

Thought for the Day, Wednesday 10 June 2020,

by Clive Barrett (St Michael's).

Joshua 8.1-29; Luke 11.1-13

The Mirror and the Light



Today's Old Testament reading wallows in the brutal slaughter of 12,000 people. This account the Word of the Lord? Maybe. These acts the will of God? Surely not.

The news today tells of thousands of casualties, of despair and pain from another adversary; but we cannot, we do not, call the virus the will of God. The news tells us what is, not what should be.

Luke tells of Jesus's teaching on prayer. "Your will be done" - how the world might be, not how it is.

Jesus puts everything in perspective by starting with God: "Hallowed be". Entrust the world to God ("Your kingdom come"). Only then come our needs ("daily bread") and our relationships – with God ("forgive us") and others ("we forgive"). Luke adds parables on persistence in prayer, and trusting God.

Our prayer is a mirror on who we are. What do you ask God for? Why?

As a boy, hearing my team had lost a cup tie. I prayed, "Lord, make it a replay". Even as an adult, at election times, I've prayed, "Lord, make there be a recount". That says more about me, than the will of God.

What do your prayers reveal about you?

Are you praying for armies to kill enemies, or that we might forgive enemies? Admit who you are to God, what you like or don't like about yourself. Shine a light on your deepest hopes, needs, fears, prejudices. Be honest with yourself, and God.

You needn't give God instructions; just lay open who you are.

What are your concerns? Who are the people who matter to you? Archbishop Michael Ramsey once advised, "Be with God, with the people on your heart." Exactly.

Jesus started with God.

"Your kingdom come. **Your** will be done." Amen.