

January 20th 2008: The Groans of Jesus

In one of the books.....reading.....quote by this scientist....Geophysicist...about Jesus

“Jesus is so compelling! Einstein thought so. Napoleon thought so. This Nazarene captivated their attention, and he continues to captivate mine. I remember thinking at one point that if the Jesus of the Bible weren’t real, I would need to worship the person who created the character. Jesus is so beyond what I can comprehend !”

That encouraged me....to consider the wonder of Jesus ...who in some 4 yrs of public ministry impacted that small region of Palestine....in a way....that still touches our world

Such a small period of time.....in which He achieved so much:→ And all He did

....His miracles...His teachings...His healings.....right up to His death and resurrection
Were neither haphazard nor without a purpose.....FOR

- He fulfilled the prophecies
- He showed by His mighty works....that He was indeed the Son of God
- He proved His power over evil
- He fulfilled the law.....

But the most vital thing He did.....was to teach the 12....and those who followed close to Him
What it means to be a child of God....What it means to have Faith....What it takes to gain forgiveness
.So that they could then pass that teaching on.....after....by the power

That’s why we look at this block of Scripture....and see beyond the stories

To the teaching that Jesus left behind for us:

For in Mark 7:24—8:21 We find:-

- The story of the Syrophenician Woman (7:24-30)
- The healing of the Deaf and Mute man (7:31-37)
- Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand (8:1—10)

.....All took place amongst Gentiles

Then after a boat trip:

- Questioning from the Pharisees (8:11-12)
- Teaching of His disciples in the boat. (8:14-21)

- The story of the Syrophenician woman.....surprises...

JESUSnot seen to be ...polite helpful best

But what we must not miss.....is the Lord’s teaching intention

The disciples were not surprised.....that deep in Gentile territory.....He hid Himself away
For they saw that His mission.....His miracleswere for the Jews.....not for the Gentiles

But this mother was so desperate.....that she found Him.....and begged Him to drive out...
And He deliberately acted towards her.....in what most Jews saw as an acceptable fashion

....v27 *“First let the children eat all they want, for it is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to their dogs.”*

From the Jews with Jesus....there would have been immediate agreement
But the woman persisted....as Jesus knew she would

Even though the children may receive their bread.....there is still enough in whatfor us to gain

And Jesus said.....”You have got that so right”.....and by a word....He healed her daughter

Then just to make sure His followers got the message.....He traveled to another Gentile district
And when some people asked Him to heal.....He has no hesitation whatsoever
In fact He seems to treat this gentile.....with extra compassion

This man couldn’t hear...hardly speak
Took him aside
Placed his fingers
Be opened

- **Now we find that the Gentiles** are also overwhelmed with amazement
They also flock in great numbers.....to hear what He has to say.....To get their crumbs.....

Indeed.....read in 8.....4,000 men at least.....And they had been with Him for 3 days
And Jesus says in verse 2 *“I have compassion for these people; (suggesting perhaps that the others didn’t) they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance.”*

When the Disciples suggested feeding them was impossI don’t think it was because...forgotten
But then Jesus had fed 5000+ Jews.....God’s people(Manna).....**But** these were 4000+ gentiles

So we have.....A very similar miracle.....An entirely different crowd

Interesting to note.....crumbs were collected in 7.....a basket big enough to hold a man.....
Suggesting....Jesus has more than enough to offer....for Jews and Gentiles.....Bread of the world

- **After the feeding Jesus returns by boat....to the Jewish area**
And immediately....accosted by Pharisees.....intend on destroying his credibility.....
Asking for a sign.....

It was after this altercation.....that Jesus.....alone in the boat with His disciples
Warned them to watch out for the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod
Because their wordscontaining a little truth.....could lead them astray from the truth

And then chastised them.....for their slowness in realising the power He had

- **Five different situations in the life of Jesus**

One deliverance.....One healing.....One major miracle.....Two discussions
The first three amongst the Gentiles.....The last two.....amongst the Jews

And in two of those incidents.....Jesus publicly sighs

When He heals the deaf7:34 reads: *“He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, ‘Ephphatha!’(which means, ‘Be opened!’)”*

And when He talks to the Pharisees in 8:12

“He sighed deeply and said, “Why does this generation ask for a miraculous sign?”

It’s the same basic Greek.....but the second is a more intense sigh

It means to groan from deep inside.....and although it is only mentioned in those two **I sense**.....that each of these incidents led Him to groan.....in 5 diff ways

And that each groan.....is full of teaching

- **With the story of the Syrophoenician woman.....**

The Groan against prejudice

THE Jews hated.....samaritans....gentiles.....

And would happily keep good things from them.....included the Message of Kingdom

And we too need to guard against the prejudices...in our own lives

It’s far too easy to hold another person in contempt.....while professing a love

Then in the story of the deaf and dumb

The Groan because of the sad state of humanity

This poor man was sick.....The result of sin breaking into a perfect world

But He also revealed physically...spiritual state of so many

→**Having ears but not hearing**→**Tongues.....not speaking**

Then as we come to the Feeding of the 4,000

I sense

The Groan over those who hunger for the Bread of Life

Jesus fed them.....with the help of His disciples

Yet I sense that their hearts were not fully in it

And as Jesus looks upon a world.....where so many lack the only Spiritual Food that lasts

He groans for the lost.....and yearns for us to groan for them too

For us to give more of who we are...what we have....**That** others may feast on the Bread...heaven

Then comes the altercation with the Pharisees....and

The Groan Against Stubborn Disbelief

Like so many today.....they wanted something more.....A miraculous sign

**With all Jesus had already done in their midst.....They still needed to hide behind an excuse
Just give us a more**

**God has revealed Himself in creation.....In His Son.....In His Word.....and in the lives
Yet still so many refuse to believe.....**And we can** almost hear the Groan from heaven**

• **But then followed the time He spent with His disciples**

His chosen followers.....who were worried that His concern was because they only had one loaf

So slow to realise....that He is the Lord.....who fed.....And who** wanted their trust**

The Groan over their slowness to Understand and to Grow.....

To grow in faith.....To remember the past and to trust Him for their future

So slow to be all that God wanted them to be

And of all the Groans....all the Sighs.....Surely this would be the worst

Into the lives of those.....Jesus had invested so much.....yet they were still babes

What about us this morning ? What about you.....what about me?

It's encouraging to realize.....The Lord doesn't sigh

When we make mistakes.....Or when at times we stumble

Only when we stop growing.....And that's an area we can do something about

What steps will you take this week.....To make sure....You keep growing.....?

