

# **CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 150**

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

**'Virtually Church but with some way to go...'**

## **Welcome**

Welcome to this Sunday's edition of Cutting Edge Camelot. Ron reflects below on how Jesus compares Himself to a mother hen in our gospel passage for this Sunday. There is also an interesting anecdote about a fake £20 note!

## **Scripture Passage**

*Luke 13: 31-35*

At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you."

<sup>32</sup> He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. <sup>33</sup> Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.'

<sup>34</sup> "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!

<sup>35</sup> See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

## Reflection

One of those books people get forced to read at school, but I really enjoyed, is Homer's *Iliad* - the story of the great war the Greeks fought against Troy. Because I could read it in English it was alright. Among all these great warriors is Aias, who has a great shield - Homer says it's like a tower, and a cousin, Teucer, who is an archer. And Homer spends well over a page saying how a mother hen hides her chicks under her wing, and they come out to feed and peck around, and then they go back under the hen's wing. He really builds up this picture of farmyard life, and just when you think he's lost the plot altogether, he says, *that's* how Teucer would pop out from behind his cousin's shield, shoot off an arrow at the Trojans, and then pop back again. Which raises the question, would the mighty Aias, with his huge, oiled muscles, mind being compared with a mother hen? Jesus didn't mind at all - in fact he used the image himself.

Jerusalem is still a controversial place. It is the holiest city for the Jews, because this was where the temple was. Even before that, King David evacuated the city rather than fight for it, because he didn't want it damaged in a battle. It annoys the Jews today that two great mosques stand on the temple mount. Both Jews and Muslims claim that this is the hill where God stopped Abraham sacrificing Isaac, and Muslims say it is where Mohammed, peace be upon him, mounted to heaven on a horse. For Christians, the city is the scene of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection. Other sites connected with Jesus in the Holy Land might be based on no more than tradition and guesswork, but Jerusalem is the real deal.

And for Jesus himself, Jewish through and through, Jerusalem was the centre of his people's faith. The temple was a special place, even if other people didn't see how special it was. Jerusalem was meant to be the model city for the kingdom of heaven. In his Revelation, John saw the New Jerusalem, the perfect city, coming from heaven as a gift from God. St Paul tells us we're citizens of heaven - citizens, as in city. If heaven is envisaged

not as a wilderness, and not as the Garden of Eden re-made, but as a city, the New Jerusalem, what a pity, thinks Jesus, the original Jerusalem isn't a better model. He isn't angry with it, but disappointed.

Some well-meaning Pharisees, good people who really didn't want to see Jesus come to harm warned him that Herod Antipas was out to get him. Jesus dismissed him with a snort - *that fox!* Interesting he should use that word. What do mother hens do? They try to protect their chicks from foxes. The king was as unpopular as the Romans, who had put him in power. There were all sorts of rebel movements bubbling up, but Jesus was offering to deliver the people from the clampdown that would surely follow any uprising, by showing them a more spiritual meaning of the words, *the kingdom of God*. But the people were only interested in the power of politics, and rejected Jesus when he wouldn't give it to them. Jesus knew that his final appeal would be made in the capital city, Jerusalem, and that if it failed, it would cost him his life. So carrying on with the same set of metaphors, he cried out,

*Jerusalem! The city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I wanted to gather your children together, like a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you weren't willing!*

He didn't say, *how often has God my Father wanted to gather you...* And there's no history of Jesus the man offering the people of Jerusalem his protection. So this saying implies Jesus' oneness with the God who gets described in the psalms as hiding us under the shadow of his wings; and he described the danger of destruction facing the people of the city he loved. He didn't need any supernatural power to do this. All he needed was the detachment to be able to look at the current situation and realise that if there was an uprising against the Romans, centred on Jerusalem, then the Romans would flatten the city. They didn't do proportional response. And in 70AD, it happened, just as Jesus said.

We're in danger, too. Every day we call out to God, *deliver us from evil*. I suppose the evil we ask to be delivered from is different from what faced the people of Jerusalem. We're not in danger of being killed. Christians all over the world have to pray to be spared dreadful things we don't run the risk of. You only have to watch the news to see how comfortable our lives are.

But we're still in danger of losing our faith, and not trusting God is the worst thing that can happen. Really, it's all God asks of us is to trust him. Killing is wrong - trust him. Covetousness makes you a bitter, dissatisfied person - trust him. Your sins are forgiven - trust him. But if we suffer prolonged pain, for example, that could tempt us into believing God doesn't care for us. If we don't achieve what we hoped we might, or we feel we've lost our self-respect, because our personal economies collapse, or we have problems with our families, any of these might frighten us into turning away from God and looking for a more human deliverance. If we ever get to thinking we, or anybody else knows better than God, we're losing our faith. Or we've tried calling out to God, and he sometimes seems to have ignored us. So the next time, we don't even bother to pray.

But like the people of Jerusalem in the first century, we've often been looking for a material answer to our prayers; but Jesus points us to find deliverance in the spiritual strength that God gives us to cope with our problems. Sometimes we have to fail in order to triumph over compromise. I need to sort that out. Sometimes, doing the right thing would cost us. So we compromise, and avoid the immediate difficulty, and say we've won. But we haven't. There are times when we have to do the right thing and lose, rather than do the wrong thing. I was in Homebase on Thursday, and there was a chap in front of me who had tried to pass a counterfeit £20 note. It wasn't his fault - he'd been given it in another shop. I couldn't have told the difference, but the check out girl had a magic pen that showed it up. So he paid with another one. Now what does he do? If he keeps it as a souvenir, or hands it in to the police, he's £20 down. But he's in the right. If he spends it in another shop, he's got his money, but he knows he's in the

wrong. Sometimes, we have to lose to win. And eventually, we'll all lose our life, but trust God, we'll have a better one, a more real one. And as Jesus showed us, sometimes death is the supreme victory, which crowns a life of sacrificing ourselves for those we love.

Jesus will deliver us, not *from* death, but *through* death by gathering us under the shadow of his wings, even at the cost of his own life. But this is only possible if we're willing to take shelter, and that means conforming our lives to his example. Jesus offers; we have to trust him, and accept. Jesus cried out, *how often have I wanted to gather you under my wings and save you, and you weren't willing!* Are we willing, now, this Lent, to live less selfish lives, accepting the deliverance from solitary fear that he offers?

*Ron*

## **Points for Prayers**

- Accepting Jesus' deliverance from solitary fear so that we lead less selfish lives
- The conflict between Russia and the Ukraine and the efforts to help Ukrainian refugees
- New rise in covid cases and continued thanksgiving for the care, skill and courage of all healthcare workers
- Those whom we know who are facing illnesses of all kinds and have recently been bereaved
- Bishop Ruth and the rest of the Diocesan staff as they take on additional responsibility in this vacancy in See
- For the choice of a new Bishop, someone who shares God's heart for this Diocese
- For Elliscombe House in Higher Holton now reopened and for its first residents

- For North Cadbury Church School and other local schools
- Prayers and thanksgiving for contributions to the foodbanks and for those helping to take these to the foodbanks.

## Hymn

One suggested hymn for today is ‘All my hope on God is founded.’

## Services for March

Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	9.30 am Communion, North Cheriton
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	9.30 am Communion, Galhampton
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	9.30 am Matins, Blackford
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	11.00 am Sunday Worship, Holton
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> March	9.30 am Communion, Compton Pauncefoot
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> March	11.00 am Communion, Maperton
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> March	11.00 am Sunday Worship, North Cadbury
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> March	4.00 pm Evensong, Yarlington
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	8.00 am Communion, Blackford
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	9.30 am Communion, South Cadbury
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	9.30 am Matins, Compton Pauncefoot
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	9.30 am Morning Worship, North Cheriton
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	11.00 am Communion, North Cadbury
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	11.00 am Communion, Holton
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	11.00 am Sunday Worship, Yarlington
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	6.30 pm Evening Service, Galhampton

## **Excalibur**

Excalibur is back in paper form. It contains details of Camelot people, a record of baptisms, weddings and funerals undertaken through the church in the Camelot Parishes. The March edition of Excalibur has now been published online at [camelotparishes.co.uk](http://camelotparishes.co.uk).

## **The Parish Office**

If Rob is not in the Office during normal office hours please contact him via email ([office@camelotparishes.org.uk](mailto:office@camelotparishes.org.uk)) or on 01749 850934.

*Growing as a worshipper, a servant and a family*

*We pray that 'we might live in love,  
as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us'*

(Ephesians 5: 2)