**Wednesday, 29th July 2020**

Read the**Psalm 49 verses 1- 10. 16** of the day

*(I would suggest that you read the verses aloud, be it yourself alone or as a couple saying alternate verses,*

This is a psalm of wisdom, being like Job and Ecclesiastes; and the discussion of a problem. In every time and period we are perplexed by life’s enigmas. Here, the problem is that of wealth and its influence upon the character and destiny of people, ,,,,of us.? The problem is stated in verses 5.6. Why should the godly man fear the worldly rich?

The Psalmist gives two answers. In 7-`10 he contrasts the present with the ultimate state of those who trust in riches. It is the contrast with those who make a god of wealth **and those who find their wealth in God.**

It is the latter that we should seek each day of our life.

**Introduction**

Jacob finally reaches the home of his mother’s brother Laban, from which she had set off many years before. Her love story is repeated in her son. Resting at the well where the sheep are gathered every evening to be watered, he enquires after Laban, and is told that his daughter Rachel is approaching with her father’s sheep, The Bible narrative says that Rachel was beautiful and lovely. It is a case of love at first sight. He tells her that he is a relative of her father and a son of Rebecca, They weep and embrace each other. She runs to tell her father, and Laban hurries to meet him, embraces him and welcomes him to his home.

Read the Bible passage for today**Genesis Chapter 29:15-28**

*This is the Word of the Lord*

***Thanks be to God***

***Jacob marries Leah and Rachel***

Jacob agrees to be one of Laban’s shepherds, and when wages are discussed the two men, agree that Jacob shall serve seven years for the hand of Rachel. The text says that "so great was the love of Jacob and Rachel, that the seven years seemed only a few days. since they did see each other every day."

When the seven years were up, Jacob asked for his bride. What followed was probably only the custom of the East, that the elder sister should be married before her younger sisters. When the night came for the bride to be brought to Jacob’s tent. Leah, veiled according to custom, was brought instead of Rachel. Jacob, who had deceived his father by pretending to be Esau, is now deceived in turn by his father-in-law.

When he complains to Laban about this deceit, Laban promises that he may have Rachel as well, in return for seven years more service, and Rachel understandably becomes the favourite wife. Surely all the time Jacob would have been remembering how he had tricked his brother Esau out of his father’s blessing as the eldest son,

Perhaps as a young boy he had heard his father Abraham speak of God’s promise to bless the whole earth through his descendants, and Jacob grew up longing to be heir to that promise. So sadly rather than asking for God’s help, Jacob resorted to trickery and then found himself running for his life from his father’s wrath.

Down the ages Jewish law, which permitted Jewish men to have more than one wife, did insist on absolute fairness; the wives must receive equal food, clothing, and love. But a man could not marry two sisters, because of the rivalry that would ensue, as in this case of the sisters Leah and Rachel,

Leah and Rachel had to struggle daily to maintain the equilibrium of their household, to remain full of strength and self-respect, able to love each other, love their husband and their children, and they succeeded. Rachel failed to produce children, while her sister gave birth to several children. Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah. Then came Rachel’s agonised complaint to Jacob. "Give me children or I shall die".. At last Rachel’s prayers are answered, and doubtless Jacob’s as well, and Rachel gives birth to a son, Joseph

**Reflection**

This is a useful example to us of creative struggle with God and with people. The desire to maintain self-respect and love for others in our lives comes as part of our continual everyday interaction with family and friends; and the knowledge of God in our lives guiding us and His love to be at the centre of all that we do and say.

How and where did the change come about in Jacob? Was it the dream at Bethel and God’s words to him in his sleep. Was it when he realised where he had failed God and had cut himself off from God; and he repented.

And what about us? Are we listening, are we praying and letting God speak to us. .Time and time again we fall, and we say over and over again we will not do it again, we will never fall again. But we do.

Yet in God’s eyes it is how quickly we get up and acknowledge where we have failed; and how we seek God’s forgiveness, placing ourselves and our life in God’s hands and God’s will. Everything changes when God speaks! Bravery is not easy, but it is about having courage and trust.

**So what is God saying to us through this reading and reflection?**

**What does God want us to do about it?**

**PRAYERS**

Forgive us when our love is not like your love.

**Forgive us, O God, and remind us that none of us is worthy, that your love is a free gift to all of us**

If we think we can put boundaries around your love

and hold you to ourselves within our own community of faith; **Forgive us, O God, and remind us that we will never own you and that you break free of all our limitations**.

We confess, before the bounty of your life,

That we often make you a small God in our own image.

**Forgive us, yet again, O God of Grace.**

The forgiveness of God surpasses all that we can ever know.

Even as God gathers the world into costly grace, so we are included, we are no longer strangers,,but placed in the love of God. **Amen**

**In joy and hope, let us pray to the Father, in Christ our Lord**

That our risen Saviour may fill us with the joy of his glorious and life-giving resurrection.

**Let us pray to the Father**, **in Christ our Lord**

That isolated and persecuted churches may find strength in the good news of Your love . We name all those known to us who serve others, who share and proclaim the love of Christ here and abroad , thus showing the love of God in all that they are and do. ..............................................................................

**Let us pray to the Father**, **in Christ our Lord** .

That God may grant us humility to be subject to one another in Christian love. **Let us pray to the Father, in Christ our Lord.**

That he may provide for those who lack food, work, or shelter....................................... **Let us pray to the Father, in Christ our Lord**.

That by his power all nations come together and co-operate in this time of uncertainty and pandemic

**Let us pray to the Father, in Christ our Lord.**

That he may reveal the light of his presence to the sick, the weak the dying and all those who mourn, to comfort and strengthen them, ....................(we name them to your O Lord) .**Let us pray to the Father, in Christ our Lord.**

That he may send the power of the Holy Spirit upon all people, upon all situations, anxieties and fears ensuring that we and they may bear faithful witness to his resurrection and eternal love. **Let us pray to the Father, in Christ our Lord.**

**May Christ’s holy, healing, enabling Spirit be with you and guide you on your way at every change and turn. Ame**