

Bible Study Lesson Summary, April 8, 2018

This Sunday, April 8th, your readings should be Day 169: Chapters 12-13 of the Second Book of Kings, Proverbs 7, and Chapter 16 of St. Paul's 1st Letter to the Corinthians.

ST. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

1Cor. 10: I have been trying to teach you that the OT story of the Israelites and their relationship to God and the Holy Land is an example of what the NT is about. St. Paul says this in vs. 6, "These things happened as examples for us..." Vs. 13b is important, "God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it." I don't know if this is singular or plural. Is he talking about each or us as individuals or the church? Vs. 14-17 is a clear teaching of the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Vs. 18-22 is probably the basis for Catholics be warned about not receiving communion in other denominations. The last part of the chapter teaches us to be conscious of how our actions affect others. Our example is important.

1Cor. 11: Vs. 2 is very important as we deal with Bible only Christians. "I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold fast to the traditions, just as I handed them on to you." As Catholics we are based on Bible and Traditions. In this issue of wearing head coverings, which is a tradition with a small "t", Paul says in vs. 11, "Woman is not independent of man or man of woman in the Lord." Vs. 17 starts a teaching on how to approach going to Mass. We must watch out for each other. Vs. 23-26 is another reinforcement of the consecration at Mass. Vs. 27 is critical, "Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord." And vs. 29, "For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself." The 'body' to be discerned is the Mystical Body, the presence of Jesus and the church.

1Cor. 12: Here Paul explains the Mystical Body of Christ, all parts being important. The transition line is vs. 31b: "But I shall show you a still more excellent way." The body lives in love.

1Cor. 13: Here he defines this particular kind of Love.

1Cor. 14: St. Paul must have had some negative experiences of people speaking in tongues and bragging about it. So he gives several warnings about this gift. Vs. 13 is one that seems to be forgotten in recent times, at least in my experience: "Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray to be able to interpret." In vs. 19 he says five words with his mind to instruct others is better than a thousand words in a tongue. He worries in vs. 23 that non-believers will think we are out of our minds. And in vs. 28: "But if there is no interpreter, the person should keep silent in the church and speak to himself and to God." Vs. 34-35 has to be seen as speaking in tongues and the thing that women are to be subordinate. He has just said everyone should be subordinate to Christ, and now I presume he is giving male priesthood a push.

1Cor. 15: Here he emphasizes the core Gospel message, death and resurrection. It is passed on by witnesses of which Paul sees himself (vs. 8) "as to one born abnormally, he appeared to me. But starting with vs. 12 he focuses on the resurrection as critical. Vs. 19: "If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are the most pitiable people of all." Vs. 26 speaks of the last enemy of God being destroyed: "The last enemy to be destroyed is death, for "he subjected everything under his

feet.”” In the end Jesus will bring it all to the Father. Vs. 32 is the result of no hope of resurrection, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” Starting with vs. 35 he focuses on the resurrection of the body and not just the soul. Vs. 52 summarizes: “For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

Prv. 3: Vs. 5, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, on your own intelligence rely not...” The Letter to the Hebrews, vs. 5-6, quotes vs. 11-12, “The discipline of the Lord, my son, disdain not; spurn not his reproof; for whom the Lord loves he reproves, and he chastises the son he favors.” This is also the same concepts of Psalm 119 except that the psalm was from Jesus’ perspective and this chapter from Proverbs is from the Father’s. Vs. 11-12 are quoted in Hebrews also. “The discipline of the Lord, my son, disdain not; spurn not his reproof; for who the Lord loves he reproves, and he chastises the son he favors.”

Prv. 4: Vs. 1, “Hear, O children, a father’s instruction...” Vs. 10, “Hear, my son, and receive my words, and the years of your life shall be many.” My Dad said, “Do what I say and you will live a long life.” He stole that line. Proverbs is not the words of just any old father but the word of God.

Prv. 5-6: These chapters on adultery sound harsh and are one sided but remember that this book is geared to be between a father and his son. There could be another whole set of chapters dedicated to mothers warning their daughters. Also remember that Jesus specifically forgave the adulteress woman.

THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS

1Kg. 19: The victory of the prophets of Baal puts Elijah’s life in danger from Jezebel. 450 men don’t scare him but he is afraid of Jezebel. After all, she is the queen at this time. Elijah hides but is so frustrated that he wants to die but he is given a hearth cake to revive him and give him strength for the journey. We too receive food for the journey, the Bread of Life. Remember that what we have read in Proverbs about discipline from God. He doesn’t make this life easy for us. Elijah is to anoint Jehu as the next king of the north but he won’t be in power for a while. Then Elijah anoints Elisha as his successor. Elisha was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen. That takes tremendous strength. He wants to say goodbye to his father first and Elijah lets him know it is an invitation not a command. Realize that all the prophets are limited. Only Jesus needs no successor. As the note says the wind, earthquake, fire, and whispering sound (vs. 11-13) at Horeb are a reminder of Moses at Horeb and his encounter with God. Elijah’s mission was to reestablish the covenant and restore the pure faith. To do it he must go to Horeb. Moses and Elijah appear on Mount Tabor for the Transfiguration where the new covenant is discussed with Jesus.

1Kg. 20: A victory for Ahab because he trusts in God. Even though Ahab is more evil than others, God blesses him and his people to turn them around but Ahab does not follow through so he and his people will pay a price.

1Kg. 21: Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, turn away from God's ways and are sentenced to become dog food. Contrast Jezebel with Judith when we get to that book of the bible. Judith uses her talents for God's purpose. Jezebel uses them against God. When Ahab hears he will be dog food he begs God who responds with mercy: (vs. 28-29) "Have you seen that Ahab has humbled himself before me? Since he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his time."

1Kg. 22: The prophet Micaiah gets slapped on the cheek for telling the truth. Jesus got the same treatment at His trial. Even though he tries trickery Ahab is killed in battle and his blood licked up by dogs. His son Ahaziah reigns of the north after him and was evil also. Jehoshaphat followed his father Asa as king of the south. They were not evil but not perfect either.

THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS

2Kg. 1: Elijah calls down divine fire and it comes and kills 100 men. This might have been what convinced James and John to ask Jesus to call down fire on the village that wouldn't welcome them. Ahaziah, king of Israel, the northern territory, dies as Elijah foretold. He had no son so his brother, Joram, succeeded him as king. This happened when Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, was king of Judah.

2Kg. 2: Elijah gets to act like Moses and part the water. Elisha becomes his successor and does the same. Jesus just walks on the water. Elijah goes up to heaven in a whirlwind. This would have been right about where Jesus was baptized, showing us the way to heaven. Jesus doesn't ride a chariot but ascends. The big question during Elijah's time was whether the gates of heaven were open for him? In vs 19-22, Elisha purifies the water with salt. Up until the new Code of Canon Law, in about 1989, salt was used in making holy water. Elisha has a bad temper and doesn't like being called "Baldhead". (vs. 23) 42 kids are killed for doing it. I'm so glad Jesus didn't do that. Remember, Elisha couldn't send them to hell. Only Jesus could do that. This applies to the 100 who are killed by divine fire also.

2Kg. 3: Vs. 22: The people are saved by water looking like blood. We are saved by the blood of Christ. By the way, I have not checked the count but I have heard that Elijah did ten miracles and Elisha did twenty since he got a double portion in the last chapter vs. 9.

2Kg. 4: This story of the multiplication of oil seems like something that was made up but several Saints in the history of Christianity have done very similar things. The story about the Shunammite woman foreshadows the birth of John the Baptist. Elisha bringing the boy back to life foreshadows Jesus' raising two people back to life. Elisha makes the stew okay to eat. Jesus tells us that nothing that goes into our mouth is impure. Elisha feeds 100, but Jesus multiplication of loaves and fishes and feeds thousands. Each of Jesus' miracles was greater to show He was more powerful.

2Kg. 5: The story of Naaman is a foreshadowing of baptism, especially since it happens in the Jordan River, where Jesus was baptized. But the most important thing is that it is the power of God

and not the water that is the blessing. Gehazi tries to make a profit off the miracle of God and is punished with leprosy.

2Kg. 6: The miracle of recovering the lost ax sets up the story about Elisha, a prophet with amazing powers from God. In vs. 9-11 he does better than finding an ax, he can tell where the King of Aram is going to attack. In vs. 14-18 the king of Aram coming to arrest Elisha. Elisha calls on God and he is saved. Jesus does not call on God when he is going to be arrested but every Jew would have figured that He could have because he was more miraculous than Elisha. Elisha saves Israel without bloodshed. The king of Aram decides it is better to attack Samaria instead of the part that Elisha had been in. Samaria is half way between Jerusalem (south) and Galilee (north) but was still a part of Israel. Aram was north of the northern kingdom. Vs. 17 says there were “horses and fiery chariots around Elisha.” Maybe they were the same kind that God sent for Elijah.

2Kg. 7: Vs. 6-7 tell of how God can win battles. But remember Jesus did not depend on this for his battle is against Satan and his weapon, death.

2Kg. 8: In vs. 6 the woman whose son had been cured by Elisha approached the king of Israel who said: “Restore all her property to her, with all that the field produced from the day she left the land until now.” It is a good idea to be nice to a favored daughter. With all the power God has given him, Elisha is still afraid for his people. Vs. 12”Why are you weeping, my lord?” Elisha replied, “Because I know the evil that you will inflict upon the Israelites. You will burn their fortresses, you will slay their youth with the sword, you will dash their little children to pieces, you will rip open their pregnant women.” Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem for He too knew that horrible things would happen to them because not everyone was willing to do what they need to do in order to be saved.

2Kg. 9: The story of Jezebel is such a powerful one. It shows the power of a women to get a man to do what she wants. Jezubel does it for evil. Mary even got Jesus to do something He was not planning to do at the Wedding Feast at Cana, but she did it for good. But Jezebel dies as had been prophesied in 1Kg 21:23. Vs. 36 “In the confines of Jezreel dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel.”

2Kg. 10: It is hard to follow the history line of these stories when they jump back and forth so much. These are important stories for the Jews and for us, but not because of the history but because of the lessons. This chapter gives more details concerning the death of Ahab’s family. Vs. 18-27 is the trick used to kill the worshippers of Baal, which is like Jesus’ message about separating the wheat from the chaff and burning the chaff. But the next generation is still left with the golden calf gods, so judgment goes on.

2Kg. 11: Jehoiada becomes king of Israel and finishes off the altars of Baal.