

MEDITATION ON THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS

And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that they should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, . . . (2 Ch 20:21)

What is the meaning of this descriptive phrase that is found four times in our King James Bible? What is beauty? Does it relate to holiness, and is there a greater truth underlying these words?

The word “beauty” is much like the word “truth.” We know what it means but it is instructive to apply it to something before we can explain it. There is not one particular property of an object that gives it beauty but rather, a pleasing combination of all of its elements. If only one facet exhibits ugliness, it seems to contaminate the whole, and that object no longer has “beauty.”

For the sake of discussion, let us examine the beauty of an orchid. We see, first of all, a fragile, delicate shape. Next, we may see a fascinating combination of colors. Thirdly, it may have hidden underneath an unexpected delight of some sort, and perhaps an unusual texture in a protruding part. It may lack symmetry but that is undoubtedly part of its attractiveness. There may be many unique attributes but they all come together in harmony, producing an object of beauty. Even this, however, soon fades away and dies.

The second part of the phrase we are considering is “holiness.” Holiness denotes perfect purity. A holy object must be without contamination. Also, each component part must be wholly pure so as not to adulterate the whole.

Therefore, in examining the beauty of holiness, whatever object is referred to must be a combination of perfectly pleasing, pure, components. Each element making up the whole must, in itself, be without blemish or corruption, and only then will the combination of the elements produce an object of exceptional, glorious, incorruptible beauty.

There is only one object in the whole created universe that can measure up to this standard of perfection. Interestingly enough, this object was never created at all but always has been. The Lord Jesus Christ exhibits the beauty of holiness even though in the Bible we read the following:

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; **and when we shall see him, *there is no beauty that we should desire him.* (Isa 53:2)**

What a failure on the part of man to not desire the perfect, holy, eternal Son of God; the object of ultimate perfection, the only one worthy of our praise. May we, through the eyes of faith, see the beauty of holiness and loudly proclaim:

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. (Rev 5:12)