

Bible Study Lesson Summary, June 28, 2020

Today's lesson includes Days 103-109 on your reading guide.

DUETERONOMY

Dt. 33: Moses talks about the sons of Jacob and the tribes that come from them.

Dt. 34: Vs 5 says Moses died, and vs. 7 says he “was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were undimmed and his vigor unabated”, and Joshua takes over and leads the people into the Promised Land. Moses truly prefigured Christ in many ways. Pope Benedict XVI's book, *Jesus of Nazareth* does a great job of outlining many of those ways. But Moses was only the shadow. Then Joshua foreshadows another part of Jesus.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

The whole book, which is the history of the conquest of the Promised Land, is a foreshadowing of the spiritual conquest of the world through the church under the leadership of Jesus the Messiah.

Jos. 1: Joshua becomes the leader. Vs. 5, “No one can withstand you while you live.” But Joshua did die. That is why the devil was so excited to be able to have Jesus killed because he then thought he could win. With Jesus coming back, the devil can never win.

Jos. 2: He gets help from outside the Chosen People. Rahab foreshadows the first Gentile followers. She is a sinner outside the People of God who helps the cause and wins salvation. Rahab is even mentioned in the NT in Mt. 1:5 because she ended up marrying into the line of Jesus' ancestors. She became the wife of Salmon and the mother of Boaz, who was famous in the Book of Ruth. She is also mentioned in Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25. Vs. 19, Rahab's family will be safe as long as they stay in the house, just like staying in the church once you get there is important. Outside is not safe. Outside of God's Kingdom is hell.

Jos. 3: The Ark of the Covenant takes the lead. At the wedding feast at Cana, Mary, the new Ark of the Covenant, takes the lead and encourages Jesus to start His ministry. It is believed that this is also the spot that Jesus and the apostles did baptisms. See chapter 5.

Jos. 4: Vs. 2, “Choose twelve men from the people...” Jesus picks twelve apostles. Vs. 7, Twelve rocks as a perpetual memorial...The twelve apostles become the foundation stones of the church that are built on the cornerstone, Jesus.

Jos. 5: They are at the Jordan River and all the men must be circumcised, for this had not been done in the desert. The Old Covenant sign for salvation and hope of the Promised Land is circumcision. The New Covenant sign is baptism. In Jn.3:22, “After this, Jesus and his disciples

went into the region of Judea, where he spent some time with them baptizing.” Vs. 13, Joshua starts getting help from the Lord through an angel.

Jos. 6: The fall of Jericho is one of the first victories. The people, the priests, and even some Gentiles work together and conquer the city. Vs. 17-19, Rahab and her family is to be spared but they are limited in what they can keep as loot. This is significant because they are entering the Promised Land and it reminds us that when you enter heaven you can't take it with you, i.e. silver and gold, etc.

Jos. 7: Achan is unfaithful and is too worried about treasure of silver and gold. Sounds like Judas. If you hold onto the silver and gold you lose the Lord. In vs. 25-26, Achan is stoned to death. Remember this is a foreshadowing and does not necessarily mean that Achan is in hell. But notice that vs. 1 did say: “and the anger of the Lord flared up against the Israelites.” *This was a question that came up last week in class. We are taught that we can be angry about a sin but not the sinner. How can God be angry at the people? The answer is that he is God and is the one who is to judge us. We are not the judges.* God does judge Achan and he is stoned to death.

Jos. 8: After getting rid of Achan, God's anger is appeased. The people now win victory in Ai, or Bethel. Vs. 2, “Do to Ai and its king what you did to Jericho and its king; except that you may take its spoil and livestock as booty.” I presume that the change is that now they are considered judged and in the Promised Land and now can partake of the goods of heaven. They also know that they had better obey the Lord. Notice in vs. 6 that God used the foiled plan from the first battle against Ai in chapter 7:2-5 to create a strategy to win the second one. The King of Ai did not realize how powerful the Israelites were when God was helping them and got careless. God can make good come from bad. Vs. 30-35, foreshadows how important the law of the Lord and worship will be in the Promised Land, and certainly what heaven is based on.

Jos. 9: This chapter is a shady foreshadowing of communion for us Gentiles. The Gibeonites go to Joshua and with bread as their instrument, he makes a promise to them and they are saved from destruction. It is all based on willing to be a servant of the Lord rather than dead. Remember that even Mary spoke of herself as being the “handmaid of the Lord.”

Jos. 10: Vs. 13, “And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, while the nation took vengeance on its foes. Is this not recorded in the Book of Jashar?” The primary lesson from this is a foreshadowing of the victory of Jesus on the cross when an eclipse of the sun took place and day become night. So time gets mixed up when God is doing His best work. Do we have to believe that the sun stood still? The fact that it says that this is a reference from a book that is not in the Bible gives us an out. Vs. 20-27 has the death of the five kings. They defeated, imprisoned, hung from trees and then put in stone tombs. They are now out of the picture. The devil tried this on Jesus and it didn't work because the Lord was His stronghold. All these people are put to the sword and doomed. They do not get to be in the Promised Land. This foreshadows those who will not be in heaven. But this does not mean that these particular OT people were all going to hell. We don't know what God's judgment will be. Forty years in the desert made the Israelites tough. God's plan had many layers.

Jos. 11: Vs. 9, “Joshua did to them as the Lord had commanded: he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots.” This was to foreshadow that it is not going to be through weapons of war that we would obtain victory and win heaven. It was going to be through God and his Chosen People. God will not save everyone. If you do not cooperate with the plan of God you will go to Hell. Vs. 20, “For it was the design of the Lord to encourage them to wage war against Israel, that they might be doomed to destruction and thus receive no mercy, but be exterminated, as the Lord had commanded Moses.” This results in a final result of: “And the land enjoyed peace.” (vs. 23)

Jos. 12: All these conquered kings are gone but God’s promise lives on, as does the King of Kings, who reigns forever.

Jos. 13: Some of the land is divided up. John 14:2, “In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.”

Jos. 14: The story of Caleb, who was faithful, is given as an example of God doing good things for His faithful people. Because of this story we know that this is not just about tribes but individuals. This also helps understand that these battles came over a five year period. For Caleb was forty when judged obedient to the Lord, spent 40 years in the desert, and is now 85.

Jos. 15: I am convinced that this many towns meant that there had to have been a town every two miles in the Promised Land.

The Book of Psalms

Psalms 104: This is one of the most beautiful prayers of Jesus. I personally love vs. 15 (and wine to gladden our hearts), and vs. 26 (here Leviathan, your creature, plays). But vs. 29-30 hints at the resurrection of the body and the new heavens and new earth. “When you take away their breath, they perish and return to the dust from which they came. When you send forth your breath, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.”

Psalms 105: This is a wonderful psalm of praise for all the great things that God has done for His Chosen People.

Psalm 106: This psalm seems to be the other side of 105 and is a little history lesson of the Chosen People, the story of sinners dealing with God. God loves and too often we respond with sin.

Psalm 107: Jesus outlines how God helps those in need.

Psalm 108: The prayer of Jesus asking for continued aid in times of need.

Psalm 109: This is a prayer of Jesus during His trial and death. Vs. 5-7: “My enemies say of me: ‘Find a lying witness, an accuser to stand by his right hand, that he may be judged and found guilty, that his plea may be in vain.’” Vs. 22, “For I am sorely in need; my heart is pierced within me.” Just remember that these psalms from about 1000 years before Christ was born in Bethlehem.

ST. PAUL’S FIRST LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

1 Thes.3: Vs. 5: “I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had put you to the test and our toil might come to nothing.” The good news is that they remained firm with just a few deficiencies in their faith. Vs. 7: “Because of this, we have been reassured about you, brothers, in our every distress and affliction, through your faith.” Vs. 10: “Night and day we pray beyond measure to see you in person and to remedy the deficiencies of your faith.”

1 Thes.4: Paul gives a couple basic reminders like in vs. 7, “For God did not call us to impurity but to holiness.” Vs. 9, “For you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another.” And continue to believe in the Resurrection, vs. 16-17: “For the Lord himself, with a word of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” Rapture books have been written about this phrase that are exciting but misleading.

1 Thes.5: Vs. 6, “stay alert and sober.” Vs. 8, “putting on the breastplate of faith and love and the helmet that is hope for salvation.” That is one of his ideas about the armor of God. Vs. 21-21, “Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil.” This is basically the summary of the Ignatian Spiritual discernment process.

ST. PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

Paul has some of the same concerns in this second letter.

2 Thes.1: The letter starts with the same kind of expression good wishes that his other letter did. He makes a point of giving thanks to God for their faith. He even mentions that he boasts about them to churches in other areas as to their endurance in the midst of persecution and affliction. In vs. 5-10 he outlines what he knows will happen to those who don't believe. Vs. 9, "These will pay the penalty of eternal ruin, separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." He concludes that scary message with a prayer. This kind of destroys one of the Protestant notions of once saved, always saved.

2 Thes.2: The warning he gives in this chapter is easier for us to receive than it would have been for them. We have a couple thousand years to see a long-term view of how God works. This was all new to them, so it was easier for a phony to panic them. We have fake news all the time now so hopefully we are more skeptical. Our problem is more a tendency to be skeptical of the truth of the Scriptures because they are so far removed. He would be writing a different kind of letter to us. But this is why vs. 15 is even more important to us than it was to them: "Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by an oral statement or by a letter of ours." The consistency of the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church is a big help for us. But this statement reminds us that Paul realizes that not all truth is contained in Scripture. There was more that was still in oral tradition. This counters the "Sola Scriptura" banner of the Protestant Churches.

2 Thes.3: I love this third chapter in which he warns about people who are more busybodies than busy with the work of the Lord. He uses himself as the example. So he was worried about those who might not practice what they preach or what he preached.

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

This letter was probably written about A.D. 54-55. My notes say he might have written it from Ephesus. He might have visited Mary and John there.

Gal. 1: The chapter starts with the usual greeting but in vs. 6-9 he warns them of false gospels. Remember that these were Christians who were just converted from paganism and don't have the catechism to help keep them on track. They are needing some of the treatment God gave the Israelites when they escaped Egypt, when He had to convince them to throw away the notion of the Egyptian gods. On the other hand, I hope we don't see a greater judgment on those who start their own churches. I'm sure Paul had no idea we would have over 30,000 Christian denominations by now. Even then he says in vs. 9: "if anyone preaches to you a gospel other than the one that you received, let that one be accursed!" Sounds a lot like Jesus talking about millstones around their necks if they lead a child astray. Once again he gives his own story to make his point. (vs. 11-24) When he mentions Kephas, that is Peter; so he is focusing them on apostolic authority.