NO COFFEE FOR SATAN

A missionary story for children by Lorella Rouster

Bektelach was an Ethiopian girl who learned to love Jesus at school. She attended a mission school run by SIM. Starting in second grade, Bektelach attended the school, walking four miles to school with her lunch slung over her shoulder. She loved the stories of Jesus. One day she put her trust in Him.

Year after year, Bektelach grew in her love for Jesus. When she was 12 years old and in fifth grade, she found herself facing a problem. She had come to understand that Jesus is not just another god. He is the Creator, the Lord who made everything. She had come to understand that He wants all our love and worship.

It was the Feast of Adibar when the problem arose. It was a day when many Ethiopian families sacrifice a black sheep to Satan and brew coffee for Satan. They believe doing this will help protect them throughout the year ahead.

“Bektelach!” called her father. “Brew up some coffee.”

Bektelach stopped in her tracks. Her heart pounded. It was not a sin to brew coffee, but what was the coffee for? Bektelach had determined not to do anything that would dishonor her precious Lord Jesus. She was determined to give Him all her love, all her worship. She had been thinking about how she used to throw a chunk of the black sheep over her shoulder to Satan to show that her sins were being taken away and her prayers would be answered in the year ahead. Now that she was following Jesus, she knew she could not throw sacrifices to Satan any more. Besides, Jesus had already washed her sins away as far as the east is from the west. Jesus had already promised that God would answer any prayer she made in His name as she followed His will.

Bektelach knew that she could no longer throw grain on the fire with her family. She could no longer eat the sheep with its special porridge. She was determined. Nothing more for Satan, that liar who came to kill and steal and destroy, that enemy of God. Everything for Jesus, her beautiful Savior.

“Is…Is the coffee for Satan?” Bektelach finally got the words out.

Her father did not hesitate to answer. “Of course it is for Satan!” he snapped angrily. He had not been happy to hear of Bektelach’s new faith in Jesus.

Bektelach took a deep breath. “Help me, Jesus,” she whispered. Then she lifted up her face to her father’s hard, angry stare. “Father,” she said as politely as she knew how, “I can’t brew it. You see, I don’t worship Satan any more. I belong to Jesus, my Savior.”

Bektelach’s father became furious. He pushed her out of the house right then and there, and refused to let her come back in. He told her to go stay somewhere else. He refused to give her food for school.

Bektelach had just lost her home. Would she lose her family forever?

Bektelach thought about telling the missionary teacher, but she remembered that the Bible says, “When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.” She had learned that Jesus would always take care of her, so she decided just to tell Him about her needs.

Bektelach had often shown kindness to an old woman as she passed her house on the way to school. In her time of need, this woman now showed her kindness. She gave Bektelach food and a mat to sleep on.

One day in a testimony meeting at school, Bektelach stood up and thanked God for meeting all her needs and keeping her in school. Only then did the missionaries find out how the courageous young girl had stood up for Christ.

Bektelach kept praying for her father. She did not grow angry with him in her heart. After some time he became very sick. Bektelach visited him, and she saw that his heart toward her had changed. She showed her father kindness and quietly shared Jesus with him.

One day, Bektelach was sweeping out the house for her father and happily humming a song about Jesus. Suddenly her father raised himself up partway out of bed and called her. “Bektelach, my daughter,” he said. “I have seen how your Jesus took care of you even when I refused to help you. You made the right decision, daughter. It is good to follow Jesus. Will you come back home and live with us again?”

Bektelach was only too happy to do so. She had found that when she gave everything to Jesus, He gave everything to her. She prayed that she may always keep on being faithful to Him, because Satan deserves nothing, but Jesus? He deserves everything. All our love and all our worship.

(Adapted from “Run While the Sun is Hot” by W. Harold Fuller, Sudan Interior Mission, n.d.)