

Bible Study Lesson Summary, Mar. 11, 2018

This Sunday, Mar. 11, your readings should be Day 155: Chapters 6-7 of the First Book of Kings, Psalm 147, and Chapter 4 of St. Paul's 1st Letter to the Corinthians.

THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK

Mk. 15: The chief priests didn't dare bring Jesus to Pilate before his morning coffee. Vs. 2, Pilate has only two questions: "Are you the king of the Jews?" and "Have you no answer?" Vs. 9, Pilate eggs on the chief priests with "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" Barabbas is released. He is only a nobody rebel. In Vs. 12, "Then what [do you want] me to do with [the man you call] the king of the Jews?" Pilate was still shocked that they wanted Jesus to be crucified. He started with scourging then crucifixion. Vs. 16-20 the soldiers dress Jesus in purple (John has him in red) and crown Him with thorns and call Him: "Hail, King of the Jews!" Vs. 21 mentions Simon, a Cyrenian, father of Alexander and Rufus. Rufus is mentioned again in Romans 16:13 and Acts 11:20 mentions "men of Cyrene" preaching to the Creeks. That might be Simon. Cyrene is modern day Libya near Egypt. Vs. 22-32 is the crucifixion with more mentions of King of the Jews, vs. 26 and 32. Vs. 33-41 is the death of Jesus. It starts with three hours of darkness, then starting psalm 22 are his only last words mentioned. The veil or division between the Holy of Holies and the rest of the temple is torn, so the separation between God and man is over. They both have experienced death? A centurion recognized Jesus as the Son of God. There are women witnesses. In Vs. 42-47 is the burial.

Mk. 16: At the end of the Sabbath three women head to the tomb and see a man who might be an angel. They are given instructions that they don't follow and run away instead. Then in vs. 9-11 you have a longer version with Mary Magdalene getting to see Jesus and follows the instructions. In vs. 12 & 13 you get a very short version of the Emmaus sighting. In vs. 14-18 you have the commissioning at the table, with promises. Vs. 19-20 Jesus ascends. Hopefully the table was outside but they do go and preach as instructed. Then is another ending that is shorter.

ST. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

This is supposedly written from Ephesus where I think Paul was visiting Mary and John. But he responds to bad news from Corinth about the followers getting into trouble so he responds.

1Cor. 1: It starts with his long greeting and typical giving of thanks. Then in vs. 10-17 he starts into the first problem of divisions created from them having different teachers. He refocuses them on the cross of Christ, which sounds like foolishness to all but true believers. (vs. 18-25) But then he shows that this helps for the wise guys might not get the message but they will.

1Cor. 2: This continues the theme wisdom of the cross but the second half focuses on the gift of the Spirit of God, which helps us know the mind of God, vs. 16.

1Cor. 3: This chapter starts again with the need to end divisions. In vs. 11) "for no one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ." With this focus there won't be divisions.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Psalm 140: Vs. 11: “May God rain burning coals upon them, cast them into the grave never more to rise.” I don’t like to hear about Jesus sending anyone to hell but I know it is a reality because He says so. The last verse gives our alternative: “then the just will give thanks to your name; the upright will dwell in your presence.”

Psalm 141: Again we have Jesus praying to be delivered by the Father. Vs. 5 is interesting: “Let the just strike me; that is kindness; let them rebuke me; that is oil for my head.” In other words correction from the just person is good.

Psalm 142: This is also a cry for help to the Father from Jesus.

Psalm 143: One more prayer in distress from Jesus. These have all been prayers that Jesus would have prayed during the first Holy Week. This one probably in the Garden for vs. 8a says: “Show me the path I should walk.” Your will not mine was His conclusion in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Psalm 144: This was certainly a prayer of King David. He wanted victory and prosperity. It is what we all want. But as a prayer of Jesus it goes to another level for He is praying that we get to heaven. Vs. 3, He is truly speaking as one who has a human nature, “Lord what are mortals that you notice them; human beings, that you take thought of them?”

Psalm 145: Another prayer of King David. Vs. 14, “The Lord supports all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down.” A loving Father would be this way. But many would not like vs. 20, “You, Lord, watch over all who love you, but all the wicked you destroy.” What many fail to learn is that these are images to help us understand heaven and that no one can be wicked there. God gives us all many chances at forgiveness and reconciliation but if we insist on wickedness, we will not be allowed to ruin heaven by our presence. I think this prayer of Jesus is very powerful because it truly teaches us how to pray.

Psalm 146: Another prayer of trust in God, but vs. 7-9 are especially significant for they are similar to Isaiah 49 & 61 and then in Lk. 4. “Secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free; the Lord gives sight to the blind. The Lord raises up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord protects the stranger, sustains the orphan and the widow, but thwarts the way of the wicked.” Even as Jesus prays this He works to fulfill it. We must do the same.

The First Book of Samuel

2Sm. 19: The son of the king is killed, David is sad but the question is whether he loves those who killed his son? After a while he says in vs. 13; “You are my brothers, you are my bone and flesh.” David forgives just as God forgives. Vs. 24, “Then the king said to Shimei, “You shall not die.” This is forgiveness but also foreshadows that Jesus conquers death for us. In verse 40 all the people crossed over the Jordan, then King David crossed over. The Jordan becomes a symbol of baptism and Jesus goes to heaven.

2Sm. 20: In vs. 3 David goes to Jerusalem and provides for his concubines but does not have relations with them. Jesus goes to the New Jerusalem and loves us and cares for us but there is no sexual relations in heaven. Vs. 9-10, “With his right hand Joab held Amasa’s beard as if to kiss him. And since Amasa was not on his guard against the sword in Joab’s other hand, Joab stabbed him in the abdomen with it, so that his entrails burst forth to the ground...” Amasa had been Absalom’s general. Judas betrayed with a kiss and “He bought a parcel of land with the wages of his iniquity, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle, and all his insides spilled out.” (Acts 2:8)

2Sm. 21: The last chapters of 2Sm are considered appendixes. I did not notice any foreshadowing in this chapter. All I noticed was that seven sons were sacrificed as payment for injustice, just so it would rain. Then they were given a decent resting place with their father, Saul. So they were sacrificed but not lost.

2Sm. 22: This is the Song of Thanksgiving by David that certainly sounds like a psalm which sounds again like Jesus’ words.

2Sm. 23: Here we have David’s last words. Vs. 5, “Is not my house firm before God? He has made an eternal covenant with me, set forth in detail and secured. Will he not bring to fruition all my salvation and my every desire?” Some of the stories that follow are short and weird. Like water from a cistern being thought of as blood. Jesus turned water in wine and then wine into blood. This skips the middle element.

2Sm. 24: This story of the pestilence is read as one of the Sunday readings in the Lectionary. I don’t remember which one. But it is all about trusting in the Lord’s mercy rather than anything else. And sure enough, vs. 16b, “Enough now! Stay your hand. And then David says: “It is I who have sinned; it is I, the shepherd, who have done wrong. But these are sheep; what have they done? Punish me and my kindred.” Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is also willing to take the punishment for sin even though it was the sin of the people and not His. He took it on Himself. Basically these last four chapters make me think that someone dropped the scrolls that make up the book of Samuel and the scrolls containing these chapters didn’t get put back in the same order and too much time went by and they couldn’t figure out where they fit because they were numbered.

THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS

As the notes say, the 1st and 2nd book of Kings was once one book. To follow it you almost need a chart, which they just happen to have in many bibles under the heading of the Two Kingdoms. Remember Judah is the south kingdom and Israel is the north one.

1Kg. 1: King David needs to be kept warm. Vs. 3, “So they sought for a beautiful girl throughout the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunamite, whom they brought to the king.” It is good to be the king. I think one of his wives, like Bathsheba, could certainly have done that. Again, God make sure we get the whole truth, even if it is racy. There is a fight over who is to be king after David. Bathsheba wants her son, Solomon, to be king. David agrees. Another son, Adonijah, also wants to be king. Vs. 38, “...and mounting Solomon on King David’s mule, escorted him to Gihon...and all the people shouted, “Long live King Solomon!” It sounds a lot like Palm Sunday. But the message is that the king chooses his successor. It cannot be taken on by one’s own initiative. It is a roundabout way of saying Jesus gets to be the boss and others don’t, because His Dad said so.

1Kg. 2: Adonijah tries to get King David’s beautiful nurse for his wife. This is because she is the only witness besides Bathsheba to hear David’s announcement that Solomon should be his successor. Solomon sees through this attempt at getting rid of the witness and has Adonijah killed. In vs. 19 we have an important understanding of the important position of the Queen Mother. “Then he sat down upon his throne, and a throne was provided for the king’s mother, who sat at his right.” This is a verse that helps understand the churches image of Mary as Queen of Heaven. The rest of the chapter is getting rid of the enemies of the king. With Jesus if you are not with Him you are going to end up in the only other alternative, hell.

1Kg. 3: Solomon, a Christ figure, is given great wisdom. Jesus has His Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Wisdom.

1Kg. 4: We are given details of Solomon’s officers. It is hard to get a count of how many because of how it is written but this is similar to Jesus selecting the apostles.

1Kg. 5: Solomon proposes to build a temple. He has been blessed and has much to trade for to get the rest of the materials needed but build it, by trading with other nations.