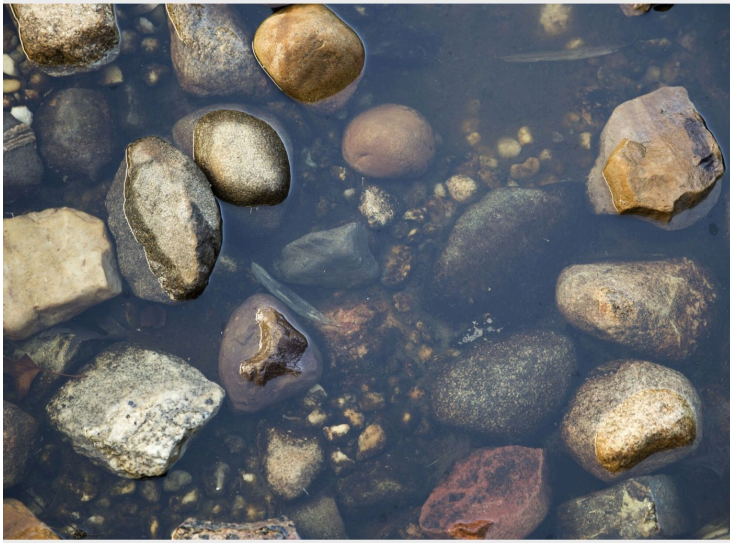


A P O C K E T F U L O F
S M O O T H S T O N E S

B R A V E L I T T L E S O N G S F O R A B I G S C A R Y W O R L D



M A L C O L M G O R D O N

Foreword.

These songs are not about themselves. They are gateways to silence and communion. After you've heard them a few times they'll fade into the background and let you attend to what is happening within and without you, what God might be saying. They are icons that you listen *through*, rather than to.

Find somewhere quiet. Give yourself 15 minutes. Get comfortable. Use headphones, or close the door if you aren't watching anyone small. Or leave it open and let the interruptions be another avenue where God might meet you.

These songs are small. There isn't much to them really. But they *are* solid. They won't crumble or flee at the first sign of trouble. They are brave little songs. Maybe they can help you to be brave. These are the kinds of smooth stones David picked out of the creek on his way to face down his giant. What giants are you facing? These songs might help you.

Try listening to these songs each day for a week or so. See if they help you find rest, spaciousness, a way into prayer.

Each song has been paired with a soundscape that bookends the song. These are simply to give you space to reflect, and to ground the song in the real world. Prayer is not an act of escape, but one of deep engagement: with God, with ourselves and with the world.

Come, Come, Come (w/fire)

Based on Matthew 11:28-30

*Come, come, come all who are weary
Come, come, come you heavy laden
Take my yolk for it is easy
Feel my burden rest ever so lightly*

*For I am gentle and humble
And you will find rest for your soul*

*Come, come, come all who are weary
Come, come, come you heavy laden
Take my yolk for it is easy
And you will find rest for your soul*

Sink Like a Stone (w/ ocean)

Inspired by a painting by Libby Byrne.

A reflection on what we fear being what we need; on baptism.

*Should I sink like a stone
And come to my rest in the deep,
I will wait in the womb of the world
Buried in deep, dark peace.
I will wait for the storm that will stir me from rest
And the waves that will throw me ashore.
As by the sand I am worn
The tide I am drawn
Through the waters I am newborn.*

Be Gentle with Grief (w/ rain)

Based on a poem by George MacDonald

*Do not rush as you walk with grief
For it does not help the journey
Walking slow, take your time
Do not hurry my friend
As you walk with grief*

*Be not disturbed by the memories that come unbidden
Swiftly forgive them, letting Christ speak for you
Unspoken words, unwoven threads
Will be resolved in him
Be not disturbed, be not disturbed*

*Oh be gentle with the one who walks with grief
If it is you, be gentle with yourself.
Swiftly forgive, taking it slow
Take your time
Take time to be gentle as you walk with grief*

Our Father in Heaven (w/ forest)

Based on the Lord's Prayer,
through the lens of lament.

*Our Father in heaven
Save us who bear Your name
Do not leave us abandoned
Let Your will and kingdom reign*

*Meet our hunger with bread
And our sin with forgiveness
As we meet our enemies
As You have met us*

*Lead us not into trial
But deliver Your children
For this world and the one to come
Rest forever in Your power.*

This too shall pass (w/ heart)

Unknowingly based on an ancient proverb of Persian
and Jewish origins.

*This too shall pass
This too shall pass
Though these days are dark
And sure to leave a mark
This too shall pass
This too shall pass*

Attend to the Ground (w/ earth)

An invitation to encounter God in
the ordinariness of life.

*Receive what cannot be claimed
Fall into what cannot be scaled
Breathe in what cannot be seen
Awake to what cannot be dreamed*

*Attend to the ground beneath your feet
Attend to the colours underneath
For God is here and now in love
My friend, trust that will be enough.*

The Way (w/ footsteps)

Based on a poem by Joy Cowley.
Used with gracious permission.

*The Way may be steep and rough
But don't be afraid my friend
If you stumble a hundred times a day
Love will surely pick you up
And kiss your wounds so tenderly
You might even feel pity
For those too strong
To fall.*

Afterword.

None of these songs were written to go on an album.
They were written because I needed a way to keep
these words from slipping away, and the hurts and
hopes that they carry with them. They weren't written
as performance pieces. They were written so I could
remember how to pray. I hope they might help you
also.

It wasn't until I had written them all that I noticed
they might belong together, that they might *be*
something together. The first ('The Way') arrived in
2012, and has been helping me pray since. 'Attend to
the Ground' came in late 2016, and the others more
recently. But it wasn't until the scariness of a global
pandemic that I realised they might be songs for *now*;
nuggety little songs that get into our souls and stay
there, no matter how dark it gets.

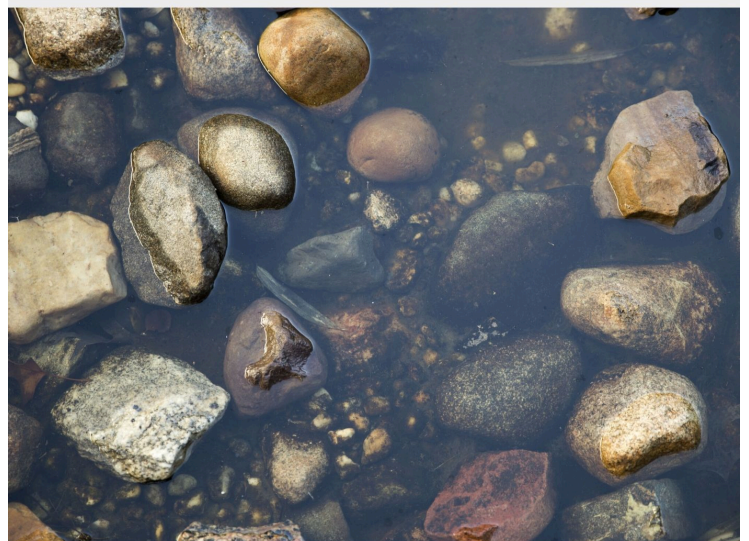
I recorded these songs over the five weeks of Level 4
Lockdown, 2-3 hours each morning while my wife
homeschooled our 3 children. They wouldn't be here if
it wasn't for her. Thank you Vanessa.

And to my friends who heard these little songs and
helped midwife them into your care. Thank you.
Finally to Anne, who thought these songs might be
worth hearing and sharing. Thank you.

Malcolm Gordon
Eastertide 2020
Ōtepoti, Aotearoa

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