

# The Lakeside



## Message in a bottle

Verse of the day for Monday May 15, 2023 – Joel 2: 28-29

28 And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions. 29 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those days.

Read Joel 2 for meditation and inspiration.



## ***THE LEAST OF THESE***

Dear Lakesiders and friends,

A national magazine ran a story that began with a picture of a man lying prostrate on subway stairs. This was followed by a series of images taken for thirty minutes. The photos showed hundreds of people walking by the man still lying on the stairs, looking down on him and none offering a helping hand. Then followed the magazine's editorial comment about the lack of caring and compassion in today's world. What was left unsaid -- perhaps forgotten -- was that the magazine's photographer did nothing to help the distressed man. Like the cold crowds who were passing by, rather than treating the unfortunate man with compassion and respect, the photographer just went about his business, snapping pictures.

The Gospel of the familiar story of the Samaritan woman at the well speaks to this very issue. As the story unfolds, Jesus has made a tiring journey and is alone by a well to which the nearby village dwellers come for water. He has sent His Apostles ahead to pick up supplies and He is awaiting their return. A woman comes to draw some water from the well, and a conversation starts up between her and Jesus. Jesus is thirsty after his journey over the last few hours, but he has nothing

with which to draw water from the well. So, he addresses the woman: "Give me a drink."

The remark seems simple enough, but it surprises the woman. She reminds Him that He is a Jew, and Jews don't talk to Samaritans. A wall of hatred stood between these joint descendants of Abraham. Each group accused the other of being unfaithful to God, and each condemned all contact with anyone of the other group. Violators would be accused of breaking the law of social norms and customs. To intermingle with the outside group would cost one much. Jesus did not really have any compelling physical reason to get involved with this outsider, let alone a woman. After all, she certainly did not need a drink as she had fresh water from the well, she did not seem to need food, and she was not sick. So, Jesus' usual reasons to give aid were not there. BUT she needed much more than any physical help. She needed spiritual guidance and help. She needed His living water - and that is just what she got. She was astounded at His knowledge of her and amazed with His wisdom as to what she needed from Him. His willingness to share with her, a Samaritan, was so awesome that she could not contain herself.

Well, drink in the presence of Jesus and enjoy the living water that He gives and let it become a spring of fresh spiritual newness in your heart.

In God's Spirit,



Roger

