

BIBLE CLASS 22.02.2024 LUKE 10:30-37
THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

...a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said to him, "what is written in the law? How do you read it? And he answering said, you shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all thy strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as thyself.

And Jesus said unto him, 'You have answered rightly: this do, and you shall live. But he, willing to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?"

Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*, And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spend more, when I come again, I will repay you. Which now of these three, do you think, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus to him, "You go and do the same".
(Luke 10:25-37)

To understand this parable we need to know a little of the history of Jericho and Jerusalem. Throughout the Bible we read that people went "up" to Jerusalem, it is presented beautifully in Psalm 122 I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together:

Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD. (Psa 122:1-4 KJV)

From Jerusalem, except for the Inn of the Good Samaritan it is downwards all the way to the plain of Jericho which is 800 feet below sea level. When Joshua and the Israelites moved towards the Promised Land and the City of Jericho reckoned to be the oldest surviving city in the world, Joshua was given instructions by God to destroy that city and all its inhabitants. All these events were recorded in the writings of sacred Scriptures.

To go up to Jerusalem then, was to draw nearer to God while to descend down towards the Dead Sea was to draw away from his presence, and to draw nearer to the city Joshua had cursed before God.

What then was the relationship between the Jews and the Samaritans? Samaria itself was the royal city of northern Israelite tribes after they rebelled against the house of David under king Rehoboam. After the exile of the 10 tribes, the Assyrians brought people from Babylon and other conquered cities and settled them in the Israelite cities. However the king of Assyria was informed that because these immigrants did not know the manner of the God of the land: he had sent lions among them to slay them. Consequently the king of Assyria commanded, that one of Israel's priests should return to Samaria and live there in order to teach these foreign settlers the manner of the God of the land. So a priest from Samaria came and lived in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear YAHWEH. (2Ki 17:26-28) these became known as Samaritans who were made up of tribes that began to settle in the land of Judea when the Jews were in exile in Babylon as the books of Ezra and Nehemiah explain. When the Jews found themselves confronted by enemies the Samaritans, such as the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, were inclined to help the enemy. For this reason they became the despised enemies of the Jews.

So when the listeners of the teaching of the Lord Jesus would have expected a Jew to be the hero of Jesus' story, instead they

would have been very surprised to hear that it was a Samaritan. But it was of no surprise to the Lord Jesus for when he travelled from Galilee to Jerusalem he encountered ten men who were lepers. "Seeing Jesus, there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off. Seeing Jesus they cried out Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." (Luke 17:12-13) Jesus instructed them "Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed from their leprosy. One of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and he fell down on his face to the ground, at Jesus's feet and giving him thanks: and **he was a Samaritan!** And Jesus responded, asking, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger? And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: your faith has made you whole." (Luke 17:14-19) He was in fact the first of many Samaritans who after hearing the Gospel proclaimed by Philip, accepted that Jesus was indeed the Messiah and under the further teaching of Peter and John, received the Holy Spirit through their hands. (Acts 8:5-17)

In the parable, the Lawyer is described as tempting Jesus. He probably hoped to trip him up. Possibly as a Lawyer, he hoped to prove Jesus wrong in his teaching. So he asked Jesus respectfully, "Good Master what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus replied "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" The Lawyer replied, quoting Deuteronomy 6:5 "You shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind;" and he added Leviticus 19:18 "and your neighbour as yourself". And Jesus said to him, you have answered correctly: this do, and you shall live. (Luke 10:27-28) But the Lawyer wanting to justify himself, for as a Jew he seemed more alert than his orthodox idea rabbis who held that merely keeping the letter of the law was sufficient for one to be regarded as a neighbour. So he asks Jesus to classify 'his neighbour'. "and who is my neighbour?" To answer this question, Jesus set out his Parable, "A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving

him half dead.” In the time of Jesus, the road from Jerusalem to Jericho was notorious for its danger and difficulty, and was known as the "Way of Blood" because "of the blood which is often shed there by robbers who robbed people"(Henry Baker Tristram in his book "Topography of the Holy land). 'The road plunges down to Jericho, and though many men and women aspire to ascend to the City of God, the New Jerusalem and immortality, they find themselves being deceived and robbed of the promised inheritance by thieves who stripped him of his clothing, and left him half dead'.

By chance a certain priest came by, presumably to attend to services in the temple, in which case he would have washed himself and put on clean clothing, his attendance was more important to him than helping a dying man who needed help, so he passed on his way. Similarly another person came by, a Levite, a teacher who also knew the law, he looked and went his way. But a third man came along and seeing him, he had compassion and went to him and bound up his wounds pouring in oil and wine, and then he placed him on his own donkey or mule and brought him to an inn, where he paid the innkeeper for the accommodation promising payment for anything more the man might need.

Jesus then asked the Lawyer "Who was neighbour to the man who fell among thieves?" The Lawyer said "he that showed mercy to him" Jesus replied go and do thou like wise.

So we see Jerusalem as the city of God, the city of hope and blessing. Jericho from ancient times had been a city of curse.(Joshua 6:26) Mankind for centuries has been journeying away from God, deceived by men who though aware of their own mortality, mock any idea that there could be such a being as God. Millions have been deceived by them, robbed, debased and despoiled by sin. The representatives of law and order, setting out the laws they have made with no intention of keeping them themselves. And now we are once more on the threshold of World War Three. But the Lord Jesus kept faith with his Father. He that is of God, hears God's words: you therefore do not hear *them*, because you are not of God.

Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, **Say we not well that you are a Samaritan, and have a devil?** Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and you dishonour me. And I do not seek my own glory: there is one that seeks and judges. (Joh 8:47-50) Yes in the parable it is Jesus who is actually the Good Samaritan, he has performed the neighbour's part to both Jews and Gentiles, and it is those who have received the oil of anointing and the wine of gladness and bread of life *which* strengthens man's heart. (Psa. 104:15) Having received it we can and should deliver it to others.

So much of this parable is based upon the identity of Jesus himself, consider the connections that we find in scripture, "he had compassion on him" (Luke 10:33) as we learn in Hebrews 4:15 be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; (Heb 4:15) The Samaritan had a beast probably an ass so also Jesus, "behold, thy King comes unto you: he *is* just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. (Zec 9:9 KJV) The provision of oil and wine reminds us of the continual burnt offering that was given each day as the foundation of all offerings, reminding us of how our Lord Jesus poured himself out every day of his life in service to his Father leaving us an example that we should follow his steps (1Pe 2:21)

The Good Samaritan paid for the injured man's stay at the inn and Paul reminded the Corinthians "ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1Co 6:20-1) Moreover he spoke of his 'coming again' even as Christ is to appear the second time without sin unto salvation. (Heb. 9:28) So we are reminded of the nearness of his coming, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed *are* they that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev 22:12-14)