

Thought for the Day , Friday 17th July 2020

The readings for today from 2 Samuel 5 and Matthew 27 gave me cause to stop and ponder – which is I suppose the whole point.

The Old Testament (OT) reading covers the period where David is chosen to succeed Saul by popular acclaim (as well as heavy hints to Samuel by God). Although Samuel was a fair, if strict Judge and had travelled the whole land discharging his duty the people had wanted to return to being ruled by a King instead of by a Judge. The way the people went about voicing their objective – essentially “ we want a King to rule us so we can be like other Nations! ” – showed that they had again forgotten that they were the chosen people of God and that they were “his nation” {faults and all} and that he therefore had a say in the matter. So Saul was chosen as the first King and life proceeded onwards. However although Saul’s “pedigree” was long and without question, he was not exactly a firebrand either and eventually because he was too mild towards the Amalekite king despite having been given a divine instruction, Samuel told him that he would soon meet and know his successor. That was David.

David was chosen and anointed he initially ruled over Judea and then took Jerusalem back from the heathen Jebusites. It was at this time he had said to God that if he would aid him in his wars he would build him a temple . But God said that it would be his son, Solomon, who would build a temple in Jerusalem. Not deterred, David got wood from his neighbour, Hiram King of Tyre and built a magnificent wooden tabernacle. He also however built himself a magnificent palace on the same site which, to say the least, wasn’t tactful. But David was driven by at least two emotions. One was to demonstrate his piety and the other was to leave a lasting legacy for his son Jedidiah (who became known as Solomon). That legacy was actually not so much in the buildings but in the strong nation he had forged and his teaching of faithfulness to God who would give wisdom and strength to Solomon as long as he maintained the Covenant of Moses.

The passage of Matthew, deals with that awful moment at the end of the Crucifixion. Now only watched by a group of women who had come from Galilee, including his mother and a small number of family and disciples he surrenders

his spirit to God. At that moment darkness covers the land, there are earthquakes, nearby tombs were broken open and the holy dead were raised to life, and the veil in the temple which hid the holy-of-holies was torn in two. The Centurion and the soldiers guarding the crosses who saw these things said "Surely he was the son of God!". This as we know was no ordinary or simple passing. It had been foretold by the prophets of old and Jesus had reiterated their prophecies and his own future in his teachings on many occasions, but these signs left no one in any doubt just how significant the moment was.

In a sense one could say that this was part of Christs legacy. Again it was nothing to do with physical wealth or property – quite the opposite. He had left, for his disciples, his followers, and any who would choose to believe in Him, that enduring legacy of his simple teaching of Gods Law, which he stated was the most important thing for any of us and faithfulness to his new commandment would gain us an eternal reward in heaven.

Therefore, these two different passages from the bible serve to remind us not to focus on creating a physical legacy that will be worn away by the sands of time, but to lead a Christian life and give the legacy of an example to follow for those who come after us, that will enable them to live a better life and to live in peace and harmony with God , his world and the universe.