

Bible Study Lesson Summary, April 22, 2018

This Sunday, April 22th, your readings should be Day 183: Chapters 18-21 of the First Book of Chronicles, Proverbs 15:1-17, and Chapter 1 of St. Paul's Letter to the Romans.

ST. PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

2Cor. 7: Once again, these first chapters of this letter are not found in the Lectionary for Mass because they really don't apply to much spirit content. Paul is just trying to help his parishioners to keep calm, and not overreacting.

2Cor. 8: Here we have a thing about the Macedonian's generosity. This is in the Lectionary, for it encourages generosity. In vs. 9 he talks of Jesus, "For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for your sake he became poor although he was rich, so that by his poverty you might become rich." He continues to guide them as a father guides generosity for his children, "Who ever had much did not have more, and whoever had little did not have less." (vs. 15) Then comes praise for Titus.

2Cor. 9: More lessons on generosity in vs. 6: "Consider this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."

2Cor. 10: At this point it is almost hard to remember what he might be trying to argue about. I wish we knew what the original situation was, but we don't. What we can learn from this is what Paul clarifies in this chapter, that he does not credential himself. What he has is from the Lord. That is who he boasts in. (vs. 17) That Lord has the power to destroy fortresses. (vs. 4)

2Cor. 11: This chapter is used in the Lectionary, for he is helping the Corinthians to understand who to listen to. There "are false apostles, deceitful worker, who masquerade as apostles of Christ." (vs. 13) My guess is that he didn't believe that any false apostles would go through what he had endured. In vs. 21-29 we hear that besides being a Hebrew, an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, he has also suffered "far more imprisonments, far worse beatings, and numerous brushes with death. Five times at the hands of the Jews I received forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was ship-wrecked, I passed a night and a day on the deep: on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my own race, dangers from Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness..." You get the point.

2Cor. 12: In vs. 2 he mentions someone who had an out of body experience or a near death experience. In vs. 7 he talks about a thorn in the flesh. "A thorn in the flesh was given to me, an angel of Satan, to beat me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I begged the Lord about this, that it might leave me." The answer was "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So he goes back to boasting of his weaknesses. No one knows what this thorn was. It might have been a person who drove him nuts, an illnesses or an injury that didn't heal. He is proud that he wasn't ever a burden to them.

2Cor. 13: Vs. 5 is an appropriate ending to this argument. "Examine yourselves to see whether you are living in faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you?" Hopefully that worked.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

Prv. 10: There is just a lot of interesting lines in this. One that struck me was vs. 23: “Crime is the entertainment of the fool; so is wisdom for the man of sense.” I guess that I should watch less of NCIS or CSI and more documentaries. But even though I think the author was talking more about the real thing and not the TV shows it still applies. Vs. 27, “The fear of the Lord prolongs life, but the years of the wicked are brief.” Johnny Carson asked a 100 year old man his secret to longevity. He said: “A horrible fear of death!” Carson just about lost it. It is still wisdom if it is rightly placed.

Prv. 11: I like vs. 7: “When a wicked man dies his hope perishes, and what is expected from strength come to nought.” As the Divine Mercy image says: “Trust in Me.”

Prv. 12: Vs. 1, “He who loves correction loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid.” It would be like collecting all the sayings of your parents and teachers. But notice there is always good and bad. (12:4) “A worthy wife is the crown of her husband, but a disgraceful one is like rot in his bones.”

Prv. 13: Vs. 13, “He who despises the word must pay for it, but he who reveres the commandment will be rewarded.” If you capitalize word you get a foreshadowing of chapter one of the Gospel of John. Vs. 19 is very interesting, “Lust indulged starves the soul, but fools hate to turn from evil.” Self-discipline or self-control is not promoted in a consumer society so lust is indulged in regularly, and once started it is an addiction that is hard to stop. All the while the soul is not growing in holiness. Vs. 24 does not go over well in our current culture either, “He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him takes care to chastise him.” Variations on this theme will show up several times in Proverbs.

Prv. 14: The author is good at bringing in the upside and the downside to help with perspective. (14:1) “Wisdom builds her house, but Folly tears hers down with her own hands.” (14:21) “He sins who despises the hungry; but happy is he who is kind to the poor!”

FIRST BOOK OF CHRONICLES

These books are added history but more like history in public schools today, which is very tainted; i.e. the influence of the Catholic Church is eliminated. The Books of Chronicles I & II are more to help understand the work for God in the lives of His people, so they are written to influence the people to get back to God after they have suffered exile.

1Chr. 1-8: In general the thing to realize about these chapters is what it would have taken these people to keep track of all of this. Most of us can't go back more than four generations. The Chosen People were record keepers. They were obsessed with it. There are no other signs of a people like the Israelites who had this kind of obsession. God uses it to His advantage, to tell His story. One little side note is in chapter 4, vs. 9-10. It is the prayer of Jabez. "Oh, that you may truly bless me and extend my boundaries! Help me and make me free of misfortune, without pain!?" You will occasionally see plaques of this prayer of Jabez. Those plaques make a big deal of something that is very insignificant in the bible. They sell to the people focused on the Gospel of Prosperity. Other than that you are on your own to find meaning in these lists.

1Chr. 9: The first part of this chapter, vs. 3-34, is a good summary of some of the tasks of the people in Jerusalem: priests for service of the house of God, gatekeepers, those in charge of liturgical equipment, and chanters.

1Chr. 10: A question that is sometimes asked is why David is treated so much better than Saul, when they both have their times of infidelity and disobedience. The answer is that Saul, like Judas, does not come back to God. David, like Peter, does come back and reconciles. So one of the comments that the author put in beyond history is in vs. 13-14; "Thus Saul died because of his rebellion against the Lord in disobeying his command, and also because he had sought counsel of a necromancer, and had not rather inquired of the Lord. Therefore the Lord slew him, and transferred his kingdom to David, the son of Jesse."

1Chr. 11: Vs. 4-9: Here we have David coming into Jerusalem, which will be called the City of David. Jesus ascends to the New Jerusalem to have it as the City of God, heaven.

1Chr. 12: After a whole lot of naming of the soldiers, which looks like the credits after a movie, we hear in vs. 39; "The rest of Israel was likewise of one mind to make David king.

1Chr. 13: Vs. 9-10 tells of Uzzah touching the Ark and instantly being struck dead by God. This is a foreshadowing that supports the Churches teaching that Mary remained a virgin for life. No man touched her. She was the new Ark of the Covenant and certainly could not have been protected less than the old Ark. It is believed that Obed-edom where the Ark was kept temporarily is where Elizabeth and Zechariah and John the Baptist had their home.

1Chr. 14: David has kids and battles the Philistines.

1Chr. 15: Vs. 2; "No one may carry the ark of God except the Levites, for the lord chose them to carry the ark of the Lord and to minister to him forever." This idea of the priests having a connection with God that others don't have is critical to the celebration of the Eucharist for only priest can do the consecration.

1Chr. 16: This chapter starts with a foreshadowing of the Eucharist, with prayers, offerings, and food. Then in vs. 3 "and distributed to every Israelite, to every man and to every woman, a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and a raisin cake. Raisin cake would be wine cake. They even sing songs. It was all to celebrate the presence of the Ten Commandments, the word of God. Then they went home.

1Chr. 17: Vs. 10-14 are prophesying about Jesus. The verses barely make sense concerning Solomon, but do make sense concerning Jesus.

