

Bible Study Lesson Summary, Aug. 19, 2018

This Sunday, Aug. 19th, your readings should be Day 267: Chapters 23-24 of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, Chapter 17:11-21 of the Book of Wisdom, and Chapter 2 of the 1st Letter of Peter.

THE FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY

Timothy is big in the Ephesian community. I wonder if Mary was there with John yet? One of his parents was Jewish and another was Gentile.

1Tim.2: Paul starts with the need to pray for leaders, but then in vs. 8 starts teaching about women. If he has lived twenty years ago he would have been crucified. It is not much better now but I have an idea that I think can help understand this. In my book I said that men have strength and women have power. Simply if women try to control things directly they lose their power and the men lose their strength, which is what we are leaning towards at this time. Women can give the “look” and the men will regain their strength and the women will actually have more control than if they try to take it from the men, which would have to be done by strength. That is why they lose their femininity.

1Tim.3: Vs. 1-13 are what he wants to see in the clergy. With our current scandal we need to get back to this. Vs. 15 is overlooked but should not be. “But if I should be delayed, you should know how to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth.” The church is the foundation of truth because it is the living body of Christ. When we lose this reality in our world we lose Christ.

1Tim.4: Vs. 1-5 are summarized in vs. 3: “They forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.” He is warning us about people who are in panic mode and go overboard. It happens in every generation. Vs. 6-16 are speaking to Timothy as bishop. He should be wise and stand firm. Vs. 14 (“with the imposition of hands of the presbyterate”) is Paul’s referencing ordination, which must have been common in the minds of all by then.

1Tim.5: This is Paul’s common sense pastoral care lesson for Timothy concerning elders, widows and priests. Vs. 17, “Presbyters who preside well deserve double honor, especially those who toil in preaching and teaching.” This is where stole fees come in for sacraments. It is a way to give a bonus to a priest who has just provided a special sacrament to you. In vs. 19 he could be talking to our current scandal. We must have reliable witnesses or accusations may not be true.

1Tim.6: Vs. 1-2 are referring to a different kind of slavery than we have had in our country or have now with slave trafficking. These more current masters are not to be given respect. Paul has always credentialed himself by his beatings and not by his desire for wealth in this world. Here he again used this to give Timothy a gauge for true teaching. It is a good balance from what was just taught on bonuses for clergy. Note in vs. 10 that “the love of money is the root of all evils...” not money is the root of all evils. Then in vs. 17-19 he tells Timothy to tell the rich to be careful with their attitude towards wealth.

THE LETTER TO TITUS

Titus traveled with Paul several times and is now in charge of the church in Crete, as bishop.

Titus 1: This time Paul identifies himself as a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, whose purpose is to help the “faith of God’s chosen ones...” In vs. 5 he reminds Titus that has must be appointing presbyters (priests for each town.) Paul already seems to be worried about what the work will do to families so he says they should be “married only once, with believing children...” Then in vs. 7 he describes the qualities of any bishops that he appoints. Paul is worried about some of the Jewish Christians. There must really have been some trouble-makers in that group.

Titus 2: Here Paul gives some restrictive thoughts on behavior on different people. These might sound hard but he outlines why we should follow them in vs. 11-14. His idea is that we should live devoutly in this age so we receive what has been promised to us in the next. This means we must be ready to reject some happiness and satisfaction in this life. That is hard for us because we are told we can have it our way in this life.

Titus 3: Paul repeats his concept of being humble before others for that was what Jesus did. In vs. 10-11 recognizes that not all will listen. “After a first and second warning, break off contact with a heretic, realizing that such a person is perverted and sinful and stands self-condemned.” Then he signs off after mentioning some specific people who can help them both.

THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER

There are questions as to whether this was actually written by Peter. I think he did but he may have had editing help. But even that I doubt. He was a smart guy after being Pope for all those years.

1Pet.1: After letting everyone know who he is addressing in vs. 1-2, he goes right into the focus on the resurrection, which is the hope of Christians. Vs. 6: “In this you rejoice, although now for a little while you may have to suffer through various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” In vs. 10-12 he mentions how the prophets helped us by letting us know that Jesus would suffer. In vs. 13-16 he lets us know we need to be smart and strong. Vs. 17 is critical about judgment: “Now if you invoke as Father him who judges impartially according to each one’s works, conduct yourselves with reverence during the time of your sojourning...” Vs. 22-25 is a reminder to love one another.

THE BOOK OF WISDOM

Wis. 13:10-19: The author points out the false idols. Vs. 10 mentions objects that we see as idols. Crystals are the new one for the New Age Movement. Vs. 11-19 explain the foolishness of carved idols.

Wis. 14: This chapter continues the same theme against idolatry. Vs. 1: “Again, one preparing for a voyage and about to traverse the wild waves cries out to wood more unsound than the boat that bears him.” I see the boat that bears him as a reference Noah’s ark and then to the Church to come. Vs. 6 refers to Noah specifically. Vs. 7: “For blest is the wood through which justice comes about...” This refers to the cross. Vs. 17 could refer to any king that Israel tried to flatter, like Pharaoh.

Wis. 15: Vs. 1, ”But you, our God, are good and true, slow to anger, and governing all with mercy.” This is a popular reference to God that we have seen several times before. I love the image of the Potter’s work starting in vs. 7. He makes stuff that are used at the table and the outhouse. Those are my words. It is made from the same stuff. The judgment is in terms of what it is used for. Are we used for God’s will or not?

Wis. 16: Vs. 6 refers to the serpents in the desert that killed those fleeing Egypt but mentions the “sign of salvation.” But it foreshadows the Cross of Jesus. “But as a warning, for a short time they were terrorized, though they had a sign of salvation, to remind them of the precept of your law. Vs. 20 relates to Manna from heaven and foreshadowing the Bread of Life. “Instead of this, you nourished your people with food of angels and furnished them bread from heaven, ready to hand, untoiled-for, endowed with all delights and conforming to every taste.” Vs. 26 speaks of the Word made Flesh and Scripture: “That your sons whom you loved might learn, O Lord, that it is not the various kinds of fruits that nourish man, but it is your word that preserves those who believe you!” As Jesus said in Mt. 4:4 after being tempted by Satan; “One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.”

Wis. 17:1-10: This tells of God’s actions during the Exodus, another example of His work. These verses remind us of the 9th plague of darkness in Ex. 10.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH

This is about the time of 742-687 B.C. The kingdom is divided into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. The kings are not following God. The question always comes in terms of whether this is all from one prophet. The name Isaiah means “the salvation of the Lord.” This could mean it comes from several prophets and here is the summary of the plan of salvation. We will find out in the next life.

Is. 3: Vs. 15, is a summary of Isaiah’s condemning the nations of Israel and Judah: “What do you mean by crushing my people, and grinding down the poor when they look to you? says the Lord, the God of hosts.” They have their priorities all messed up so everything will be chaos.

Is. 4: Vs. 1 is about the ravages of war when all the men are killed and the women left have no husbands. Vs. 2-3, is a prophecy of the Church or the followers of the Messiah: “On that day, the branch of the Lord will be luster and glory, and the fruit of the earth will be honor and splendor for the survivors of Israel. He who remains in Zion and he that is left in Jerusalem will be called holy.”

Is. 5: Isaiah uses the common theme of the vineyard to describe the situation. Jesus did the same thing. (Mt. 22:33-46) I like vs. 11-25 about those he refers to in vs. 22 as: “the champions at drinking wine, the valiant at mixing strong drink!” Vs. 26-30 are the punishment of an invasion.

Is. 6: Isaiah is prepared to prophecy through a vision of being purged. Vs. 9-10 are quoted by Jesus in Mt. 13:14. “Listen carefully, but you shall not understand! Look intently, but you shall know nothing...” If they don’t want to be cleansed from impurity like Isaiah they will not be in the program.

Is. 7: Vs. 10 starts a section that should seem familiar for it is read during Advent. Vs. 14, “the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.”

Is. 8: Jesus refers to vs. 23 in Mt.4:15. For Isaiah is referring to a savior who will straighten this mess up and Jesus was starting His ministry to gather them back.

Is. 9: Vs. 1-6, describe Jesus, the Christ, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light...(5) For a child is born to us, a son is given us...” But the last half of the chapter is about what will come first, the fall of the northern kingdom, Israel.

Is. 10: Isaiah prophecies that Assyria will become the tool of God but will still perish. But in vs. 21, a remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. Vs. 12-15 are for Assyria who had better not think they are great because God is using them to accomplish the fall of most of his people, for they will fall soon also. Vs. 27b-34 are the reality of that invasion.

Is. 11: This whole chapter describes the result of the coming of the Messiah but its fulfillment will not come until the final judgment.

Is. 12: Vs. 1-2 give us courage. Vs. 3 foreshadows baptism. Vs. 5, (“Let this be known throughout all the earth.”) is basically fulfilled and said when Jesus ascended to heaven.

Is. 13: In vs. 4-5 Isaiah is talking of Babylon being used to punish the Chosen People, but it better describes the hosts of angels in their battle against evil. Vs. 11, “Thus I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their guilt...”

Is. 14-23: Isaiah lets the nations know that even though He will let them have their way with Israel for a time, they will still have to pay the price for their own wickedness.