

## **Bible Study Lesson Summary, Nov. 4, 2018**

*This Sunday, Nov. 4th, your readings should be Day 323: Chapter 38-10 of the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapter 28:13-26 of the Book of Sirach, and Chapter 19:23-42 of the Gospel of St. John.*

### **THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

**Jn. 13:** Now we start the Book of Glory, better known as the Last Supper, Passion, Death, & Resurrection of Christ. Before this Jesus was showing signs of what he was to accomplish. Now he is doing it all. He starts with humble service in vs. 1-20. Many people forget how this sets the tone for his humbling himself to accept death on a cross. It is also the preparation for the priesthood of the apostles who were being ritually cleansed like in Deuteronomy.

Vs. 21-30 is about the betrayal. Vs. 27: "After he took the morsel, Satan entered him." According to some Church Fathers when God created the angels and asked them to serve mankind, Satan refused this idea of humble service. This leads in vs. 31-35 so the commandment of love one another, or humble service. Peter's arrogance shows and he is warned where it will lead him

**Jn. 14:** John spends far more time relating the teachings of Jesus at the Last Supper than the other Gospel writers. Vs. 1-14 are about Jesus' connection with the Father. Vs. 15-31 are his connection to the Holy Spirit, the Advocate.

**Jn. 15:** The vine and the branches image helps us to understand the next step after understanding the Trinity, and that is our connection to all of this. We need God as a branch needs to stay connected to the vine, which goes back to love one another because we will all be connected. Vs. 18-25 is the opposition we will face from the world. If we are connected to him, they will hate us just like they hate him. Vs. 26-27 is a reassurance that the Holy Spirit will help them and us as they and we go through this opposition.

**Jn. 16:** This whole chapter is all about the temporary sense of loss that they will have when he faces death. He again reminds them that the Spirit will help them and they will eventually find joy again. Vs. 20: "but your grief will become joy." But they shouldn't worry because in vs. 33b he says: "In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world."

**Jn. 17:** This chapter is all about Jesus prayer to the Father as he faces all of this. He expresses his trust in the Father and prays for the apostles and for us who will believe through their word. He completes this thought in vs. 21: So that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us..."

**Jn. 18:** Notice John never mentions the supper. He covered his part of that in Chapter 6 in the bread of life discourse. When Jesus is faced with being arrested he lets them know in vs. 5-8 that he is God." Vs. 8: Jesus answered, "I told you that I AM." After he is taken to Annas, the father-in-law of the high priest. Vs. 15-18 Peter and that "other disciple" are following and Peter has his first denial. He probably doesn't think much of it, almost a thoughtless remark. Vs. 19 says the high priest questions Jesus and he is speaking to Annas. The in vs. 24 it says: "Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest."

In vs. 25-27 Peter denies twice, but this dual action surely makes him think, especially since "and immediately the cock crowed."

Vs. 28: “Then they brought Jesus from Caiaphas to the praetorium. It was morning.” There is a time gap here and missing hours with Caiaphas, probably because John could not witness this part. Vs. 29 is the start of the trial with Pilate. In vs. 29: “Pilate came out to them and said, ‘What charge do you bring against this man?’” They don’t give him a straight answer but Pilate goes a strange direction for his first question in vs. 3: “Are you the King of the Jews?” Then they talk about kingdom. The chapter ends with Barabbas, or the son of the father, being freed instead of Jesus. Bar means son and abba or abbas means father. This is simple sign to let us know that God is still in charge.

**Jn. 19:1-22:** This chapter starts out with more king connections. Vs. 2: “And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak, and they came to him and said, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’” It would be royal purple. After the scourging, in vs. 5, Pilate says: “Behold the man!” For now he is less than human looking. He and Jesus talk about power. In vs. 19: “Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, ‘Jesus the Nazorean, the King of the Jews.’” That causes a fight but we have to remember that the idea of the messiah was that he would not only end up the king of the Jews but it would be a universal kingdom and so would be over everyone, forever.

## THE BOOK OF SIRACH

**Sir. 24:18-31:** Vs. 26 of this continuation of a narration on wisdom is a favorite of mine ever since I grew past being a teenager when I knew everything to being a senior citizen who knows that I very little. “The first man never finished comprehending wisdom, nor will the last succeed in fathoming her.” Learning more and more forever in heaven will keep it interesting.

**Sir. 25:** From vs. 1-11 is the good news or actually about good people. It can be a kind of checklist on how we are doing. Just remember vs. 6: “The crown of old men is wide experience; their glory, the fear of the Lord.” Just remember we have experience and not necessarily wisdom. For with age comes wisdom but sometimes only age shows up. Vs. 12-25 is about nasty women. This author really feared their power. Vs. 15: “With a dragon or a lion I would rather dwell than live with an evil woman.” This is all about the difference between the strength that men have and the power that women have, which is horrible when it is not balanced and sacred.

**Sir. 26:** Vs. 1-4 is the very often-quoted description of the blessings of a good wife. He also describes an unruly wife in vs. 5-18. Then vs. 13-18 go back to giving more information on a good wife. Vs. 19-20 go with the first part of chapter 27.

**Sir. 27:** Vs. 4 and 6b can help you understand me as I talk to you and anyone else who speaks: “When a sieve is shaken, the husks appear; so do a man’s faults when he speaks.” So too does a man’s speech disclose the bent of his mind.” In my case it might be a bent mind. Vs. 22-30 are about nasty men and is continued with vs. 1 of the next chapter. Vs. 30: “Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight.”

**Sir. 28:1-12:** Vs. 2-7 are very positive ways of thinking and vs. 2 even sounds like a foreshadowing of part of the Lord's Prayer. "Forgive your neighbor's injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven." Vs. 8-11 are more warnings about being a jerk.

## THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS

*This book is set after the destruction of the temple and the exile, after 587 B.C.*

**Lam. 3:** Chapter 3:17-24 is a good summary of this book of the Bible.

"My soul is deprived of peace, I have forgotten what happiness is; I tell myself my future is lost, all that I hoped for from the Lord. The thought of my homeless poverty is wormwood and gall; remembering it over and over leaves my soul downcast within me, but I will call this to mind, as my reason to have hope; the favors of the Lord are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent; they are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness. My portion is the Lord, says my soul; therefore will I hope in him." This about the people of Israel that have been in exile but it can also be read like the psalms, as a prayer of Jesus going through his passion and carrying all our sins and sorrows.

**Lam. 4:** The situation that the people were in was extreme. The city had been under siege, as described in this chapter. The result was things like vs. 10, "The hand of compassionate women boiled their own children, to serve them as mourners' food in the downfall of the daughter of my people." But to get them back to God would not be easy because they are now in exile.

**Lam. 5:** Now they pray to get back to being right with God. "To Egypt we submitted, and to Assyria, to fill our need of bread. Our fathers, who sinned, are no more; but we bear their guilt." And so in vs. 21-22, "Lead us back to you, O Lord, that we may be restored: give us anew such days as we had of old. For now you have indeed rejected us, and in full measure turned your wrath against us."

## THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET BARUCH

*The first part of this book is similar to the way Jeremiah wrote. Baruch was his secretary. It is not written by Baruch but by someone who wanted the next generations to understand the sufferings of the people in their time of distress. We can figure this out because Baruch would have had to have been over 100 years old. So it was written in Baruch's name to help the people who are now back in Jerusalem understand what went on during the siege and the exile.*

**Bar. 1:** We realize right in the beginning, in vs. 4, that the remnant of Israel are in "Babylon by the river Sud." Since they are talking about sending money to pay for sacred vessels for the temple, they have got to have been in Babylon for quite a while. In vs. 11 they are praying for Nebuchadnezzar so this had to have been after his revelations from God and not right after he destroyed Jerusalem. Vs. 18 is a summary of their confession of guilt that goes from vs. 13 to vs.

10 of the next chapter: “We have neither heeded the voice of the Lord, our God, nor followed the precepts which the Lord set before us.”

**Bar. 2:** Vs. 11 is their prayer for deliverance. Vs. 17: “Look directly at us, and behold: it is not the dead in the nether world, whose spirits have been taken from them, who will give glory and vindication to the Lord.” They remind God of his promise to free them. Vs. 30: “But in the land of their captivity they shall have a change of heart; they shall know that I, the Lord, am their God. I will give them hearts and heedful ears; and they shall praise me in the land of their captivity, and shall invoke my name.” Vs. 34: “And I will bring them back to the land which with my oath I promised to their fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and they shall rule it.”

**Bar. 3:** That prayer continues through vs. 8 in this chapter. The rest of the chapter is a reminder of the wisdom of following God’s law and the foolishness of disregarding it. That continues through vs. 4 of chapter 4.

**Bar. 4:** The people realize how they have failed God. In vs. 5-6, “Fear not, my people! Remember, Israel, you were sold to the nations not for your destruction; it was because you angered God that you were handed over to your foes.” Vs. 18, “He who has brought this evil upon you must himself deliver you from your enemies hands.” Vs. 29, “For he who has brought disaster upon you will, in saving you, bring you back enduring joy.”

**Bar. 5:** Vs. 1-3, the Jews were helped when Nebuchadnezzar freed them, but Jesus fulfills it totally. “Jerusalem, take off your robe of mourning and misery; put on the splendor of glory from God forever: Wrapped in the cloak of justice from God, bear on your head the mitre that displays the glory of the eternal name. For God will show all the earth your splendor...” This is fulfilled in the new Jerusalem which is in the new heavens and the new earth.

**Bar. 6:** This chapter sounds different. It is about a common subject, idolatry, but it is a different style. It just gives example after example on how silly idolatry is. 6:15, “As useless as one’s broken tools are their gods, set up in their houses; their eyes are full of dust from the feet of those who enter... (18) They light more lamps for them than for themselves, yet not one of these can they see.” Or vs. 69, “For like a scarecrow in a cucumber patch, that is no protection, are their wooden, gilded, silvered gods.”

## **THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL**

*Ezekiel is a priest and was one of the exiles deported by Nebuchadnezzar in 597. His visions are of an awesome God. His priesthood even colors his coming to be a prophet while in exile.*

**Ez. 1:** Ezekiel is called by God through visions. Vs. 5, “Within it were figures resembling four living creatures that looked like this: their form was human, but each had four faces and four wings...each of the four had the face of a man, but on the right side was the face of a lion, and on the left side the face of an ox, and finally each had the face of an eagle.” Similar visions are in the Book of Revelation. I like vs. 26b-27 because it reminds me of how the host shown at Holy Name Church after consecration: “Upon it was seated, up above, one who had the appearance of a man. Upward from what resembled his waist I saw what gleamed like electrum; downward from what resembled his waist I saw what looked like fire; he was surrounded with splendor.”

**Ez. 2:** Vs. 2, “Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their fathers have revolted against me to this day.” He is becoming a prophet.

**Ez. 3:** Vs. 18-21 speaks of the responsibility he has as a prophet. He knows that if he does his job he is off the hook. Then it is up to the people to listen.

**Ez. 4:** Chapters 4-24 are about what God is going to do to Jerusalem. The siege will happen. Very few are going to survive. The first sign Ezekiel is given is to use a clay tablet to represent the city. They might have to bake bread by burning human excrement, which would be considered “Unclean.” (vs. 12-15)

**Ez. 5:** Here he uses his hair as an example of how different groups of people will fare.

**Ez. 6:** God will destroy all the idols the people have set up in the hills.

**Ez. 7:** A nice summary is vs. 9: “I will not look upon you with pity nor have mercy; I will deal with you according to your conduct...”