2020 07 05 Light and Easy

Genesis 24:34-38,42-49,58-67. Psalm 45:10-17 or Song of Solomon 2:8-13. Romans 7:15-25a. Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30.

(? = Congregational involvement)

Did you know that ‘Light and Easy’ breakfast cereal has a sugar content of than ‘Corn Flakes’ and ‘Weetbix’? Nothing to do with the message but - yeah ok.

Genesis 24:34-38,42-49,58-67 tells the story of…..

In my own life I have found that trusting God and doing what is for me to do, brings peace and quietness – it is a saying in our family – “ok just do what you can and see how it works out.” The plaque that the Billinudgel Anglican Church put up after my Dads mother died early, some 93 years ago, read “She hath done what she could”[[1]](#footnote-1).

The quietness that comes from knowing that God is in a thing, and can bring it to pass. We see this with the, humanly speaking, blind trust of Isaac, his servant, Rebeca and her family – they knew that God had it planned and they had peace.

Note the comment by Laban and Bethuel – “The matter comes from the Lord; so, we cannot speak to you bad or good.” And also, that Isaac had the practice of meditating or strolling in the fields in the evening and knew what God had organised was good.

? (Note also that they wore rings in their noses – what do we think, or feel when we see someone wearing a nose ring? Does anyone recall what the Israelis did with their nose rings in the desert one their journey from Egypt?)

**Read Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30.**

There is a lightness in our Lords attitude and words (v25-30) – you can feel the fresh air of spring! Not a lightness of content or meaning but of freedom and quietness and excitement that makes you want to smile – maybe twirl – slowly if you are older and more breakable and cartwheels for the children.

We do not have to have a degree in theology and be ‘old and wise’, the truth of Jesus is understood and taken into ourselves with the simplicity of a child.

A child can be loved and treated as precious or can be vilely abused or neglected – **so how can a person who has no experience of love come into this “come unto Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest?”**

Can we let the thought in that God was not against us, not punishing us but that God was with us and God felt the hurt and the pain - as Jesus did on the cross.

Jesus identifies so closely with us that what is done to us is done to him – for good or evil – look at Saul – Jesus said to him: Saul, Saul why do you persecute Me – who are you Lord – I am Jesus whom you are persecuting!”[[2]](#footnote-2) Saul/Paul was killing, imprisoning believers in Christ Jesus but Jesus took it personally.

The positive side was when Jesus said “when you give even a cup of water to one of my little ones you do it unto Me.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

If we can let go all the noise of our thinking and the pain of loneliness there is a place inside us where we know God exists[[4]](#footnote-4) – if we can say ‘NO’ to the confusion, the fear of rejection, of intellectual arguments – if we do not argue inside ourselves with it – but know somehow – just a tiny shadow of hope that there is a reality of God.

Maybe you will feel something, a sense off, or just a knowing inside - maybe we accept that there is a reality and simply start walking – it has to be a moment by moment living – a deliberate acceptance that God is real and a coming into “because God loved His creation so much He gave His only begotten Son that if I believe in Him I will not perish but have eternal life.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

When the downs or fear or whatever start to come in – get up and move *‘light and easy’* yes – nothing big or grand just a song or a word of God in the mind and move.

I have learnt from a woman who had spent time in a psychiatric ward and has struggled most of her life with her ‘busy mind’ – she came to faith in Jesus 30 years ago and has found that not allowing the obsessive talking things over in her mind – simply saying ‘NO’ and looking to God and getting on with the day she is able to show love and know that she is loved. She is a witness of God to her three generations of descendants living nearby.

A friend of mine who was an alcoholic sat in a motel room when he was 32 – with a gun and cried out to God ‘if you are real show me – or its over. Nothing dramatic happened but a quiet feeling came and he has walked softly with God these past 30 years.

Another – a 15-year-old male asked God to come and expected a dramatic ‘book’ like response – nothing happened – perhaps his motivation was a danger for his faith - but his faith in God continued.

My best mate of 50 years came to believe under the ministry of a minister who turned out to be a thief and cleared out – my friends faith grew stronger and despite 30 years of pain from an accident he is strong and straight in his faith.

For myself – God has always existed and no matter what life or my nature has brought - God has always been a certainty.

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, comfortable and My burden is light.”

A yoke is a carved piece of wood, as a carpenter, Jesus would have made these – they are shaped to fit across the neck of two bullocks to unite them in pulling a plough or a vehicle – often an experience bullock is united with a young one that is to be trained. They can also be for single use for carrying a load on either side of a person. As a young teenager I had to use one in a banana plantation to carry bunches of bananas down the hill to the packing shed.

(? – how do you react to this concept of being ‘joined at the hip’ with another person.)

We can see the significance of being ‘yoked’ to Jesus in life and death – the senior bullock pulls most of the load, sets the direction and the young bullock is taught and guided and a bond of familiarity is created.

The burden is light because our lord Jesus has taken the load and we have the Presence, the Spirit of God in us.[[6]](#footnote-6) The Spirit is our guide and teacher and companion and brings Jesus to us.[[7]](#footnote-7) We do not have to walk this life by ourselves.

A spouse and friends cannot take the place of Jesus inside us. Yet the common presence of the Holy Spirit brings a fullness and an easiness/ a comfortableness to both of these relationships.

The team of bullocks was a common sight in Jesus time and everyone would have seen the significance of it.

Oh, yes, and the rebellious young bullock could not easily get away and go and chew grass.

**Romans 7:15-25a**

The contrast is presented to us in Romans 7:15 – 8:3. **Read.**

The choice is ours; the walk is moment by moment – to buck and pull away or to walk in strength and lightness with the Lord.

I would like to conclude with the reading in Song of Solomon 2:10-13. This is to us – we are the ‘beautiful one – the Lord Jesus is the beloved’.

“My beloved … said to me,

‘Arise, my darling, my beautiful one,

And come along.

For look, the winter is past,

The rain is over and gone.

The flowers have appeared in the land.

The time has arrived for pruning, for singing,

And the voice of the turtledove has been heard in our land.

The fig tree has ripened its figs,

And the vines in blossom have given forth their fragrance.

Arise, my darling, my beautiful one,

And come along!’”

Almost the last words in the bible are:

“The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.”

And let the one who hears say, “Come.”

And let the one who is thirsty come;

Let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.”[[8]](#footnote-8)

The way is open to us – come and be yoked together with our Lord Jesus.

*So be it*.

1. Mark 14:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Acts 9:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Mark 9:41 and Matthew 25:44 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Romans 1: [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. John 3:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. John 14-17 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. John 14-17 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Revelations 22:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)