

Bible Study Lesson Summary, Nov. 12, 2017

This Sunday, Nov. 12th, your readings should be Day 50: Chapters 31-33 of Exodus, Psalm 50, and Matthew 26:26-46.

The Gospel of Matthew

Matthew 23:23-39: After taking the methods of the Pharisees out of the picture in the eyes of his followers, starting in vs. 37 he gives a beautiful images of wanting to protect Jerusalem but they will not accept him as Savior.

Matthew 24: This starts where 23 left off. Jesus is predicting the destruction of Jerusalem. The Western or Wailing Wall in Jerusalem all that is left of the temple from 70 A.D. when Rome destroyed it. Maybe the destruction is not done since there are still a few stones on other stones. I don't know if we can take it that literally. From verses 3-31 he is referring to what will happen with his death and also the second coming. It is hard to distinguish, but that is what the church has taught. From verse 32 to the end the chapter, Jesus is warning us to be ready. Notice that not everyone will be saved.

Matthew 25: The parable of the ten virgins continues the theme that not all will be saved. The foolish virgins did not have treasure in heaven (oil) so they were not ready at the end when the bridegroom will come. Notice they were not bad, just not that good. The parable of the talents gives another look at how we must serve the king. Vs. 23 makes me nervous; "I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy." I think this means we will be working in heaven, which would be better than what Satan might have in mind for us in hell. (vs. 30) The Judgment of Nations is the 2nd Coming. Two things of contrast in this story. One is that there is not mention of having to believe in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, just do good deeds. The second is like it, you have to love your neighbor and not just God.

Matthew 26:1-25: Notice in vs. 5 the chief priests do not want to do anything to Jesus during Passover. In vs. 8 we see that in was "disciples" not just Judas that were upset at the waste of perfume. Also notice that Matthew does day she did this for forgiveness, just an act of kindness. It's a little like the Last Judgment lesson we just had. In vs. 14-16 Judas finishes the sandwich by tying back into the chief priests, but realize the real lesson or the meat of the sandwich is the goodness of this woman. Notice that Judas betrays Jesus right at the beginning of the Last Supper in Matthew's account. It does say if he leaves before receiving communion but we can surmise this. After all, he was the first one to leave Mass early.

The Book of Psalms

Psalm 42-43: Here is a prayer of Jesus on Palm Sunday. "When I went in procession with the crowd, I went with them to the house of God, amid loud cries of thanksgiving, with the multitude keeping festival." (vs. 5) But the next verse says: "Why are you downcast, my soul; why do you groan within me?" Jesus knew what was coming on Palm Sunday for it was prophesied in these psalms.

Psalm 44: Notice that the first part of this psalm starts with: “O God, *we...*” This is the prayer of Jesus standing with His people. In verse 5 Jesus refers to “my king and my God.” There are so many kingdom references.

Psalm 45: This psalm is one of my favorites. It speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven and the royal family that the Father is building through His Son who is praying about it. In verse 10 it says: “Daughters of kings are your lovely wives; a princess arrayed in Ophir’s gold comes to stand at your right hand.” The Church is the Bride of Christ. Mary is the perfect bride, so is given the honor of Queen of Mother. “The throne of your fathers your sons will have; you shall make them princes through all the land. I will make your name renowned through all generations; thus nations shall praise you forever.” (vs. 17) Mary is now the Queen of Heaven. We, the Church, are her sons and will stand as princes.

Psalm 46: Jesus is again speaking with His people. So this is to be our prayer to God: Vs. 11, “Who says: “Be still and confess that I am God!”” I love that line. It is Jesus quoting the Father.

Psalm 47-48: Both of these are marvelous songs of praise of God as king in heaven.

Psalm 49: This psalm lets us know that we can’t take it with us. Our material wealth will not follow us to heaven. Verse 15 lets us know what happen to those who trust in this folly; “Like sheep they are herded into Sheol.”

Psalm 50: One of the main questions that the writers of scripture try to answer is what makes God happy. This psalm (vs. 9-13) lets us know that God is no longer into animal sacrifices as His main appeasement. “Offer praise as your sacrifice to God; fulfill your vows to the Most High.” It also lets us know that if we do not obey Him, He will not be pleased.

THE BOOK OF EXODUS

Ex. 18: This chapter is a foreshadowing of the Church. At first we hear of Moses (a Jesus figure) sitting in judgment for the people (vs. 13). Then Moses realizes that he will not be able to do all this by himself. One because there are too many people and two because he will not be there forever. So he looks among all the people for able and God-fearing men to help him, which is a foreshadowing of the Church with its successors of the Jesus being the apostles and their successors, the bishops and their priests.

Ex. 19: Vs. 5 “Therefore, if you hearken to my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my special possession, dearer to me than all other people, though all the earth is mine. You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.” “Vs. 9, “The Lord also told him, “I am coming to you in a dense cloud, so that when the people hear me speaking with you, they may always have faith in you also.”” God is foreshadowing His Church and His use of spokes persons, all priests, but especially the Pope. Vs. 12 sets the limits of who can approach God’s mountain. Only Moses, who is chosen by God, can approach. Jesus came to us to be the chosen one or great high priest so He could approach the Father without fear. The description of Mount Sinai in vs. 18 sure sounds like a volcano. “Mount Sinai was all wrapped in smoke, for the Lord came down upon it in fire. The smoke rose from it as though from a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently.” What better way for God to carve out stone tablets and write on them than with lava. Notice in verse 16, that this all happened on the morning of the third day. Sounds like Jesus coming in glory on Easter.

Ex. 20: After Moses has warned the people to stay back, God delivers the commandments. As you have heard from me before, these are basic survival commandments, so they can start to build a kingdom with God as the king. He will lead them into the Promised Land. Vs. 24, “An altar of earth you shall make for me, and upon it you shall sacrifice your holocausts and peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In whatever place I choose for the remembrance of my name I come to you and bless you.” This is still the early form of sacrifice that God is asking for. It is what these people are ready to understand. But notice that God gets to decide how we please Him, not us.

Ex. 21: In terms of dealing with the concept of laws, these people are very primitive in our eyes but were ahead of most other cultures back then. They have been working under the basis of the survival of the fittest until God chose them for His own. To get them in line, he must discipline them very severely. So just about everything has a punishment of “shall be put to death.” Notice that in vs. 20-21, there is a less severe punishment when dealing with slaves. Slaves could have been gentiles or Jews who have lost their rights, through wrongdoing. It seems that God was not ready to force his people to believe in a concept of equal rights for everyone. Part of that is that he is not building a democracy but a kingdom. Vs. 24 has “eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.” This seems like God’s way of discipline for His kids. It is harsher than a spanking but then they are not really children. Vs. 32 tells us that the price of a slave is thirty shekels of silver, just like the price of Jesus for Judas.

Ex. 22: Verses of note are vs. 18, “Anyone who lies with an animal shall be put to death.” Sex is not for pleasure. Vs. 20, “You shall not molest or oppress an alien, for you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt.” Remember Abraham & Isaac and the situation with their wives in foreign territory. So God tells them to learn from their experiences to be compassionate. Vs. 28, “You shall give me the first-born of your sons.” God will not accept anything but the first fruits. This is not to kill the son but to consecrate him to God’s work. Vs. 30, “Flesh torn to pieces in the field you shall not eat; throw it to the dogs.” Don’t eat road kill. This was a hard rule for the poor to live by. They did not have many alternatives if they had one cow and predators killed it. This is why some of the people were so surprised when Jesus said that the poor might get to heaven faster than the rich. The rich wouldn’t be forced to break any of these laws. The poor found they were tempted all the time.

Ex. 23: In vs. 2, “Neither shall you allege the example of the many as an excuse for doing wrong.” Ethics and morality are not done by a democracy. What a great lesson for our country today. Another lesson we have forgotten today is from vs. 12 “For six days you may do your work, but on the seventh day you must rest, that your ox and your ass may also have rest, and that the son of your maidservant and the alien may be refreshed.” This refers back to the third commandment (Ex.20:11) “In six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the Lord has blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” God is big on this commandment, we have become lax. In vs. 18 “You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread.” This foreshadowing is God’s early way of making sure that Mass is always tied in with the feast of unleavened bread, Passover.

Ex. 24: Verses 5-8 have a description of what they must do for a sacrifice. Young bulls are sacrificed. Half of the blood is splashed on the altar. The book of the covenant is then read aloud to the people. The people respond to the readings. The people are sprinkled with the rest of the blood, while Moses says: “This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words of his.” This is an OT version of the Liturgy of the Word. Vs. 9-11, Moses and some others beheld the God of Israel, but they were not smited nor did they die.

Later Moses will ask to see God and only be able to see Him as He goes past. Then Moses spends forty days and nights with the Lord, foreshadowing Jesus.

Ex. 25: In verse 2 “Tell the Israelites to take up a collection for me.” Vs. 8, “They shall make a sanctuary for me, that I may dwell in their midst.” To God building of churches is not a waste of time like some would have us believe. In vs. 21, “In the ark itself you are to put the commandments which I will give you.” The commandments are the written word of God. The NT version of this is Mary (the Ark) carrying within her womb the living Word of God (Jesus).

Ex. 26-27: These chapters are a continuation of the theme that lets us know just how important God feels His Word is. Not just the ark that bears it but all the trappings surrounding it must be just right in order to please God. In the NT the ark is Mary. If God was so insistent on detail in how the home for the Word of God on Stone was taken care of, imagine what perfection He wanted for this new ark, Mary, and when and where she would be.

Ex. 28: In verse 5 we find out that the vestments of the priests are to be “gold, violet, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen.” The Church has added green but otherwise these are still the colors we use for vestments. Verses 36-38 speak of the miter of Aaron, who is a foreshadowing of the bishops. It says that Aaron bears whatever guilt the Israelites may incur in consecrating any of their sacred gifts.” So the priest bears the guilt of sin while these sins are being atoned for. Jesus is the ultimate, great high priest and bore all the sins of humanity. Notice that all of this is very elaborate. This is their connection with God and his Kingdom.

Ex. 29: In verse 4 Aaron and his sons must be washed before they begin their work as priests. Jesus did this at the Last Supper when He washed the apostle’s feet to prepare them for priesthood. But he also emphasized that it would be a priesthood of service. In verse 7, “Then take the anointing oil and anoint him with it, pouring it on his head.” Priests, prophets and kings were anointed in this way in the OT. Priests are still anointed with oil, except now the bishop anoints them on the hands. But we are all baptized into the priesthood of Christ at baptism and then we anoint the head of the person with oil. In verses 23-24 the loaves of unleavened bread are put into the hands of Aaron. The paten with a host and the chalice are put into a new priest’s hands by the bishop during their ordination. In verses 32-33 we find out that the bread and meat of the sacrifices were to be the food of the priests. They did not go out to work the herds or fields so they must be provided for.

Ex. 30: The OT model of the burning of incense is shown in verses 7-8. The priest must wash his hands and feet before offering sacrifice “lest they die.” The washing of hands at Mass during the preparation of the gifts continues this. We find out that other things are anointed with oil in verses 26-27, the meeting tent, the ark, the table, etc. Now a church and the altar are to be anointed when they are first to be used.