

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

*This Sunday, Mar. 4, your readings should be Day 148: Chapter 19 of the Second Book of Samuel, Psalm 140, and Chapter 15 of the Gospel of St. Mark, vs. 1-20.*

### **THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK**

**Mk. 12:** The parable of the vineyard continues the theme of Jesus' upcoming Passion. Vs. 13-17, the question of paying taxes sets the stage for how the Jewish bigwigs are going to get the authority to kill Jesus, through Rome. Vs. 18-27, goes the next step. Jesus knows he is going to die. This question of what will come after the resurrection is that step. Vs. 25, "When they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but they are like the angels in heaven." Angels don't get married for they aren't going to have kids. Vs. 28-34 is much shorter than Matthew's Sermon on the Mount. Mark just gives the two great commandments at the path to the kingdom of God. This presentation to the scribe is a reminder that Jesus did not give each of His teachings only once. The apostles would have heard many of His teachings many times.

Vs. 35-37 is confusing to me. Have any of you heard an explanation? One scribe was close to the Kingdom of Heaven. In vs. 38-40 he gives a warning to the apostles to beware of them for the put on a show but don't live authentic faith. That is a good warning for all of us. The poor widow gives everything for the sake of the kingdom and Jesus says she will be rewarded. That is the opposite of the scribes.

**Mk. 13:** First Jesus predicts the end of the temple buildings, then He explains its meaning to the four apostles. In vs. 9 He says they should watch out for themselves. In other words, do not try to save the old stuff, for they must make sure (vs. 10) "the gospel must first be preached to all nations." The warnings continue in vs. 14 that seem more for the rest of the crowd. They too must be vigilant, for they will see "the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory,..." (vs. 26) In vs. 28-31 the lesson of the fig tree just lets us know that there will be signs that make sense but not what the final ones will be. Vs. 32 explains that only the Father knows those signs so we must each be vigilant.

**Mk. 14:** By now you should be getting the idea that Mark is all about the death and resurrection of Jesus. He has a lot that should help us understand that Jesus' death did not come as a surprise to Him. He was preparing for it and would have had an understanding of how His enemies were preparing for it. This chapter starts with the chief priests and the scribes thinking that they were in control, for they were trying to delay it until after the Passover. God had other plans. Vs. 3-10 has the woman anointing Jesus' head, not his feet. Vs. 7, "The poor you will always have with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them, but you will not always have me. She has done what she could. She has anticipated anointing my body for burial." So he knew it was coming. Judas sets up his plans in vs. 9-10. They prepare the Passover, which Jesus also has prepared. It starts in vs. 17 and deals first with Judas, "the one who dips with me into the dish." Mark may or may not have caught the connection of this gesture being one of trying to rebuild friendship or family bonds. Then in vs. 22 Jesus has consecration and goes to the Mount of Olives. Peter's denial is foretold there in the garden. Peter, James and John do not do themselves proud. Vs. 38, "The spirit is willing but he flesh is weak." Three times they fail for they don't know what is coming after all that gave them signs.

In vs. 43-52 we read that the arrest is chaotic. A crowd with swords and clubs, a kiss, a bystander that loses an ear, and a young man running away naked. That was probably Mark himself. Why the bystander was there is unknown but a warning not to go to your garden after dark.

Vs. 53 starts the illegal trial. In vs. 62 Jesus declares who He is. This refers back to Psalm 110, vs. 1, "Take your throne at my right hand, while I make your enemies your footstool."

Then in vs. 66-72 we get the report on Peter's latest failure.

Remember that Mark also brought up how Peter tried to talk Jesus out of His Passion after saying He was the Christ

## **THE BOOK OF PSALMS**

**Psalm 132:** Jesus is praying that God will not forget His anointed one. Because of His promise to David, an everlasting kingdom must come but it seems that even Jesus was feeling insecure.

**Psalm 133-4:** Two psalms that express love of God the Father.

**Psalm 135:** In this psalm Jesus praises the Lord but is more explicit in why, for it reminds us of God's mighty deeds as He brought the chosen people to the Promised Land. Vs. 15-18 speak of the "idols of the nations" and how worthless they are. Jesus speaks of this again in Matt. 13.

**Psalm 136:** A history lesson and prayer of praise that is a reminder for us to count our blessings. One of those blessings is that you are finished reading Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers so you know the more obscure references mentioned here.

**Psalm 137:** Here is another psalm of praise with a history lesson that speaks of the exile in Babylon. Vs. 5, "If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand wither." It reminds us to keep our eyes on the prize of heaven. You still have to read all those details about the exile.

**Psalm 138:** Vs. 8, the last verse, summarizes it, "The Lord is with me to the end. Lord, your love endures forever. Never forsake the work of your hands!"

**Psalm 139:** The first part of this psalm is about a God who knows His Son and each of us personally. Vs. 1, "Lord, you have probed me, you know me: you know when I sit and stand; you understand my thoughts from afar." Vs. 8, "If I ascend to the heavens, you are there; if I lie down in Sheol, you are there too." Vs. 13, "You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb." The fourth part scares many people for we are called to love, so we think of hate as evil. Vs. 21, "Do I not hate, Lord, those who hate you?" We don't realize that we do need to hate true evil, or we will not be against it. We simply can't put ourselves in the position of being the judge. That is for God alone.

## **The First Book of Samuel**

**2Sm. 3:** Abner is insulted by Saul's son. Abner's response: "Am I a dog's head in Judah?" (vs. 8) You have to have watched male dog's inability to control themselves sexually to understand this. Oddly enough we now expect our teenage boys to be like those dogs. Because of this insult Abner goes from being a general for Saul to lining up with David. He actually brings the people in the northern territories (Israel) in line with the south, Judah; which David already rules. Abner then dies for having killed someone during one of the many wars. It is a crazy story but the chapter ends with the people starting to accept David as king.

**2Sm. 4:** This glee from some of David's followers in killing the sons of Saul who they think of as the enemies of the king is hard to understand since King David explicitly promised not to take revenge on Saul's descendants. But it is the kind of thing that happens when you don't listen to your King. So for many people, "What Would Jesus Do" is simply what would I do?

**2Sm. 5:** David is made King of Israel. During the capture of Zion (vs. 6-9) there is mention of David being put against the blind and the lame. But notice that it seems to be written in terms of a perception that he would be against the blind and the lame, not that he really is. This same feeling was held by some Jews as they wondered why Jesus paid so much attention to the blind and the lame. David also defeats the Philistines because he listens to the Lord.

**2Sm. 6:** Vs. 6, "Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of God and steadied it, for the oxen seemed to be making it tip. But the Lord was angry with Uzzah; God struck him on that spot, and he died there before God." Mary is the NT Ark that bore the Word of God in her womb. The Church believes that she too was not to be touched and remained a virgin throughout life. In vs. 10-11 the ark is taken back to Obededom. It is said that this is where Mary visited Elizabeth for three months. Vs. 11: "The ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obededom the Gittite for three months, and the Lord blessed Obededom and his whole house.

Then David decides to try bring the ark to his city again. Michal is not impressed with her husband's behavior and pays the price by being childless. This is another sign of the old regime no longer bearing fruit for she is the daughter of Saul. In vs. 19 David has been celebrating the coming of the Ark of the Covenant and "distributed among all the people, to each man and each woman in the entire multitude of Israel, a loaf of bread, a cut of roast meat, and a raisin cake." I have been told that another translation of raisin cake would be wine. Then it would be bread and wine and meat.

**2Sm. 7:** I see this as one of the most powerful chapters in all the Bible. God makes a promise to David. It is one of the most important lines in the OT. Vs. 12-14, "I will raise up your heir after you, sprung from your loins, and I will make his kingdom firm. It is he who shall build a house for my name. And I will make his royal throne firm forever. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me." The people of David's time may have thought this referred to Solomon but we know now that Solomon was merely foreshadowing the real Son of God. Vs. 16, "Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever." David's kingdom will all but die out, but the Kingdom of God will last forever and Jesus is the one who makes it happen. Vs. 18, "Who am I" that all this is done for me shows that David had the right attitude before God as Mary did.

**2Sm. 8:** David wins wars and follows God's commands faithfully. Notice in vs. 4 all the horses are hamstringed for God doesn't want to win wars with them as weapons for the people would start to think that it is horses and chariots that win wars and not God.

**2Sm. 9:** David keeps his promise to forgive the descendants of Saul and especially Jonathan. He even restores the Meribbaal the son of Jonathan, not physically but financially. Saul and his descendants represent the people of Israel who are not forgotten.

**2Sm. 10:** David is insulted and wins a war against his enemies, but this whole chapter sounds more like some of the battles that we face day-to-day. Those who hate the Catholic Faith stand up against us and insult our best intentions and then blame us for everything. They side with others who hate us and get ready for battle, but most of the time they don't stand up well when we actually face them with courage.

**2Sm. 11:** One of the main points of the story comes in the beginning. Vs. 1, "At the turn of the year when kings go out on campaign, David sent out Joab along with his officers and the army of Israel, and they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. David, however, remained in Jerusalem." In other words David was being lazy and in his idle time gets into trouble. David's affair with Bathsheba is an example of why we can't save ourselves. The lowest to the greatest need God's grace and forgiveness. No other human but Jesus is ever going to be able to show us the way.

**2Sm. 12:** Nathan, the prophet, confronts King David with his sin. Vs. 5-6, "David grew very angry with that man and said to Nathan: "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this merits death! He shall restore the ewe lamb fourfold because he has done this and has had no pity.'" When Nathan points out that David is the man he realizes that he cannot repay what he has done. He is at God's mercy, which is where we all are. David seeks that mercy but a price must be paid. But with all the misery that David has caused, God brings something good from it. David and Bathsheba conceive Solomon. David is foreshadowing us and not Jesus in these last two chapters.

**2Sm. 13:** The story of Absalom and his sister, Tamar, who was raped by Absalom's brother, Amnon is bazaar. These are the kinds of stories that help me understand that the Bible is definitely inspired by God. For what kind of family would keep a story like that in their family lore? I'm convinced that God has this story in the Bible to help us understand how depraved we can become when we confuse feelings with God's will. In this case it is confusing the feeling of lust with love. Love would not have done anything to hurt the object of it. Vs. 20, Absalom tells Tamar, "Do not take this affair to heart." This is the advice that many give today to try and alleviate guilt. But realistic guilt must be felt and dealt with in the appropriate ways like reconciliation. Without reconciliation the sin gets punished in worse ways, just like what Absalom did.

**2Sm. 14:** In this chapter Joab becomes the intercessor for Absalom with the king. He successfully reconciles Absalom but Absalom is not yet allowed to appear before the king. Absalom is impatient and burns Joab's field because he wants to be closer to the king than Joab had negotiated. This foreshadows Jesus interceding for us in this life but we want more and ending up hurting what He has given in our attempt to get more from God. The last line in the chapter shows the king's love for the intercessor, "Then the king kissed him."

**2Sm. 15:** Absalom tries to be the king because he is not getting his ways so he thinks he can be the judge of what is right and wrong in the kingdom. Absalom is a Judas figure in this story. Vs. 18-23, Ittai is willing to follow the king to the Mount of Olives, foreshadowing Jesus and His apostles. For Jesus (the king) and his apostles (soldiers) went across the Kidron Valley to the Mount of Olives at the time of His passion. Vs. 30, "As David went up the Mount of Olives, he wept without ceasing." Jesus wept at the Mount of Olives.

**2Sm. 16:** Vs. 1, “David had gone a little beyond the top when Ziba, the servant of Meribbaal, met him with saddled asses laden with two hundred loaves of bread, an ephah of cakes of pressed raisins, an ephah of summer fruits, and a skin of wine.” This is David’s version of a last supper. Jesus rode an ass into Jerusalem, but later had bread and wine and himself to strengthen his apostles. Vs. 6, “He threw stones at David and at all the king’s officers, even though all the soldiers, including the royal guard, were on David’s right and on his left.” The arrested, beat and mocked Jesus while he was surrounded by his apostles and armies of angels. Vs. 12, “Perhaps the Lord will look upon my affliction and make it up to me with benefits for the curses he is uttering this day.” The Lord God made great benefits happen because of the afflictions that Jesus suffered.

**2Sm. 17:** Vs. 3-4, “It is the death of only one man you are seeking; then all the people will be at peace.” This plan was agreeable to Absalom and to all the elders of Israel.” The High Priests believed that the death of one man, Jesus, was for the benefit of the people. Vs. 23, “When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not acted upon, he saddled his ass and departed, going to his home in his own city. Then, having left orders concerning his family, he hanged himself.” Judas, the betrayer, hanged himself.

**2Sm. 18:** Absalom, the son of David, is killed horribly. The Son of God, carrying even the sins of Judas, is killed horribly. Both Fathers are filled with sadness.