



Link Up!

‘Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken.’ Psalm 55:22

For the rest of February

On Sunday 23rd February, we will look at The Parable of the Wicked Tenants (Matthew 21: 33 – 45)

Ken is taking some of his Annual Leave from Monday 17th February until Friday 21st February. Please remember this and contact one of the Deacons in his absence.

Looking forward to March

On Sunday 2nd March we will prepare for Lent by looking at Matthew 3: 13 – 4:11 – The account of Jesus’ baptism and testing in the wilderness.

Then on Sunday 9th March we will be looking at the parable of the Wedding Feast in Matthew 22: 1 – 14.

On Sunday 16th March our Contact Group will be celebrating their Anniversary and leading our service with Rachel Roberts as our speaker.

On 23rd March we will return to our look at parables with The Ten Virgins in Matthew 25: 1 – 13

And on the final Sunday, 30th March, which is Mothering Sunday we will be holding one of our joint services with Parkstone Baptist Church when they will join with us.

Ken will be taking another week of his Annual Leave from 10th – 16th March, so please respect this by not phoning him during that time.

You only need to chat to me for about five minutes (if that long) until I mention singing. I started singing about the same time I could talk, and so it’s very natural to me to want to praise God with sung worship. I also grew up in the church choir, with many wonderful people who looked out for me and encouraged me in both my singing and my fledgling relationship with God.

I learnt a lot about breath technique, dynamics, a little bit about the sight reading of sheet music and the importance of not getting caught eating sweets by the Choir Master! One of the key things he was sincerely passionate about, and instilled in me by his enthusiasm, was the desire to find understanding and connection with the words of each worship song being sung. After all, there is something quite disquieting when people are singing “Rejoice! Rejoice! Christ is in you!” with the same enthusiasm as reciting a shopping list.

I have sung in many secular choirs as well over the years, so when Steve and I moved to Poole it wasn’t very long before I sought a nearby choir in which to sing and make like-minded friends – and many of you know I am a member of Bournemouth Rock Choir.

The song we learnt at the beginning of term I really did struggle with in my spirit, and that really doesn’t happen often – even with songs that have some somewhat dodgy lyrics. It took me a couple of weeks to work out why it was unsettling me. Certainly everyone else around me instantly loved the song “Mountain” by Sam Ryder (he is ‘famous’ to some because of Eurovision). It is a very beautiful melodic song, with wonderful dynamics. Everyone around me was clearly loving the upbeat sound and words, commenting how “empowering” it was to sing. So why did I feel so troubled in my spirit?

Other Notices

During Lent, our Monday and Wednesday Bible Study groups will be following a Lent series called 'Open the Doors' which was written by Ken and Nicky. We hope that some of folk from the other Baptist Churches in Poole will be joining us for this. If you want to join in, then the Monday group starts at 6.15pm and the 'Wednesday Night In' group on Zoom starts at 7.30pm. Talk to Ken or Janet for more details.

The Annual General Church Meeting will be held on Sunday 23rd March. As usual this gives an opportunity for a Diaconate Election. None of the existing Deacons have come to the end of their current term of service, but if you feel that God might be calling you to serve as a Deacon then talk to Ken about this. Nominations need to be in by Sunday 2nd March.

Work on our new Church Garden will begin on Monday 10th March and, while we have received some donations towards the cost, it may be that some of the church congregation would like to give money towards this project. If you are interested in supporting this then do have a chat with Stephen, our Treasurer, or Janet.

The Rock Choir version interprets the original, it's not an exact cut and paste, so they had the backing track set up with a very Gospel sound, especially with the harmony arrangement applied.. this was my first clue to what was troubling me. Then I fully realised what it was... it's the fact that it sounds like hymn of worship to God Almighty; in fact it even has the line "I'll sing this hymn to rise above...." Leading into this chorus...

"I am a Mountain. And down in the valley below is all that I've overcome. All that I've overcome. Whoa! I am a Mountain. And down in the valley below is all that I've overcome. All that I've overcome. Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!"

And I realised that I wasn't feeling very at ease with a singing "hymn" that seems to be a boast in ourselves.. in the SELF – *I have overcome, I am a Mountain, I am so strong and amazing* – it felt like a crude counterfeit of a hymn, mocking a worship song, getting us to focus on ourselves and making out like we were strong and towering over our obstacles in our own strength.

After feeling a bit weird about it for a couple of days, I finally got my sense back and I talked about it to Father God in prayer... and found peace. I thought through with Him about how in my life I call out for God to take me to the Rock that is higher than I (Jesus my Saviour and Lord). So I am free as I don't at all believe the lie that I am a mountain in and of myself ... but I know the truth that God Almighty is The Mountain, and everything I have overcome it is through his power and to his glory, as in Him we are more than conquerors. And this is what I think about when I sing the song now... so if there is some mocking spirit behind the song, there is no power to it at all.

I have been pondering on how powerful the words are that we speak, we sing, we believe and hold to be true – especially the honest whispers to God about the things that trouble us. So whether you praise God in song, or in a myriad of other ways, I just wanted to encourage you to give your mind and your heart to fully consider the words you entertain.. and if anything troubles you, take it straight to the Mountain of the living God!

Kim Chaloner