

Bible Study Lesson Summary, Feb. 25, 2018

This Sunday, Feb. 25, your readings should be Day 141: Chapters 3-4 of the Second Book of Samuel, Psalm 132, and Chapter 12 of the Gospel of St. Mark, vs. 1-27.

THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK

Mk. 8:22-38: We start with the curing of the blind man of Bethsaida, which is northwest of Capernaum. Then they head further north to Caesarea Philippi where a pagan temple stood as part of a rock face of a cliff. Typical of Mark, the significance of this is not mentioned. Just that Peter is smart enough to call Jesus the Messiah. Then Jesus predicts His passion and Peter gets himself into trouble for thinking like a human instead of with divine inspiration. Jesus then explains that a disciple must be willing to lose his life in order to save it, which is what He just predicted He would do.

Mk. 9: Now we have more preparation of Jesus' death. Vs. 1, "not taste death until they see the kingdom of God" is about His resurrection. That is when the kingdom of God reigns. Then you have the Transfiguration which is to encourage Peter, James & John. Elijah is mentioned for he must come before the coming of the kingdom. He was just at the Transfiguration but Jesus seems to be referring to John the Baptist, but again it is not clarified.

Now the four of them come to the rest of the disciples and Jesus has to heal a boy that the disciples couldn't handle. In vs. 24 the boy's father gives a great line for all of us: "I do believe, help my unbelief!" Then the boy is healed by prayer and the second prediction of the passion happens.

In vs. 33, the apostles get another lesson on discipleship. They must be the servants of all. Also, in receiving a child you are receiving Jesus and God. The story of the exorcism in vs. 38-41 underscores that if you are serving the Lord and doing His work you are okay.

Then in vs. 42-48 we get dire warnings, not good old sweet Jesus talk.

The salt and fire message in vs. 49-50 is again about sacrifice for that is how a sacrifice is prepared, salted and burned.

Mk. 10: This chapter starts with the difficult teaching on the indissolubility of marriage. Then Jesus blesses the children and says the kingdom is for them. These two lessons belong together. Marriage is about children and protecting them. The story of the rich man starting in vs. 17 has inspired many Saints to follow Jesus drastically. This also is really about family. Vs. 29: "Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present age: houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and eternal life in the age to come. He is defining how family will work. Then He predicts his death and resurrection a third time. James and John don't get the sacrifice stuff but Jesus clarifies it. The cure of Bartimaeus is sign of how all disciples could see better if they had faith in Him. That happened in Jericho which is on the way south, heading to Jerusalem.

Mk. 11: Then Jesus leads them in to Jerusalem and we have the Palm Sunday scene. In vs. 10 we see that they want the kingdom of David to be reinstated with Jesus.

In vs. 12 is the cursing of the fig tree. Then Mark inserts the cleansing of the temple as meat for this sandwich. Jesus cleans out the old for He is the new. Then they notice the fig tree is dead. The

kingdom of David is gone and replaced with the eternal kingdom that was promised. Then He says faith can move mountains. I keep trying. Vs. 27 starts the reaction of the chief priests. This is no longer the Pharisees. We are in the big city now. These are the bigshots. Jesus backs them off also.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Psalm 125: Continues with the theme of the Lord being the protector, but is more specific in helping us understand that Jerusalem is heaven. Vs. 2. “As mountains surround Jerusalem, the Lord surrounds his people both now and forever.” Only heaven stands “forever.”

Psalm 126: The Lord will restore what we have lost in the New Zion. This is one that focuses on a return from exile. We should all be able to relate to it as we long for our true home in heaven. Vs. 5-6 are a prayer like the Beatitudes. Those who sow in tears will reap with cries of joy. Those who go forth weeping, carrying sacks of seed, will return with cries of joy, carrying their bundled sheaves. Just like blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth.

Psalm 127: This psalm is quoted often in prayers. Vs. 1, “Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build. Unless the Lord guard the city, in vain does the guard keep watch.” The longer I work as a priest, and I hope that longer you work as parents, the more this line has power. We are so inadequate without God’s help. Also vs. 3, “Children too are a gift from the Lord, the fruit of the womb, a reward.” This is so different from our culture in which health care now refers to pregnancy as an illness that you must take a pill to keep from happening or have an abortion to cure; all paid for under the name of women’s reproductive health care.

Psalm 128: A prayer for a happy home. An olive tree is fruitful in many ways and is still very valuable in Israel. Each mature tree can be worth about a \$1000 year. Our trees only cost that much to take down. The peace described in this psalm is hard for families to hold onto, but it is what we all yearn for as members of the family of God, the Father.

Psalm 129: Vs. 2, “Upon my back the plowers plowed, as they traced their long furrows.” Think of the scourging at the pillar that Jesus went through and to a lesser degree what we all feel when family life and earthly hardships make us know that we need to be saved by the Lord. Vs. 8 gives a blessing that the bad guys won’t receive. It is the Oscar Meyer blessing song: “The blessing of the Lord be upon you! We bless you in the name of the Lord!”

Psalm 130: This one of my favorites. Vs. 3, “If you, Lord, mark our sins, Lord, who can stand? But with you is forgiveness and so you are revered.” This psalm speaks to the love of a God who is Father and redeemer. He is there when we are at our worst.

Psalm 131: This psalm is certainly a continuation of the last one’s theme. Vs. 1-2, “I do not busy myself with great matters, with things to sublime for me. Rather, I have stilled my soul, hushed it like a weaned child.” This is not “don’t worry, be happy.” It is a calmness that comes from knowing the Father has things covered as we go about our work.

The First Book of Samuel

As we go through this book I will be pointing out the many ways that David is foreshadowing Jesus, just like Moses also foreshadowed Jesus.

1Sm. 18: The battle between Saul and David begins. It seems like Saul represents the old covenant between God and the people of Israel, which they broke. David represents the new covenant. Circumcision symbolizes the old covenant, so we have Saul wanting David to get foreskins of the enemy. David proves he is certainly up to the task. Jonathan is close to David as John is close to Jesus. David has to fight to win his bride. Jesus has to fight for His bride also.

1Sm. 19: The battle continues with Saul trying to kill David, just like the priests of the old covenant try to kill Jesus. Saul's family is not faithful. In vs. 11-17, his daughter, David's wife Michal, has a household idol. The Israelites lived with idols, even to the time of Jesus. I don't know what the "prophetic state" is that is described in vs. 22-24. It is obviously more than a Charismatic Prayer meeting.

1Sm. 20: Jonathan, son of Saul, tries to reconcile the old with the new, Saul with David. He is unsuccessful. This prefigures the battle of the early church where the Paul and Peter fight about whether the early Christians have to become Jewish. Saul represents the early church. Notice in vs. 31 that Jonathan is told that he will lose his inheritance if he helps David. St. John faced that same dilemma. His status as a part of the people of God by his being Jewish is gone and he risks all to follow Jesus, trusting that he will gain an even greater inheritance. Vs. 41, David prostrates himself on the ground before Jonathan. Jesus washed John's feet.

1Sm. 21: David and his men eat of the holy bread, which Jesus actually mentions as a foreshadowing of Himself with His apostles (Mt.12:3). David also acts like a madman. So in vs. 15, "Finally Achish (King of Gath) said to his servants: "You see the man is mad." Many people thought Jesus was mad, even some of his relatives. Mk.3:20-21, Jesus returned to the house with his disciples and again the crowd assembled, making it impossible for them to get any food whatever. When his family heard of this they came to take charge of him, saying, He is out of his mind." Jesus seemed to be fulfilling the connection between food and the mental state that David had foreshadowed.

1Sm. 22: Saul has the followers of David killed. This foreshadows the persecution that Saul of the NT helped with, to kill the followers of Jesus. Vs. 19, "Saul also put the priestly city of Nob to the sword, including men and women, children and infants, and oxen, asses and sheep." He is worse than King Herod would end up being but Caesar did this in the year 66 A.D. when he destroyed the temple.

1Sm. 23: Vs. 14b, "Though Saul sought him continually, the Lord did not deliver David into his grasp." The Pharisees and then the High Priests tried to trip up Jesus and get rid of Him but He eluded them until His hour had come. Saul continues to try to kill David, but Jonathan helps David. This foreshadows the continued persecution that Christians suffered, but how some of the Israelites were sympathetic.

1Sm. 24: David spares Saul's life and is temporarily reconciled with him. Jesus did not attack the High Priests. At Saul's request, David promises not to destroy Saul's descendants. When the

Christians came in some power they did not try to destroy the Israelites. As Jesus taught, they did not return the persecution.

1Sm. 25: In vs. 1, Samuel dies and is buried. He is no longer needed for the OT foreshadow of Jesus, David, is ready to go to work. Just like John the Baptist.

The Middle East has many rules about hospitality. Nabal does not follow them and snubs David and his men. Abigail, the wife of Nabal, intercedes for her husband with David. This is an image of the Saints of the early Church, especially Mary, in that they intercede for us. Nabal dies of fright when he finds out how God's anointed one could have treated him. So intercession can only go so far. But there are interesting bits of the conversation to note. Vs. 25-26, Abigail calls her husband a fool and then wishes that enemies of David would end up the same way. In vs. 22 David says: "May God do thus and so to David, if by morning I leave a single male alive among all those who belong to him." In vs. 31 Abigail says: "...you shall not have this as a qualm or burden on your conscience, my lord, for having shed innocent blood or for having avenged yourself personally. When the Lord confers this benefit on your lordship, remember your handmaid." God takes care of Nabal's death and David is spared this guilt and then marries Abigail.

1Sm. 26: Saul is back to trying to kill David. David spares him again. Vs. 21, Saul asks for forgiveness again and receives it, just like confession.

1Sm. 27: David goes to live with the Philistines because he did not trust Saul. David would attack Israel's foes but tell the Philistines he was fighting their foes. But David killed every person so no one could betray him to the Philistines. Jesus would go to Gentile towns when the Pharisees were giving Him a hard time, but he would try to save them all.

1Sm. 28: Samuel died in chapter 25 and now Saul ends up going to a witch to conjure him up. This is a horrible sin, like the Ouiji board. Saul realizes his sin. This sin obviously continues to our time.

1Sm. 29: David is told by the Philistine Lord's that he is not to accompany them into Israeli territory, so he goes back into Philistine territory. Jesus was not totally accepted in his home town of Nazareth but went back to other places to preach. It will not matter for soon He will reign as King. David did eventually go back to Israel where he then ruled as king.

1Sm. 30: David's home in Philistine territory is destroyed and the people taken prisoner. David battles the Philistines who did it and wins. He returns with everything that was his and divides it out among those who were faithful to him, even if they had not been in the actual battle. This is similar to the parable Jesus tells about the landowner who pays everyone the same amount for different amounts of work. Jesus also battles the legions of evil and wins back all that is His. All the faithful receive the reward of heaven with the King of Kings. Note that in vs. 7-8 David wears an ephod and prays. This is a priestly role. So David has now been a priest and will be king. I don't know if in Chapter 19 he was in a prophetic state, but that would have filled all what Jesus was, in priest, prophet and king.

1Sm. 31: The Philistines kill Saul's sons and Saul also dies. The old is gone. But both are only temporary wins by the forces of evil.

The Second Book of Samuel

2Sm. 1: At the report of Saul's death, David shows his respect for this man of God even though he was a sinner. He also shows his love for Jonathan, who was always faithful. This foreshadows the love that Jesus would have for the people of Israel and for His faithful followers, especially His beloved disciple, John.

2Sm. 2: This chapter starts reports on fighting back and forth between the people of Israel who at this point are not following God or His anointed, David king of Judah. Vs. 16 is really strange as these 24 young men kill each other. They really needed to know who to follow. It might be a sign of 12 tribes (OT) and 12 apostles (NT) fighting to the death. All will die, the follower of Jesus will rise.