

**BIBLE STUDY
AUGUST 5, 2019**

THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

**Wisdom 18: 6-9
Luke 12: 32-48
Hebrews 11: 1-2, 8-19**

1. Wisdom 18: 6-9

- The Book of Wisdom is one of the wisdom books of the Old Testament.
- It is also one of the deuterio-canonical or apocryphal books of the OT.
- The deuterio-canonical or apocryphal books of the Bible are: Tobit, Judith, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus (or Wisdom of Sirach or Ben Sira), Baruch (including the letter of Jeremiah), additions to Esther, and additions to Daniel.
- These books have a different character because they were written originally in Greek and represent thoughts that come not specifically from Israel but from the wider Jewish community that included Greek influence. They were considered part of the canonical books of the Bible until the Reformation when Martin Luther placed them in a separate section of the Bible called the Apocrypha. He considered them not suited for public reading but good for private reading.
- Catholics call them deuterio-canonical, acknowledging their different character but consider them canonical books. Contemporary biblical scholars of both Catholic and Protestant traditions have come together in their assessment of these books. Protestant scholars acknowledge that they offer insight into Jewish religious beliefs and spirituality of Jesus' time. Catholic scholars recognize that they are different from the other books of the OT.
- Wisdom was written about 50 years before the birth of Christ. It was written by an author who was probably a member of the Jewish community in Alexandria, Egypt. He wrote in Greek imitating the style of the Jewish writings. He sometimes placed in words on the lips of King Solomon. He demonstrates an excellent knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures.
- His themes are: the splendor and worth of divine wisdom; the glorious events of the exodus; God's mercy; the folly of idolatry; God's justice in rewarding or punishing an individual.
- Wisdom 3: 1-8 is often used in the funeral liturgy of the church.
- Chapters 1-10: give background for the teaching of Jesus.
- Chapters 11-19 develop the theme expressed in 11: 3 "For by the things through which their foes were punished they in their need were benefited." By examples from the Exodus, it is shown that God punishes the wicked but rewards the just.
- 18: 6-9: V. 6 That night=the night of the Passover and the Exodus: the Israelites had foreknowledge through faith in what God would do. Therefore,

they were full of faith and confidence that God would save them. Because of this they had courage.

- V. 7: the expectation=the hope of the people was that God would punish the Egyptians, their foes, and reward them, the righteous. They awaited the salvation of the just—they were vigilant for what God would do for them.
- V. 8: In one action, God punished the Egyptians but glorified the Israelites.

2. Luke 12: 32-48

- Having exposed the folly of putting one's trust in material possessions through the parable of the rich fool, Jesus tells his disciple that they should not worry or be anxious about food and clothes. They can observe how God cares for the birds and the lilies of the field. If he cares for them, how much more will he care for his sons and daughters.
- Jesus urges his disciples to seek the Kingdom of God and all other things will be given to them. The most important thing is to develop a relationship with God that is the key to freedom from worry and anxiety.
- Vv. 33 He urges his disciples to be free to give away money and possessions to those in need because they have a heavenly "bank" which God has guaranteed.
- Vv 32: Jesus has a deep conviction that God will give good things to all who open themselves up fully to a relationship with God.
- St. Ignatius: Most people have no idea what God would make of them if they only would place themselves at his disposal.
- V. 34 For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.
- V. 35: One thing the disciples should be afraid of is not be ready for the Lord's return. They must be vigilant.
- Disciples are compared to servants awaiting their master's return from a wedding feast. If they are awake and ready and open the door immediately, it will go well for them. Jesus will wait on them at table. An image of the Servant messiah. The Washing of the Feet. The reversal of roles. The hospitality of God—he wants to welcome and serve us if we have welcomed and served him.
- If the master is delayed to the second or third watch—reflects the church of Luke adapting to the reality that the second coming is not imminent—it may take longer.
- A powerful image: if you knew the hour when the thief would break in, you would have been prepared and not let him break in. Jesus is compared to a thief breaking in!
- We know neither the day nor the hour. We must always be prepared.
- Peter asks if this parable is for everyone or for them—the leaders of the church. Jesus applies the image to church leaders. If leaders care for the members of their flock for whom they have responsibility, they will be rewarded. If they take the delay in the Lord's return as an opportunity to mistreat and abuse those for whom they have responsibility and they are not ready for the Lord's return, they will receive a severe punishment.

- Church leaders have received greater gifts in order for them to fulfill their responsibilities. Therefore, they have greater accountability. Those who do not have the same gifts are not as accountable. They will not be punished as severely.
- The more gifts and blessings we have the greater our responsibility.

3. Hebrews 11: 1-2, 8-19

- The author of the Letter to the Hebrews is unknown. It was written to Christians who had converted from Judaism. They have grown weary of the demands of the Christian life and an indifference to their calling. Building upon their Jewish heritage, the author presents Jesus as the High Priest and superior to Moses. He seeks to reawaken their commitment by recalling all the trials and sufferings that Jesus went through in his humanity. Jesus can sympathize with their struggle and has given them an example of obedience and perseverance. They should also recall that Jesus the High Priest in heaven is offering prayers and supplications for them. They are on a journey of faith and they must remain steadfast. He gives examples of all the holy men and women—the great cloud of witnesses who is praying for them and who urges them on to victory.
- 11: 1-2: He reminds them that “faith is the realization of what is hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.” This faith was displayed in the lives of the heroes of Scripture. They need this faith too.
- The example of Abraham as an icon of faith. Abraham had the faith to set out on a journey whose destination he did not know. He trusted God. He left his homeland and became a foreigner, living in tents, looking to the land and the home that God would provide. He looked forward in faith to a heavenly homeland.
- He believed in faith that God would fulfill his promise to give him a son even though he and Sarah were beyond the age of childbearing. “He thought that the one who had made the promise was trustworthy.” Even though Abraham was good as dead, God produced descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and the grains of sand on the seashore.
- Abraham died before he saw the fulfillment of his promise. He saw it from afar in faith. He accepted being a stranger on earth so that he could receive a homeland in heaven. He never looked back or turned back to his original homeland. So, God was not ashamed to be called his God—he prepared a city for him.
- Abraham had the faith even to be ready to offer up his son Isaac. He believed and trusted that God could raise even from the dead. He received Isaac back as a symbol or sign of Jesus’ resurrection and the power of God to bring life from death.
- Hebrews is exhorting the hearers to seek to live by the same faith.