

Thank God for the Birds

Jesus said, “*Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*” (Matthew 6:26). To encourage the believer our Lord gave this wonderful statement. He was saying if He could take care of the birds, which do nothing to merit His kindness, He could take care of us.

In January of this year, ten blocks of downtown Austin was shut down after finding sixty-three birds dead one morning. Some compared it to the miners who would go deep into the West Virginia mines with canaries. If the canary died, you knew to evacuate because that was a sign that the environment had gone lethal due to undetected gas. Investigative work began from the local sheriff to Homeland Security. What could it be? Recently we were led to understand that it could have been an outworking of orchestrated poisoning to cut down the Common Grackle population that was beginning to take over much of Central Texas. Their annoyance, from the unpleasant sound of their squawk - which may be an onomatopoeia with their name - to the even more annoying droppings that come wherever they go seemed to be the motivation for their demise. When the birds stay alive we often take it for granted. When as few as sixty-three die overnight, a city the size of Austin can temporarily shut down.

My mom has always been one interested in birds and flowers. She would leave breadcrumbs or purchase seeds to feed the birds all year round. She has been so familiar with them that she could spot some of the same ones from day to day. Knowing her, she probably named them. One week we went to my grandmother’s. When we returned home, Mom began feeding the birds again. She was welcoming her old friends back when she looked at me and inquired, “Johnny, who fed the birds while we were gone?” The point was well taken: the same birds were back, but they were not dependent on Mom. God fed the birds as He promised. It is marvelous that God could not only use the birds but even the flowers and grass to remind of His all sufficient watch-care. Jesus said in Luke 12: 27, 28, “*Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?*” In our Lord’s rebuke of worry, we should take heed.

In our study it would serve us well to know:

1. God attends the funeral of the smallest birds.

In Matthew 10:29, our Lord said, “*Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.*” The tender hand of a loving God is there to steady, catch and safely lead to the ground one of the smallest of His creation.

2. God gives us the finesse of a bird to escape from traps set for us.

“*Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth*” (Psalm 124:6-8). It is true, sometimes we can be trapped like a bird to prey, but thanks be to God for the times He delivers us from temptation!

3. God gives us a home, as He gives the bird a nest.

“*And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head*” (Luke 9:58). How touching and most tender, while our Lord was on this

earth, He had no permanent dwelling. Part of the great redemptive plan was not only to give us an eternal home in glory, but also to give us provision on this earth. Christ lived the life we could never live, so we might have eternal life. He died the death of the cross, so we could bypass the death in Hell. He forfeited His home in Heaven temporarily so we might have a wonderful home on earth until we go to heaven. Psalm 68:6 says, "*God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.*" Spring is a great time to behold the birds. When I take my morning walk, I marvel at the sight and sound of the beautiful birds. Next time you see the birds, just remember how our Lord is taking care of you and yours. Years ago, Elizabeth Cheney wrote:

Overheard in the Orchard

Said the robin to the sparrow, "I should really like to know...
Why these anxious human beings rush about and worry so?!"

Said the sparrow to the robin, "Friend, I think it must be,
That they have no Heavenly Father, such as cares for you and me!"

Thank God for the birds!

- Pastor Pope -

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