

Bible Study Lesson Summary, Jan. 28, 2018

This Sunday, Jan. 28th, your readings should be Day 113: Chapters 23-24 of Joshua, Psalm 114, and Galatians Chapter 5

ST. PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

2 Thes.1: The letter starts with the same kind of expression good wishes that his other letter did. He makes a point of giving thanks to God for their faith. He even mentions that he boasts about them to churches in other areas as to their endurance in the midst of persecution and affliction. In vs. 5-10 he outlines what he knows will happen to those who don't believe. Vs. 9, "These will pay the penalty of eternal ruin, separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." He concludes that scary message with a prayer.

2 Thes.2: The warning he gives in this chapter is easier for us to receive than it would have been for them. We have a couple thousand years to see a long-term view of how God works. This was all new to them, so it was easier for a phony to panic them. We have fake news all the time now so we are more skeptical. Our problem is more a tendency to be skeptical of the truth of the Scriptures because they are so far removed. He would be writing a different kind of letter to us. But this is why vs. 15 is even more important to us than it was to them: "Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by an oral statement or by a letter of ours." The consistency of the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church is a big help for us. But this statement reminds us that Paul realizes that not all truth is contained in Scripture. There was more that was still in oral tradition. This counters the "Sola Scriptura" banner of the Protestant Churches.

2 Thes.3: I love this third chapter in which he warns about people who are more busybodies than busy with the work of the Lord. He uses himself as the example. So he was worried about those who might not practice what they preach or what he preached.

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

Gal. 1: The chapter starts with the usual greeting but in vs. 6-9 he warns them of false gospels. Remember that these were Christians who were just converted from paganism and don't have the catechism to help keep them on track. On the other hand we do so I feel greater judgment on those who start their own churches. I'm sure Paul had no idea we would have over 30,000 denominations in the future. Even then he says in vs. 9: "if anyone preaches to you a gospel other than the one that you received, let that one be accursed!" Sounds a lot like Jesus talking about millstones around their necks if they lead a child astray. Once again he gives his own story to make his point. (vs. 11-24) When he mentions Kephias, that is Peter; so he is focusing them on apostolic authority.

Gal. 2: Vs. 1-10 refer to the first church council, which was in Jerusalem. You read about that in the Acts of the Apostles. He picks on Peter for the period that Peter was falling for the law of circumcision. That would be justification by the law. The council did rule that only the basic laws like being mindful of the poor, were important carryovers from Jewish laws. Faith in Jesus is now the rule of salvation.

Gal. 3: “O stupid Galatians!” Paul is not subtle. Faith in Christ is the basis of our being family members of God and so justified. This is the New Covenant. We are adopted into God’s family by baptism, which seals our faith in God. That gives us a chance with God. Until that was the case you had to try to be perfect law abiding Jews to receive the promise. That inheritance was the Holy Land.

Gal. 4: He continues with the idea of becoming part of God’s family to receive the inheritance. He give the allegory of Abraham’s two son’s. One to Sarah and one to Hagar. Ishmael was the son of the servant woman Hagar. He did not have the blessing of being the son of Sarah, Abraham’s wife. Isaac has an easier path to salvation because he is family. Paul is telling the Galatians that they have received the same blessing.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Psalm 107: Jesus outlines how God helps those in need.

Psalm 108: The prayer of Jesus asking for continued aid in times of need.

Psalm 109: This is a prayer of Jesus during His trial and death. Vs. 5-7: “My enemies say of me: ‘Find a lying witness, an accuser to stand by his right hand, that he may be judged and found guilty, that his plea may be in vain.’” Vs. 22, “For I am sorely in need; my heart is pierced within me.”

Psalm 110: This psalm is about Jesus being both King of kings, and great High Priest.

Psalm 111: This prayer of Jesus is a psalm of praise of God that should be our words from day to day.

Psalm 112: This is about heaven and Hell. Vs. 3, (Heaven) “Wealth and riches shall be in their homes; their prosperity shall endure forever.” Vs. 10, (Hell) “The wicked shall be angry to see this; they will gnash their teeth and waste away; the desires of the wicked come to nothing.”

Psalm 113: A psalm of praise of God for taking care of those who have so little.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

The whole book, which is the history of the conquest of the Promised Land, is a prophecy of the spiritual conquest of the world through the church under the leadership of Jesus the Messiah.

Jos. 7: Achan is unfaithful and is too worried about treasure of silver and gold. Sounds like Judas. If you hold onto the silver and gold you lose the Lord. In vs. 25-26, Achan is stoned to death. Remember this is a foreshadowing and does not necessarily mean that Achan is in hell. But notice that vs. 1 did say: “and the anger of the Lord flared up against the Israelites.” ***This was a question that came up last week in class. We are taught that we can be angry about a sin but not the sinner. How can God be angry at the people? The answer is that he is God and is the one who is to judge us. We are not the judges.*** God does judge Achan and he is stoned to death.

Jos. 8: After getting rid of Achan, God’s anger is appeased. The people now win victory in Ai, or Bethel. Vs. 2, “Do to Ai and its king what you did to Jericho and its king; except that you may take its spoil and livestock as booty.” I presume that the change is that now they are considered judged

and in the Promised Land and now can partake of the goods of heaven. They also know that they had better obey the Lord. Notice that God used the foiled plan from the first battle against Ai to create a strategy to win the second one. The King of Ai did not realize how powerful the Israelites were when God was helping them and got careless. God can make good come from bad. Vs. 30-35, foreshadows how the law of the Lord and worship will be what the Promised Land is about and certainly what heaven is based on.

Jos. 9: This chapter is a shady foreshadowing of communion for us Gentiles. The Gibeonites go to Joshua and with bread as their instrument, he makes a promise to them and they are saved from destruction. It is all based on willing to be a servant of the Lord rather than dead. Remember that even Mary spoke of herself as being the “handmaid of the Lord.”

Jos. 10: Vs. 13, “And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, while the nation took vengeance on its foes. Is this not recorded in the Book of Jashar? The primary lesson from this is a foreshadowing of the victory of Jesus on the cross when an eclipse of the sun took place and day became night. So time gets mixed up when God is doing His best work. Do we have to believe that the sun stood still? The fact that it says that this is a reference from a book that is not in the Bible gives us an out. Vs. 20-27 has the death of the five kings. They defeated, imprisoned, hung from trees and then put in stone tombs. They are now out of the picture. The devil tried this on Jesus and it didn’t work because the Lord was His stronghold. All these people are put to the sword and doomed. They do not get to be in the Promised Land. This foreshadows those who will not be in heaven. But this does not mean that these particular OT people were all going to hell. We don’t know that judgment. Forty years in the desert made the Israelites tough. God’s plan had many layers.

Jos. 11: Vs. 9, “Joshua did to them as the Lord had commanded: he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots.” This was to foreshadow that it is not going to be through weapons of war that we would obtain victory and win heaven. It was going to be through God and his Chosen People. God will not save everyone. If you do not cooperate with the plan of God you will go to Hell. Vs. 20, “For it was the design of the Lord to encourage them to wage war against Israel, that they might be doomed to destruction and thus receive no mercy, but be exterminated, as the Lord had commanded Moses.” This results in a final result of: “And the land enjoyed peace.” (vs. 23)

Jos. 12: All these conquered kings are gone but God’s promise lives on and the King of Kings reigns forever.

Jos. 13: Some of the land is divided up. John 14:2, “In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.”

Jos. 14: The story of Caleb, who was faithful, is given as an example of God doing good things for His faithful people. Because of this story we know that this is not just about tribes but individuals. This also helps understand that these battles came over a five year period. For Caleb was forty when judged obedient to the Lord, spent 40 years in the desert, and is now 85.

Jos. 15: I am convinced that this many towns meant that there had to have been a town every two miles in the Promised Land.

Jos. 16: The key line in this chapter is vs. 10, “But they did not drive out the Canaanites living in Gezer, who live on within Ephraim to the present day, though they have been impressed as laborers.” This is another reminder that this is not heaven but the Promised Land. There are still

bad influences within it. So each generation would have to struggle with staying faithful to God as they dealt with these bad influences or temptations.

Jos. 17: Vs. 12, "...the Canaanites persisted in this region. Then we have to remember that Joseph was one of the twelve sons but he had two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who each got a section of land. Vs. 18-19, if they are strong and can over power the bad influence of these Canaanites they will have more land. If we overcome temptation we will have more grace.

Jos. 18-19: By casting lots for the last seven tribes they didn't have to fight over them. They would have seen it as the will of the Lord. This would be an interesting way of doing inheritances. Some families are ready to kill each other over an estate. In heaven it will not be that way. We will accept the decision of the Lord.

Jos. 20: Setting up the cities of asylum. This is a little like Purgatory. These towns are for those who are not bad enough to be killed by are not good enough to be with the general population, only Saints in heaven.

Jos. 21: The Levites needed cities but not extensive land. They would live in the cities but would not be raising livestock. They would only need a little pasture land so the animals that were brought to them would have something to eat as they waited for the feast that they would be sacrificed for. Actually having more land would have tempted them to not do their priestly work. For this same reason monks have vows of poverty but still have a place to live, some more strict than others. This section ends with Jos.21:45, "Not a single promise that the Lord made to the house of Israel was broken, every one was fulfilled."

Jos. 22: Vs. 10, "When the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh came to the region of the Jordan in the land of Canaan, they built there at the Jordan a conspicuously large altar." This was in addition to the altar of the Lord. This causes great concern and is finally resolved but is problematic. Jesus spoke of concerns like this several times. Once it was, "if they are not against us they are for us." (Mk.9:40) This was when miracles were done in his name by other men who were not apostles and Jesus let it go. And yet He prayed for unity. That is why we have such a struggle figuring out which Christian Churches are okay and which are not.