my own. Because the Psalmist is me!

What the Psalms offer is a mirror of my relationship with God. “Acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength, my redeemer”? Of course! Why should I agonise over getting the words right when the Psalmist has already done that for me?

A prayer for today

*Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely.
You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.*

Psalm 139:4-6