

ALL AGE STORY ADVENT 2, 2021

The girl who wanted the gift of peace

Vladimir Korotkov

Not too long ago, in another country close to Australia, a 13-year-old girl was sitting on a hill. She looked down one side of the hill at her house. Her family lived on this farm.

In the upstairs area she could see her mother's room. She sees Salome in it. Their maid. Without any fuss, she cleans the house, washes clothes, she cared for her mother when she was very ill, looking after her every need. She does the work her own family does not want to do.



“But nobody seems to see her, she is ... invisible”¹. But, the girl thinks, I can see her through the window, “so she’s not invisible after all”². She has always been on the farm. The girl’s grandfather bought the land and she came with it. She is like property. A thing that belongs to this family and their culture. Salome is Other! Different. This really upsets the girl.

She looks down the other side of the hill, the side on which Salome lives in the other, poorer family house. She remembers how a few weeks ago, before her mother died, when Ma pleaded with Pa, promise me that Salome gets the house, for everything she has done

for us. Pa promised!

Until, a number of days later, Pa says, “I never promised anything”.³ Then her brother gently tells the girl, “Salome can’t own the house.”

“Even if Pa wanted to, he can’t give it to her.... It against the law.”⁴ Now the girl begins to realise the kind of country she is living in, how her kind of people created laws for their own benefit. Unfair!

The girl wants the country to be different. She dreams that everyone can have equality in a peaceful country.

The girl is like John the Baptist in our Bible reading today. John the Baptist shared God’s dream that God will remove the mountains that separate people, where some are more powerful and make life suit their interests and families. John is a voice



¹ Damon Galgut, *The Promise*, 17 (Kindle Edition).

² Galgut, 17.

³ Galgut, 61.

⁴ Galgut, 81.

calling people in all ages to prepare for God's dream of peace and equality! To work together to make the mountains low, to prepare a new path so all can be equal. To walk this straight path!

It took ten more rough years in this country to create a new path so all can become equal. Although the girls' family would not give Salome the promise, the country changed the laws so that all the people like Salome could have a house and land.

How can we follow God's dream wherever we live and create peace and equality for all?

(Based on the book, *The Promise*, by Damon Galgut)

Questions

1. What is the difference between how the girl sees Salome and how others see her?
2. How did Salome become their maid, their servant?
3. What promise does her Pa give to her Ma as she lay dying?
4. Does Pa keep his promise?
5. What is the real reason Salome can not own land or a house?
6. Do you think the reasons for not owning a house is fair?
7. What is the girl's dream for her country?
8. Did her dream for peace come true?
9. How is her dream similar to John the Baptist's dream, and God's dream?
10. Advent is the preparation for new gifts from God.
11. What new gifts do you want
 - a. for your family;
 - b. for our country;
 - c. for the earth?