

BIBLE STUDY
August 20-21, 2025

THE TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Isaiah 66: 18-21

Luke 13: 22-30

Hebrews 12: 5-7, 11-13

1. Isaiah 66: 18-21

- This passage comes from the Third Isaiah (Ch. 56-66). The first Isaiah (1-39) is the prophecies of the historical Isaiah before the exile. The second Isaiah (40-55) concerns the time in exile. The third Isaiah is about the reorganization of the community after the return to Jerusalem. Whereas the second Isaiah focused on God's gracious and unconditional redemption of Jerusalem, the third Isaiah emphasizes the response of Jerusalem by keeping the sabbath, be faithful to covenant, and God's temple as a house of prayer.
- V. 18: This passage presents a vision of the eschatological (referring to the end of time when the Lord returns) gathering of all nations. There will be a day when the Lord will gather all the nations together and his glory will be revealed—meaning that the promises of God will be revealed as true.
- V. 19: There will be a significant event that will herald the revelation of God's glory. Messengers of God's glory will go out to the farthest corners of the world where the name of the Lord has not been heard. Tarshish is often associated with the western Mediterranean, possibly in Spain, while Put is linked to North Africa, and Lud is connected to Asia Minor or North Africa. Mosoch, also known as [Meshech](#), is generally placed in the region of Asia Minor.
- V. 20: "All your kin" refers to Jews who are in exile. They shall all be brought to Jerusalem as an offering to God just as grain is brought to the temple to give thanks.
- V. 21: Some of those returning will be chosen as priests to serve God.

2. Luke 13: 22-30

- V. 22: Luke reminds us that Jesus is on a journey to Jerusalem where the Cross awaits him. As he goes, he is teaching in towns and villages.
- V. 23: Someone asks a question if the number to be saved is many or few. This question betrays an attitude of superiority in which a person considers them part of a select group.
- V. 24: Jesus redirects the person to focus on seizing the opportunity at hand for being saved. If a large crowd is trying to go through a narrow door, one must fight to get to the front of the line to enter. One must strive—a word associated with the martyrs who gave their lives for Christ—or the gladiators in the Coliseum—by taking the opportunities given in the present moment. Those opportunities are living by the Christ's law of love, forgiveness, compassion, and service.

- V. 25-26: The image shifts to trying to enter the house after the door has been locked and trying to get in by claiming familiarity with the owner. Excuses will do no good. We should have been there before the door was locked.
- V. 27: The owner will not be persuaded by their claims and excuses. He will send them away.
- V. 28: Jesus asks us to imagine the feeling of being excluded that should motivate us to act now that will insure our inclusion in the Kingdom.
- V. 29: Those who ignore or reject Jesus' message cannot claim salvation because of their heritage or ancestors. People will come from all the world and will be saved because they accepted Jesus' message.
- The Gentiles who accepted Jesus last will enter the Kingdom while Jews who rejected Jesus will be last. We cannot rely on our ancestry, heritage, or good intentions. Our admission to the Kingdom will be action in response to God's invitation.

3. Hebrews 12: 5-7, 11-13

- After having presented Jesus as the prime example of faith, perseverance, and endurance, the author reflects on the trials and challenges of life as like the discipline of a parent to his/her child.
- Vv. 5-6: The Lord disciplines those whom he loves.
- V. 7: The trials of life are the discipline of the Lord. His discipline proves that we are truly his children. What parent will not discipline their children if they genuinely love them?
- V. 8: If you are not disciplined by God then you are not a legitimate son or daughter.
- V. 9: The discipline of parents makes us respect them. Then we should accept the discipline of the Lord even more because we have even more respect for him, who is the Creator of all.
- V. 10: Parents discipline us so that we learn lessons for this life. God disciplines us so that we can share in his holiness for all eternity.
- V. 11: We do not recognize the value of discipline when we are going through it. Only later do we see its value.
- V. 12: The author exhorts his listeners to stop complaining and strengthen themselves in body and spirit for the trials of life.
- V. 13: Walk in the right way so that what is weak in us will not be broken but rather healed.