

## **Pause for Reflection**

**8 January 2021**

### **We are all blessed with riches!**

A famous footballer, not renowned for his intelligence when on TV as a co-commentator, once famously asked, "What's French for Deja Vue?"

Given the recent Government announcements about a return to full lockdown, many of you may well be asking the same question as we seem to have reverse time-travelled almost 9 months to March 2020.

I am sure that even though the return to lockdown was becoming more likely and many folks were not surprised by the announcements earlier this week, lots of people will feel downhearted, anxious and even depressed at the thought of several more weeks or even months of restrictions. Many people will feel that we seem to be stuck on a treadmill of bad news, restriction of liberty and risks to health.

It would not be at all surprising then if some people let these feelings of despair and sadness begin to overwhelm them and some individuals may well slip in to deep depressions and think that all is doom and gloom with nothing much to smile about.

But I firmly believe that is not the case and no one, no matter how dark and dreary their current outlook might be, should feel that there is no hope, nothing to smile about or be grateful for in this life.

With this thought in mind, I turned once more to my CD shelves and continued along the shelf holding artists beginning with "M." This week I have chosen a track by Mike and the Mechanics.

( Spoiler alert! I am very likely to stick with Mike for the next couple of weeks at least!)

Mike and the Mechanics is an English rock supergroup formed in Dover in 1985 as a side project of Mike Rutherford, the bassist/guitarist in Genesis. The band is known for hit singles "Silent Running", "All I Need Is a Miracle", "Taken In", "The Living Years", "Word of Mouth" and "Over My Shoulder" some of which may well feature in the coming weeks.

However, my chosen track this week is entitled "Beggar on a Beach of Gold."

I've chosen this track as I feel it encapsulates the message I wish to put across this week. i.e. we all have many blessings and we should all count ourselves lucky that we are all in fact blessed with riches.

Even although we may well feel fed up, "scunnered" even, with all the ongoing Covid issues, we should not lose sight of the joy of family and friends who continue to give us their love and support. We should never think that we are alone nor that life is full of doom and gloom.

In so many ways we are, as Mike Rutherford says in the lyrics, sitting on a beach of gold. We are all lucky enough to have family and /or friends upon whom we can call in times of need. We are lucky enough to have food to eat, clothes to wear and comfortable, safe homes to shelter in.

So, as you read through the lyrics below (and hopefully listen to Mike on YouTube) I hope that you too can find comfort, hope and strength to face all that comes before you.

## "A Beggar On A Beach Of Gold"

I didn't know when I was lucky  
Discontented feeling bad  
Filled with envy  
For possessions other people had  
I found my pride had always hurt me  
Fought the world to gain control  
Not realizing  
I was sitting on a beach of gold

Oh Lord, I'm a poor man  
With all the riches I can hold  
I'm a beggar  
And I'm sitting on a beach of gold

The problems I encountered  
Gave me strength helped me sustain  
To know the pleasure  
First I had to cure the pain  
When I was searching for solutions  
I found the answer lay in me  
I'm a drifter  
But I'm drifting on a silver sea

Oh Lord, I'm a poor man  
With all the riches I can hold  
I'm a beggar  
And I'm sitting on a beach of gold

I didn't have courage  
My life was as dark as night  
When alone in the darkness  
I saw the brightest light  
Let the light shine down

Are you out there now on empty  
Feel you've nothing left to give  
Sick of trying  
Have you lost the will to live?  
Don't be drowning in the shallows  
With the beach so near at hand  
Hear the voice say, "Stand up, get up  
And join me on the gilded sand"  
Come and join me on the beach  
With all the riches I can hold  
'Cause I'm a beggar  
And I'm sitting on a beach of gold

Oh Lord, I'm a poor man  
With all the riches I can hold  
I'm a beggar  
And I'm sitting on a beach of gold

My children my salvation  
The father to this man  
They're my teachers  
Playing on the golden sand

With my family all around me  
I've all the riches I can hold  
I'm a beggar  
Sitting on a beach of gold  
Oh Lord, I'm a poor man  
With all the riches I can hold  
I'm a beggar  
And I'm sitting on a beach of gold

-----OOOOOOOOO-----

My chosen hymn this week is amongst my favourites and I think it is very appropriate for this week's message.

### **Hymn 166**

#### **Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy**

1 Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,  
Whose trust, ever child-like, no cares can destroy,  
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,  
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.  
2 Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,  
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,  
Be there at our labours, and give us, we pray,  
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

3 Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,  
Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,  
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,  
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

4 Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,  
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,

Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,  
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

-----OOOOOOOOO-----

### **Bible reading**

#### **Psalm 104 from V1 through to V24.**

1 Praise the Lord, my soul! O Lord, my God, how great you are! You are clothed with majesty and glory;  
2 you cover yourself with light. You have spread out the heavens like a tent  
3 and built your home on the waters above. You use the clouds as your chariot and ride on the wings of the wind.  
4 You use the winds as your messengers and flashes of lightning as your servants.  
5 You have set the earth firmly on its foundations, and it will never be moved.

**6** You placed the ocean over it like a robe, and the water covered the mountains.

**7** When you rebuked the waters, they fled; they rushed away when they heard your shout of command.

**8** They flowed over the mountains and into the valleys, to the place you had made for them.

**9** You set a boundary they can never pass, to keep them from covering the earth again.

**10** You make springs flow in the valleys, and rivers run between the hills.

**11** They provide water for the wild animals; there the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

**12** In the trees near by, the birds make their nests and sing.

**13** From the sky you send rain on the hills, and the earth is filled with your blessings.

**14** You make grass grow for the cattle and plants for us to use, so that we can grow our crops

**15** and produce wine to make us happy, olive oil to make us cheerful, and bread to give us strength.

**16** The cedars of Lebanon get plenty of rain - the Lord's own trees, which he planted.

**17** There the birds build their nests; the storks nest in the fir trees.

**18** The wild goats live in the high mountains, and the rock badgers hide in the cliffs.

**19** You created the moon to mark the months; the sun knows the time to set.

**20** You made the night, and in the darkness all the wild animals come out.

**21** The young lions roar while they hunt, looking for the food that God provides.

**22** When the sun rises, they go back and lie down in their dens.

**23** Then people go out to do their work and keep working until evening.

**24** Lord, you have made so many things! How wisely you made them all!

-----OOOOOOOOO-----

Let us pray

Dear Lord, as we begin another challenging time, be with us, give us your strength and support us. Help us to appreciate all the blessings we have and guide us in your ways so that we might know we are not poor but rather we have all the riches we can hold.

Amen

-----OOOOOOOOOOO-----

**Benediction**

May the Lord Jesus Christ , who loved us and gave us unfailing courage and a firm hope, encourage you and strengthen you always.

Amen

-----OOOOOOOOOOO-----

Until next week, stay safe, keep healthy and enjoy your own beach of gold!

Alistair Session Clerk B/P 8/1/2021