

## Thought for the day 27<sup>th</sup> June 2020 from Heston Groenewald

[Judges 7](#)

[Luke 14:25-35](#)

What are your greatest treasures?? The 'possessions' you have fought hardest for in life, which help define who you are?

For 1<sup>st</sup> century Israelites, this was a no-brainer:

- 1 Land- the promised land
- 2 Lineage- being children of Abraham and Sarah
- 3 Law- Torah and Temple

All of these treasured possessions – which Gideon and many Israelites had fought and died for – identified and defined the Israelites over against 'the nations'.

Sound a little bit nationalist?? YES says Jesus! And so his challenge (through St Luke today) speaks powerfully into our own time of contested national identity and values.

Jesus says, Give it all away. These national treasures are great – they are symbols of YHWH's love and presence, and they are signposts to YHWH's love and presence. But but but – they are not themselves the Ultimate Treasure – which is YHWH's love and presence. If you lose sight of the Ultimate Treasure, you start turning symbols/signposts into idols.

This is exactly what had happened, and exactly why Jesus challenged so forcefully these great symbols of Israel's identity. To remind Israel that YHWH is not limited to Israel's land and family and temple – that God's love and presence have always been intended for all the world.

*(And to offer God's love and presence in his own love and presence! Jesus' fulfilment of all these national symbols is a Thought for Another Day) ☺*

And so for us:

*The quest for God, the never-to-be-completely-satisfied longing for God, is worth one's life. Do not be afraid to forfeit whatever owns you, whatever idols capture your heart. This is your joy. A single-minded focus on Christ will help you to survive and give you courage and insight even in darkness. Those choose and possess the treasure who can hold on to God as their source and affirmation not only in joy but even when their great desire seems disappointed by life. (Constance Fitzgerald)*