

## Thought for the Day

***'I am the resurrection and the life...' (John 11.25)***

Tidying through some drawers, as one does during days of lockdown, I came across some scribbled notes written when I was thinking about some of the great 'I AM' statements and other claims made by Jesus. It occurred to me to wonder at the paradoxes which can be seen in many of them. For example, the beginning of John's Gospel proclaims that The Word was made flesh, and made his dwelling with us. Yet that Word came as a helpless, wordless baby, and so the Light of the World was born in a dark stable and later descended into the darkness of death. The Good Shepherd became the sacrificial lamb, and The Bread of Life was also the ear of wheat sown into the ground to produce the harvest. Jesus told the Samaritan woman that he would give her The Water of Life so that she would not need to keep going to the well, and yet on the cross he said 'I thirst'. He claimed to be The Gate, leading to The way, the Truth and the Life, yet his followers were mystified by this path that led to his rejection and death. God's ways are indeed past simple, human understanding.

The words of a very well-known hymn express exactly what was happening:

*He left his Father's throne above,  
So free, so infinite his grace;  
Emptied himself of all but love  
And bled for Adam's helpless race.  
'Tis mercy all, immense and free  
For, O my God, it found out me.*

Now consider another paradox: Peter calls Jesus the stone, or rubble, rejected by builders as being of no use in the making of houses. But that very stone has become the cornerstone, the foundation of Christ's Church, as also of our own, humbler edifices. Remember, too, his great promise, which we can trust implicitly even though it appears a paradox: *I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.*

Ruth Tiller