

Bible Study Lesson Summary, July 15, 2018

This Sunday, July 15th, your readings should be Day 239: Chapters 3-4 of the 2nd Book of Maccabees, Chapter 2:12-24 of the Book of Wisdom, and Chapter 12: 32-59 of the Gospel of St. Luke.

THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE

Lk. 9:27-62: Vs. 27: “Truly I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.” The kingdom of God comes with the death and resurrection of Jesus. After reading 1st Maccabees you can see that other kingdoms rise and fall. The kingdom of God faces death and rises to go for eternity.

Vs. 28-36 is the Transfiguration. The Father lives in glory eternally and He is making this connection with His Son who lives on earth by now is showing His glory. One insight that someone gave me in class is that Moses and Elijah are drawn to Jesus from their place in the entrance of hell, for they would not be in heaven yet. The gates to heaven are still closed. It is like Jesus is preparing them for Holy Saturday when He will come to them and gather the souls that need to be in heaven. So Jesus has them there so they can start gathering the troupes. In vs. 35 the Father says: “This is my chosen Son; listen to him.” That finally shut Peter up, otherwise Peter may have rambled on longer. It is kind of a helpful lesson for all of us for we tend to talk more in prayer than listen.

In vs. 37 he comes down from the mountain, which is a sign of closeness to God, and a crowd meets him. The apostles hadn’t been able to cure the possessed son, which frustrates Jesus.

In vs. 43b-45 he predicts His passion again but they are oblivious.

In 46-48 we have a summary of the ‘who is the greatest’ discussion that the apostles have recorded in other Gospels, but it is connected to being great for receiving a child. Humble service is what is great in heaven, not glory.

In 49-50 Jesus lets the apostles know that close doesn’t just count in horseshoes and hand-grenades. It also counts in serving others.

Vs. 51 is a turning point: “When the days for his being taken up were fulfilled, he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem...” “The Samaritans do not treat them kindly so James and John are looking for “fire from heaven to consume them”. Not Jesus’ style.

Vs. 57-62 are about people who aren’t quite ready for full commitment. Sounds like most of us.

Lk. 10: Vs. 1-12 are an upgrade from Lk. 9:1-6. But now He sends out 72 rather than just 12.

These guys are basically becoming traveling salesman, selling life and retirement insurance with awesome death benefits. But from the shaking of the dust from your feet comment in vs. 11, it is an offer that you can refuse.

That was the first part of the sandwich. Vs. 13-16 are the meat. These are places that refused the offer for the retirement plan. Then in vs. 17-20 the other slice of bread is presented, which is about the 72 coming back rejoicing because some accepted the plan and they found out they really could sell with all cool things that they could do in the name of Jesus.

Vs. 21-22 are Jesus praising the Father for such a great plan of salvation. In vs. 23-24 Jesus let the disciples know how lucky they are to be a part of this.

Vs. 25-28 are about the Great Commandments. Vs. 29-37 are an example of this teaching because it clarifies who is our neighbor, everyone.

Vs. 38-42 are another clarification. The greatest commandment is still a focus on God, which Mary is doing. Serving our neighbor, which Martha is doing is still second.

Lk. 11: The first part of this chapter is about prayer. Vs. 1-4 are a basic prayer that we are given as an example of the best, the Lord's Prayer. Vs. 5-13 are about how often and with what mindset we should be praying. Persistence in prayer to the Father is outlined in vs. 5-9, but then is the realization that the Father is smart enough to give us what we need rather than what we want. In vs. 14-23 Jesus shows His separation from Satan's kingdom. Vs. 24-26 is a practical lesson. If you are spending your time outside the kingdom of God, it will not help to push out demons. You need to be full of the things of the Lord. He gives a simile about that lesson in vs. 33-36. I use the cheeseball image to teach the same lesson.

Vs. 37-54 are an outline of the false teachings of the Pharisees, for they don't understand the idea that we are in need of a change of heart and not just a change in our actions.

Lk. 12:1-31: Vs. 1 is a last warning about the Pharisees, who follow the letter of the law but not the reason for it which is that we love God and neighbor. Vs. 2-9 is about how God sees and will judge us. He can see into our hearts. If we don't have love we end up in Gehenna.

Vs. 10 has an important but confusing line. "Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven." The church teaches that this is about our willingness to change and be forgiven. If we don't believe the Holy Spirit can do that we will be in trouble for the Holy Spirit will not force love.

In vs. 13-21 Jesus teaches about greed and then gives the example of the person who stockpiles things for this life. You can't take it to heaven.

Vs. 22-31 is not about "don't worry, be happy." It is about God providing us with what we need to get to heaven, while helping us realize the rest is unimportant.

THE SONG OF SONGS

Sng. 4: This is from the groom's perspective. Vs. 7, "You are all-beautiful, my beloved, and there is no blemish in you." (could refer to Mary or the Church) Vs. 10, "How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride, how much more delightful is your love than wine..."

Sng. 5: The first half is from the groom's perspective and the second half (starting at 10B) is from the bride's.

Sng. 6-7: The first three verses are about the groom. The rest are about the bride. The people who have had a real feel of the love of God or Mary in some way can easily imagine talking like this.

Sng. 8: This goes back and forth, but unless you are imagining God's love to be this strong you will miss the point of the whole book.

THE BOOK OF WISDOM

This book was written about a hundred years before the birth of Christ. God's revelation is becoming clearer. It is a great book to use for meditation. For this author comes from the

perspective that resurrection is a reality. A short time later Jesus will fine tune this understanding and prove it with His own resurrection.

Wis. 1: This should be read from the perspective of God's Spirit trying to guide the Church and each of us. Vs. 6-7, "For wisdom is a kindly spirit, yet she acquits not the blasphemer of his guilty lips; because God is the witness of his inmost self and the sure observer of his heart and the listener to his tongue. For the spirit of the Lord fills the world, is all-embracing, and know what man says."

Wis. 2:1-11: This chapter starts with the bad guy's thoughts. He or they are patting themselves on the back and giving themselves glory for getting away with their sins. Their reasoning is that life is short and then they will die. Vs. 5: "For our lifetime is the passing of a shadow and our dying cannot be deferred because it is fixed with a seal; and no one returns." So they want to get what they can while they live. Vs. 7: Let us have our fill of costly wine and perfumes, and let no springtime blossom pass us by; let us crown ourselves with rosebuds ere they wither." Then they proclaim 'might makes right.'" Vs. 11: But let our strength be our norm of justice; for weakness proves itself useless."

THE FIRST BOOK OF MACCABEES

1Mc. 10: Jonathan, the brother of Judas is chosen as the successor. He makes an alliance with King Demetrius who was not liked by the Romans. He was from the Assyrians who were diminishing in power by this point. Jonathan rebuilds Mount Zion with square stones (vs. 11). They make for stronger walls. Then in vs. 15 we hear that Jonathan is making friends with the enemies of Demetrius, led by Alexander. Then from vs. 22-45 we hear that King Demetrius is worried and wants to be nice to the Jews he had released from exile. In vs. 46-47 we read that Jonathan and the Jews do not believe Demetrius and stay with Alexander who then killed Demetrius and beat his army. Starting in vs. 51 we have more soap opera. Alexander contacts Egypt to make an alliance with Ptolemy with a marriage to his daughter Cleopatra. This make Jonathan look good. Then in vs. 67 we start reading about Demetrius the son of Demetrius trying to attack Judea. Jonathan wins and looks even better to Alexander.

1Mc. 11: Ptolemy of Egypt turns against his son-in-law Alexander and Cleopatra marries Demetrius II. Alexander goes to war and loses his head and then Ptolemy dies, so Demetrius II is back in charge. This goes on and on, back and forth. The main thing we need to notice is that this concept of "Friends" is all about alliances with anyone but God. This will be important in 150 years with Jesus before Pilate.

1Mc. 12: Jonathon makes an alliance with Rome and of course gets killed. We should be seeing a pattern. The Romans are going to be bad news for the Jews. Vs. 53: "All the nations round about sought to destroy them. They said, "Now that they have no leader to help them, let us make war on them, and wipe out their memory from among men."

1Mc. 13: Simon is the last brother and so he takes up the challenge.

1Mc. 14: He makes an alliance with Rome but before he gets killed for that there are some interesting things said that foreshadow Simon Peter. Vs. 41: "Simon shall be their permanent

leader and high priest until a true prophet arises.” Vs. 43: “he shall be obeyed by all.” Vs. 44: “It shall not be lawful for any of the people or priests to nullify any of these decisions, or to contradict the orders given by him, or to convene and assembly in the country without his consent...” This should sound a little like papal authority and infallibility, only Peter gets his from the true prophet, Christ, rather than until one comes.

1Mc. 15: Simon continues as leader.

1Mc. 16: Simon’s two oldest sons, John and Judas, take on much of the battles. But in vs. 16 Ptolemy kills Simon and his sons Judas and Mattathias. In vs. 22 we read that John continues on.

THE SECOND BOOK OF MACCABEES

This is not an extension of 1st Maccabees. More like a different perspective on some of the same time period.

2Mc. 1: I think they may have discovered oil in vs. 21. It is the Middle East after all. Vs. 36 seems to hint at the same thing, not that it matters to the story.

2Mc. 2: Vs. 23: This helps to understand that this book covers some of the same time as 1Mc. but seems to be written as a summary of a longer version of those events.