

Morning Worship Sunday 12th March 2023
Lent 3
Preaching Notes

Exodus 17:1-7
Romans 5:1-11
John 4:5-42
[Psalm 95]

Introduction

Israelites (OT reading)

Slaves

Escape – middle of night.

Families and belongings,

flocks, herds,

kneading bowls,

Au and Ag from Egyptians

N? S? Where? Egyptians coming - “Red” Sea – fear, drama, relief

Onwards - day after day – actually, no relief – NO WATER

Thirsty

Kids - thirsty

Flocks and herds – thirsty

– even food dried out

Can’t help feeling, no wonder rebellious

God stands on the rock and water flows so their thirst is quenched

Can you imagine their relief?

Gospel reading

Meet another thirsty person – 2 actually

Jesus, like Israelites, physically thirsty

And a woman – thirst of a different kind

Samaritan woman

History of Samaritans

Bad press – outcast – woman of bad repute (midday / relationships)

Or outcast just because “different”, doesn’t fit in.

Only men could divorce,

multiple murders???!!!

Very unlucky with husbands

(or complex theological argument re Samaritan scriptures)

Anyway – there she is

Conversation – long and convoluted, but right from start focussed on thirst.

His – then increasingly - hers

Instead of tepid, insipid water– drawn from well and stored in cisterns

Living water. Fresh, bubbling, running. Like a spring in the mountains. Full of life. Clean and refreshing.

Because in desert, water = Life

Conversation develops into life – then into spiritual life, as J responds to her spiritual thirst.

Offers her fresh, bubbling, living spiritual life

Worshipping in spirit and in truth – not style but reality of worship

Not a quarrel about religious practices

Living relationship with the living God

Jesus saw her thirst

She sees he is the one in whom it can be satisfied.

Realises he is the Messiah – the one who will restore all things. Her ‘lightbulb’ moment

John tells us she left her water jar, and went back to the city.

‘Sign’ that her spiritual thirst had been satisfied??

In city

New life she has just seen / been ‘born into’ like Nicodemus last week

Too good to keep to herself

Bubbles over

Jesus explaining about sharing the Good News to the disciples.

She’s there doing it

Us?

Are we thirsty?

For truth, love, beauty, justice, joy?

Where might our thirst be satisfied?

Israelites – God satisfies their thirst in the desert

Woman at the well – God in the person of Jesus satisfies hers

Maybe thinking – “if only Jesus.....”

Romans

“because God’s love has been *poured* into our hearts through the Holy Spirit whom he has given us”

poured – like living water

John 7:37-39

³⁷ On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”³⁹ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

It's through person – presence and power – of the Holy Spirit that we are refreshed, renewed. That the love of God flows up and through and out of us to others (like woman)

Spirit comes to dwell within us when we decide to follow Jesus, to belong to God’s people

Acts 2 and Acts 4 – filled and re-filled

Overflowing – and “we leak”

John 15 – The Vine. Abide in me – so you will be fruitful.

Fruitful in loving and caring (pastoral stuff)

In introducing others to God, and restoring relationships

In making disciples

In challenging injustice in our town, our country and our world

In caring for creation

John - “Glorifying God”

“God’s mission in the world, which he graciously invites us to join in with – not in our own strength, but in the power of the Spirit”

Summary

Thirst which draws us to God

Living Water – Holy Spirit – through whom that thirst is satisfied

And who then empowers us and refreshes us to make a difference for God in the world.

Not just a one-off gift, but like fresh, running water, filling and re-filling.

Are we thirsty?

Pray that we might be re-filled.