

2020 08 16 What Outsiders Bring

Genesis 45:1-15. Psalm 133.

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32. Matthew 15:(10-20)21-28.

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The children's talk told us a piece of the beginning of the beliefs of the Jewish, Moslem and Christian religions. Of one specific man, Joseph, through whom God provided, at the beginning, a sanctuary of safeness and prosperity for a family of 70 people who composed those who believed in One God.

It had started with God drawing Abraham away from his family roots, then to his son Isaac and to his son Jacob and his twelve sons - the second youngest being Joseph.

Over 400 years the 70 became ? million people but the safety was now gone and they were slaves - slaves who called out to God to rescue them - the belief in One God had continued BUT they were also firmly infected by the belief in the Gods of Egypt. Hence the 40 years in the desert to teach them that God was real - the same God the we follow some ?4000 years later.

This nation is called Israel or the Jewish nation and our Lord Jesus was born through this family line - I believe that God preserved this group of people and called them His people to preserve a people of belief, a people not without sin and failure but a people and laws that the Redeemer Jesus the Saviour was to born into.

Jesus did not just 'pop' into history - "in the fullness of time God sent His Son , born of a woman ..."1 Over several thousand years the Jewish people had been prepared by God for his coming - but when it did - they rejected him.

The promises of God for a Messiah, a Saviour to come were through history made only to the Jewish people - the descendants of the one man who held onto belief in One God. All the laws and regulations were to keep them separate from the nations around them.

This is the basis of the strange, apparently cruel uncaring incident in Jesus' life where a non-Jewish mother came to him and begged him to cure her daughter:

**Read Mathew 15:21-28.**

At that point if His ministry Jesus went only to the Jewish people because the promise was to them; yet this woman's' faith broke through the boundaries of protection that God has set to maintain a direct decent for Jesus.

The Canaanites and the Israelis had been enemies for thousands of years - the Jews were not allowed any physical contact with other races, if they touched something of them they had to perform a ceremonial cleaning, washing of hands, they could not sit in a chair that one had sat in and so on - sound familiar in these days of corona virus?

This woman had somehow come to such a strong belief and trust in the Jewish God, and knew, that the purity of Jesus

compared to herself made her no more than a dog looking for some fallen crumbs from the masters table. She had seen something in the rituals and words of the Old Testament that had shown her the One God and in Jesus she had seen the reality in a person.

She had a heart of love for her daughter and that motivated her to approach Jesus and not give up despite the rejection by the disciples.

Jesus love for all of Gods creation meant that he would not heal her simply to rid them of a nuisance - she was screeching after them - if you have ever heard that high pitched non-stop screeching you would understand their desire - their motive was for their own peace and quiet but not so for Jesus, his love for all Gods creation wanted to help her, yet he "must awaken true faith in the heart of this woman"<sup>2</sup>

She responded, opened her heart and brain and wits to Jesus and her daughter was healed.

William Barclay comments "This woman brought to Christ a gallant and an audacious love, a faith which grew until it worshiped at the feet of the divine, an indomitable persistence springing from an unconquerable hope, a cheerfulness which would not be dismayed. That is the faith which cannot help finding an answer to its prayers".<sup>3</sup>

**Read Romans 11:1-2a and 25-36.**

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<sup>2</sup> William Barclays'

<sup>3</sup> Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew.

The Jewish people rejected Jesus and salvation through Him, they rejected Him as the promised Messiah that they had waited for.

And so the gospel went out to the non-Jewish races - in other words you and I! There was a temporary hardening of the Jewish people's spirit and the natural human arrogance came out - they expected a warrior King like King David - a renewal of the power and superiority of the old kingdom - and here comes Jesus of Nazerath born of peasants and no intention of fighting a physical war.

Because of their rejection they are in a way in suspension while the way of peace and forgiveness with God has come to us - this is how great God's love is for us. The awakening of their spirit to Jesus will come because God will keep his promise.

Remember though that the early followers and disciples of Jesus were Jewish and that the two men who took his body and buried it in one of their own tombs - were high level Jewish religious men and that Saul/Paul who wrote the Romans passage was a top class educated Jewish man.

A commentary includes this passage: "Paul acknowledges Israel's failure and rejection, but he proceeds to argue that within God's overreaching purposes this reality is temporarily limited. Indeed, God uses the present rejection for His purposes. ... since Israel's disobedience is placed in the service of God's purpose, God can be spoken of as "hardening" Israel.

But the goal of disobedience is not their ultimate rejection and destruction; it is, rather, twofold: (1) the salvation of the world - US YOU AND ME and (2) the ultimate salvation of Israel. (Romans 11:11-15).<sup>4</sup>

It is more of a history talk this morning - the thing with history though is that it is alive and present today, both in world affairs and in our individual lives, with each other, and our walk in God's Presence.

Lets' take with us today the humility, the determination and the love for her daughter, and the trust in Jesus of this 'unclean, despised woman', that brought about physical healing for her daughter, and her eternal life that came to her through faith in, and hanging onto Jesus the Christ.

### **Read Psalm 133.**

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Discussion: 1) do we see ourselves in any of the people in this account - the disciples - their attitude of 'don't bother me', the daughter, the woman, a person who seeks to help others in physical spiritual etc distress and need, or the person who walks on the other side of the street.

2) How does Psalm 133 show the abundance of Gods gift.

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<sup>4</sup> Hard Sayings of the Bible . Kaiser, Davids, Bruce, Brauch.