

**Acts 2:1-21**  
**May 20, '18**

**“NEW SHOES”**

**AT THE OUTSET, I MUST TELL YOU THAT THIS SERMON  
WILL BE DIFFERENT FROM MOST OTHER SERMONS.**

**THERE ARE A FEW REASONS FOR THAT AND THE  
PRIMARY REASON WILL SOON BE APPARENT.**

**BUT THERE ARE REASONS OTHER THAN THE PRIMARY  
ONE THAT THIS SERMON WILL BE DIFFERENT.**

**THIS IS THE FOURTH & FINAL PART OF A FOUR-PART  
SERMON SERIES.**

**OF COURSE, THAT – IN ITSELF – A FOUR-PART SERMON  
SERIES -ISN'T UNUSUAL.**

**NORMALLY, THOUGH, PART FOUR OF A SERMON SERIES  
WOULD LOGICALLY FOLLOW THE THREE PREVIOUS  
INSTALLMENTS IN THE PREVIOUS THREE WEEKS.**

**THIS SERMON SERIES IS DIFFERENT.**

**THE THREE PREVIOUS SERMONS IN THE SERIES  
WEREN'T DELIVERED IN THE PAST THREE WEEKS.**

**NOR WERE THEY DELIVERED IN THE PAST THREE  
MONTHS OR EVEN THE PAST THREE YEARS.**

**SOME OF YOU FIRST HEARD THE FIRST PART OF THIS  
SERIES MORE THAN A DECADE AGO & THE SECOND & THIRD  
PARTS HAVE FOLLOWED AT VARIOUS TIMES OVER THE  
PAST 10 YEARS.**

**SINCE I AM UNDER NO ILLUSIONS THAT YOU MIGHT  
REMEMBER ANY SERMON OF MINE EVEN FROM ONE  
SUNDAY TO THE NEXT, I'M NOT ABOUT TO THINK YOU  
MIGHT HAVE REMEMBERED THE FIRST THREE PARTS OF  
THIS SERIES OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS.**

**THEREFORE, A QUICK RE-CAP IS IN ORDER TO HELP  
GIVE YOU AN UNDERSTANDING OF HOW WE'VE GOTTEN TO  
WHERE WE ARE AT THE CONCLUSION OF THIS SERIES.**

**PART ONE – “JERUSALEM ONE SPRINGTIME” – WAS AN EASTER STORY OF TWO LITTLE ROMAN CHILDREN – MARIA & PETEY – WHO MET JESUS AND WANTED THEIR FATHER, MARCUS – A ROMAN CENTURION – TO MEET HIM AS WELL.**

**PART TWO WAS ENTITLED “THE MYSTERY BOX” AND TOLD THE STORY OF TWO JEWISH CHILDREN & THEIR FATHER – AN INNKEEPER NAMED BARSABBAS.**

**PART THREE WAS A CHRISTMAS STORY AND, CHRONOLOGICALLY, WAS A PREQUEL TO THE OTHER STORIES BECAUSE IT TOOK PLACE 33 YEARS BEFORE & TOLD OF A CHANCE MEETING BETWEEN THE FATHERS OF THE CHILDREN IN THE PREVIOUS TWO STORIES.**

**THAT CHANCE MEETING OF MARCUS & BARSABBAS TOOK PLACE WHEN THEY WERE YOUNG & SAW THEM ENGAGED IN A FIGHT BROUGHT ABOUT BECAUSE OF THEIR**

**ETHNIC DIFFERENCES – A FIGHT USING DEADLY WEAPONS  
AGAINST ONE ANOTHER.**

**WHEN THEIR BATTLE WAS OVER, THOUGH, THE  
MIRACULOUS BIRTH IN BETHLEHEM BROUGHT THEM  
TOGETHER.**

**BUT THEY WOULD THEN PART WAYS & NEVER SEE ONE  
ANOTHER AGAIN – UNTIL....**

**BUT THAT’S GETTING AHEAD OF OURSELVES BECAUSE  
THAT BRINGS US TO THE FINAL PART OF THIS SAGA & SINCE  
THE OTHER THREE TOOK PLACE AT HOLIDAY TIMES –  
CHRISTMAS & EASTER – IT SEEMED FITTING THAT THE  
OTHER PROMINENT CHRISTIAN HOLIDAY – PENTECOST –  
WOULD BE THE SETTING FOR THE FINAL PART.**

**I’VE ALWAYS WANTED ALL 6 SIX CHARACTERS TO  
SOMEHOW COME TOGETHER AND THIS HOLIDAY SEEMS TO  
BE THE RIGHT TIME.**

**IF YOU ARE ONE OF THOSE WHO FOLLOW ALONG WITH THE PRINTED COPIES OF THE SERMON, THIS STORY BEGINS ON PAGE 23 OF THE BOOKLET YOU PICKED UP THIS MORNING BECAUSE THE PREVIOUS THREE ARE INCLUDED AT THE BEGINNING.**

**THEY'RE IN THE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER IN WHICH THE STORIES TOOK PLACE – NOT THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY WERE SHARED HERE IN WORSHIP.**

**IF, AFTER WORSHIP, YOU CARE TO READ THEM ALL TOGETHER, THERE ARE A LOT OF COPIES AVAILABLE IN THE NARTHEX.**

**BEFORE WE BEGIN, THOUGH, A CAVEAT.**

**I'M NOT A POET & SO I'M GOING TO HAVE TO WORK VERY HARD FOR THERE TO BE A PROPER RHYTHM TO MY RECITATION.**

**THEREFORE, THIS IS ONE OF THOSE “*DON’T TRY THIS AT HOME*” KIND OF THINGS BECAUSE IF YOU TAKE A COPY & TRY TO READ IT, IT’S PROBABLY NOT GOING TO WORK BECAUSE – QUITE FRANKLY – THE RHYTHM IS PRETTY BAD.**

**SO WITH THAT CAVEAT, HERE’S THE FINAL INSTALLMENT OF “*A FIRST CENTURY SAGA IN VERSE*” CALLED “*NEW SHOES.*”**

**“NEW SHOES”**

**IN THE DAYS AFTER EASTER, IN THE SPRING OF THE YEAR,  
WHEN JESUS AROSE FROM THE TOMB,  
HIS FRIENDS & DISCIPLES WERE WARY,  
AND FOUND PEACE IN THE UPPER ROOM.**

**IT WAS THERE THAT THEY GATHERED THE NEXT 50 DAYS,  
AND SHARED TIMES OF SEEING THE LORD,  
THEY LAUGHED & THEY CRIED, AND IN JOY & DESPAIR,  
THEY WERE ALL OF ONE ACCORD.**

**THERE WERE A HUNDRED & TWENTY WHO'D GATHER,  
EVEN CHILDREN WOULD COME TO MEET,  
BUT THE FOUR THAT MOST CONCERN US,  
ARE RUTHIE & SAM - MARIA & PETE.**

**RUTHIE & SAM ARE OF JEWISH DESCENT,  
AND BARSABBAS, THEIR DAD, RUNS AN INN,  
HE WAS THERE AT THE TOMB ON EASTER MORN,  
WHAT HE SAW CAUSED HIS HEAD TO SPIN.**

**THE GRAVE – IT WAS EMPTY, THE STONE ROLLED AWAY,  
AND JESUS WAS ALREADY GONE,  
HE WAS THERE BEFORE PETER OR MARY,  
HE'D ARRIVED IN THE EARLY DAWN.**

**AT THAT MOMENT HE BECAME A BELIEVER,  
AND HE JOINED THE HAPPY THRONG,  
HE WAS PART OF THAT UPPER ROOM GATHERING,  
AND JOINED THEM IN LAUGHTER & SONG.**

**MARIA & PETEY HAVE COME HERE FROM ROME,  
THEIR DAD'S A CENTURION GUARD.  
EVEN THOUGH HE'S BECOME A BELIEVER,  
FOR MARCUS, IT'S TERRIBLY HARD.**

**FOR HE FINDS THAT HE'S STUCK IN THE MIDDLE,  
HIS LIFE IS TWO WORLDS APART,  
FOR ONE IS THE PLACE OF HIS HOMELAND,  
WHILE THE OTHER IS THAT OF HIS HEART.**

**THE UPPER ROOM'S NOT A PLACE MARCUS FREQUENTS,  
AND HE'D RATHER HIS CHILDREN NOT GO,  
BUT THEY BEG & THEY PLEAD FOR PERMISSION,  
AND HE FINDS IT SO HARD TO SAY "NO."**

**NOW, BARSABBAS & MARCUS HAD MET IN THE PAST,  
AS BOYS THEY HAD COME TO BLOWS.  
THOUGH THEIR PATHS HADN'T CROSSED SINCE THAT DAY LONG  
AGO,  
ON THE SURFACE, THEY WERE SEEN AS FOES.**

**FOR ONE WAS A ROMAN, THE OTHER A JEW,  
THE BARRIER BETWEEN THEM STOOD TALL,  
BUT THEY'D BOTH MET A MAN WHO COULD CHANGE ALL OF THAT,  
A MAN WHO COULD TEAR DOWN THAT WALL.**

**BUT IT WASN'T THE MEN WHO TOOK THE LEAD,  
WHEN THEY CHOSE TO MAKE AMENDS.  
IT WAS RUTHIE & SAM, MARIA & PETE,  
WHO TURNED THESE FOES INTO FRIENDS.**

**IT BEGAN AT THE POOL OF SILOAM,  
ON THE SOUTHERN SIDE OF THE TOWN,  
THE CHILDREN WERE WADING & JUST HAVING FUN  
THEY'D ALL LAID THEIR SANDALS DOWN.**

**NOW THE CHILDREN WERE AS DIFFERENT AS NIGHT IS TO DAY,  
OR SO THEY'D BEEN TOLD ALL THEIR LIFE,  
FOR WHEN ROMANS & JEWS COME TOGETHER,  
IT CAN LEAD TO NOTHING BUT STRIFE.**

**BUT CHILDREN ARE CHILDREN, THEY CAN'T SEE THE WALL,  
THAT WALL THAT KEEPS THEM APART,  
THEY'RE FAR MORE INCLINED TO LOOK PAST THE OUTSIDE,  
AND TO PEER INTO SOMEONE'S HEART.**



**IT HAPPENED THAT DAY AS THEY SAT BY THE POOL,  
WITH THEIR TOES SPLASHING ALL AROUND,  
RUTHIE & SAM MET MARIA & PETE,  
AS THEY LOUNGED ON THE COOL, SOFT GROUND.**

**THEY'D SEEN EACH OTHER BUT HAD NEVER TALKED,  
THEY ALL SPOKE BOTH LATIN AND GREEK,  
SETTING CONVENTION ASIDE IN THAT MOMENT OF MIRTH,  
IT WAS RUTH WHO WAS FIRST TO SPEAK.**

***“WE’VE SEEN YOU BEFORE – WE KNOW WHO YOU ARE.  
AND I’M SURE THAT YOU KNOW US, TOO.  
THEY TELL ME THAT WE SHOULDN’T BE TOGETHER,  
FOR YOU’RE ROMAN AND WE ARE JEW.”***

**MARIA LAUGHED AND SHE NODDED HER HEAD,  
*“THAT’S EXACTLY WHAT WE’VE BEEN TOLD.  
BUT TOGETHER WE ARE, THOUGH THEY LIKE IT OR NOT,  
I DON’T MIND BEING FOOLISH & BOLD!”***

**THEN PETEY SPOKE UP – *“I FEEL THE SAME WAY,  
IT JUST DOESN’T SEEM TO MAKE SENSE.  
EVEN THOUGH WE ALL LIVE IN THE VERY SAME TOWN,  
BETWEEN US THEY PUT UP A FENCE.”***

**SAM NODDED AGREEMENT AND WITH A PENSIVE GAZE,  
MENTIONED SOMETHING HIS FATHER ONCE SAID,  
IT WAS A LESSON IN BIBLICAL TEACHING,  
FROM SOLOMON’S PROVERBS HE’D READ.**

**IT WAS ALL ABOUT PROBLEMS THAT SOME PEOPLE FACE,  
WE DON’T KNOW WHAT OTHERS MUST HANDLE  
WE MUST WITHHOLD JUDGMENT FOR WE CAN’T UNDERSTAND  
‘TIL WE WALK FOR A WHILE IN THEIR SANDAL.**

**WHEN THE OTHERS HEARD SAM SPEAK OF SANDALS,**

**THEIR HEADS SNAPPED AT ONCE TO ONE SIDE,  
THEY GAZED AT THEIR SHOES BY THE EDGE OF THE POOL,  
FROM THERE THEY LET GOD BE THEIR GUIDE.**

**MARIA TOOK RUTH'S WHILE PETEY GRABBED SAM'S,  
AND THE OTHER TWO DID THE SAME,  
THE NEW SHOES THAT EACH WORE WOULD NOT BE APPROVED,  
BUT THEY FELT NOT AN OUNCE OF SHAME.**

**SAMMY LOOKED DOWN AT NEW SHOES ON HIS FEET,  
AND SAID *"PETE, I'M NOW JUST LIKE YOU,  
I'M WEARING THE SHOES OF A ROMAN,  
WHILE YOU WEAR THOSE OF A JEW."***

**THIS SYMBOLIC ACT OF DEFIANCE,  
BROKE THE RULES THEY HAD ALL BEEN TAUGHT,  
BUT THE JOY THEY DISCOVERED WITH THEIR NEWFOUND FRIENDS,  
MEANT IT WOULD NEVER BE FOR NAUGHT.**

**PETEY SPOKE UP IN THE MIDST OF THEIR JOY,  
SAYING *"I WISH OUR DADS COULD MEET.  
I THINK THEY WOULD SEE THAT THERE'S SOMETHING FAR MORE  
THAN SIMPLY NEW SHOES ON OUR FEET."***

**THE CHILDREN AGREED THAT THE WALLS OF DIVISION,  
THAT SO LONG HAD KEPT THEM APART,  
WERE WALLS THAT JESUS HAD COME TO TEAR DOWN,  
THEIR NEW SHOES WOULD SERVE AS THE START.**

**THOSE SHOES ONLY SERVE AS A SYMBOL  
THEY POINT TO A NEW WAY TO LIVE,  
WHEN YOU WALK IN THE SHOES OF ANOTHER,  
YOU LEARN WHAT IT MEANS TO FORGIVE.**

**THE FOUR CHILDREN ARE BOUND & DETERMINED,**

**THAT THEIR FATHERS WILL ONE DAY MEET,  
THEY DREAM OF THE DAY THEY CAN ALL JOIN HANDS,  
AND TOGETHER WALK DOWN THE STREET.**

**NOW, REMEMBER – THEIR FATHERS HAD MET AS BOYS,  
THAT WAS NOW A LONG AGO YEAR,  
THEY DID BATTLE WITH DEADLY WEAPONS,  
THEY'D FOUGHT WITH A SWORD AND A SPEAR.**

**SINCE THEN THEY'D NOT MET, BUT THEY'D COME VERY CLOSE,  
IN A SERENDIPITOUS WAY,  
THEY'D MISSED ONE ANOTHER BY MOMENTS,  
AT CHRIST'S TOMB ON EASTER DAY.**

**THE CHILDREN KNOW NOTHING OF THEIR FATHERS' DARK PAST,  
THEY THINK ONLY OF HERE & NOW,  
THEY'RE DETERMINED TO JOIN THEM TOGETHER ONE DAY,  
BUT THE QUESTION THEY FACE IS "HOW?"**

**IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS AFTER EASTER HAD PASSED,  
FAITH IN CHRIST CONTINUED TO GROW,  
AND THE CHILDREN WERE THERE FOR EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE,  
THAT THE WORLD WOULD FOREVER KNOW.**

**ON THE 40<sup>TH</sup> DAY AFTER CHRIST AROSE,  
THEY WENT TO A MOUNT BEAMING BRIGHT,  
IT WAS THERE THE EVENT CALLED ASCENSION TOOK PLACE,  
AND JESUS WAS GONE FROM THEIR SIGHT.**

**AND SOON AFTER THAT A NEW DISCIPLE WAS CHOSEN,  
BARSABBAS WAS NEARLY THE MAN,  
BUT MATTHIAS WAS PICKED TO ROUND OUT THE TWELVE,  
A DOZEN WAS ALWAYS GOD'S PLAN.**

**BUT IN THE MIDST OF ALL THESE EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE,**

**THE FATHERS' PATHS NEVER CROSSED,  
THE CHILDREN BELIEVED THAT SOMEDAY THEY'D MEET,  
AND IT HAPPENED ON PENTECOST.**

**IT WAS A HOLIDAY FEST FOR JEWS OF ALL LANDS,  
BARSABBAS WAS THERE WITH HIS CLAN,  
MARCUS HAD GONE TO KEEP ORDER FOR ROME,  
AND THAT'S WHEN THE FUN BEGAN.**

**IT'S HARD TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED THAT DAY,  
BUT THE SOUND OF A RUSHING WIND,  
LED TO A PLETHORA OF LANGUAGES  
AND LEFT OTHERS COMPLETELY CHAGRINED.**

**RUTHIE & SAM AND MARIA AND PETE  
WERE THERE IN THE THICK OF IT ALL.  
AND THERE WERE THEIR DADS – BARSABBAS & MARCUS,  
AND A WALL WAS ABOUT TO FALL.**

**IT WASN'T THE WALL OF THE TEMPLE THAT FELL,  
BUT THE ONE THAT HAD KEPT THEM APART,  
IT WAS A WALL OF DIVISION & HATRED,  
A WALL THAT HAD HARDENED EACH HEART.**

**INTRODUCING THEIR DADS WITH EXCITEMENT,  
THEY TOLD HOW THEY'D TRADED THEIR SHOES,  
THEY HOPED THAT THE MEN WOULD FOLLOW THEIR LEAD,  
AND TOSS ASIDE PREJUDICED VIEWS.**

**BUT IN THE MIDST OF THE CHILDREN'S PERSUASIONS,  
BARSABBAS LOOKED OFF TO HIS SIDE,  
"MARCUS?" HE ASKED, WITH HIS MOUTH OPEN WIDE,  
"BARSABBAS?!" THE OTHER REPLIED.**

**WHILE THE CHILDREN LOOKED ON IN DUMBFUNDED SHOCK,**

**THEY EMBRACED AMID ROMANS & JEWS,  
THEY LAUGHED & THEY CRIED AND RECOUNTED THEIR PAST,  
THEN LOOKED AT THEIR CHILDREN'S NEW SHOES.**

**UNDERSTANDING THE RISK THE CHILDREN HAD TAKEN,  
THEY WERE AS PROUD AS THEY COULD BE,  
THEN THEY SAT THEMSELVES DOWN IN THAT PENTECOST CROWD,  
AND TOGETHER, THEY MADE A DECREE.**

***“LET’S EXCHANGE SOMETHING ELSE AS WE DID ONCE BEFORE,  
LET’S SHOW OTHERS WE’VE CHANGED OUR VIEWS.”***  
**AND RIGHT THEN & THERE WITH THE SPIRIT TO GUIDE THEM,  
LIKE THE CHILDREN, THEY TRADED THEIR SHOES.**

**THEY EMBRACED ONCE AGAIN & REMEMBERED,  
A PROMISE THEY’D MADE LONG AGO.  
THAT THE NEXT TIME THEY’D MEET THEY’D BE BROTHERS,  
AND NOT SEE THE OTHER AS FOE.**

**NOW THE MESSAGE OF PENTECOST STILL LINGERS TODAY,  
HOW LANGUAGES ROLLED INTO ONE,  
HOW THEY TORE DOWN THE WALLS BETWEEN THEM,  
THROUGH THE POWER OF GOD’S ONLY SON.**

**AND TODAY ISN’T REALLY MUCH DIFFERENT,  
GOD GIVES US THE POWER TO CHOOSE,  
WE CAN LANGUISH INSIDE OUR OWN LITTLE WORLD,  
OR REACH OUT TO TRY ON NEW SHOES.**