

Encountering Jesus in the Gospel of St. Matthew - Week 5

True Greatness within the Community (18)

On the Way to Jerusalem Part 1 (19)

On the Way to Jerusalem Part 2 (20)

The King and the Temple (21)

Showdown in the Temple (22-23)

“Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:1-4 How many times does Jesus humble Himself?

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven. Matt 18:10

Angel = Messenger

St. Augustine says: ‘Angel’ is the name of their office, not of their nature. With their whole beings the angels are servants and messengers of God.

As purely spiritual creatures, angels have intelligence and will: they are personal and immortal... CCC 329-330

Angel is used 230 times in entire Bible 131 OT, 99 NT Rev. 12:4 a third of the stars

Christ is the center of the angelic world

CCC 331 They are his angels: “When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him” Matt 25:31

...all things were created through him and for him. Colossians 1:16

If your brother sins against you (Matthew 18:15-17)

If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the Church;

Greek (ekklēsia) - an assembly (131 x OT), congregation (150x OT)

Only one assembly... or one congregation

Whatever you bind on earth 18:18

Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. V. 18

Repeat of Matt 16:18, the context is different,

Matt 18:1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus,

Parallel passage Mark 9:33 (the twelve) See also John 20:23

Teachings about Divorce - Ch 19

Matthew 19:1-9 Pharisees: “Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?” Deuteronomy 24:1-4

Jesus: “Have you not read...? For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

God’s blessing and purpose for marriage Genesis 1:27

And God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it;

God gives marriage 1) a blessing 2) a purpose,

God only creates Adam and Eve, we are to fill heaven, through the sacrament of marriage

The purpose of Marriage - Covenant

So they are no longer two but one (flesh). Matthew 19:6.

The purpose of the one flesh is the same as the two flesh: to get to heaven, and fill it.

Possible by grace in the Sacrament of Marriage.

What is a Eunuch? Matt 19:12

Eunuch from birth - a birth defect

Been made eunuch - by disease or injury

Made themselves - those who choose celibacy

Key: for the sake of the kingdom

We will all be celibate in heaven

Kingdom is both temporal - here on earth, and eternal - in heaven

The Rich Young Man Matt 19:16-30

Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life? Jesus:

If you would enter life, keep the commandments.

For perfection: sell everything and follow me

Chapter 20 - End of the journey to Jerusalem

Since 19:1, Jesus and his disciples have been moving south along the eastern side of the Jordan. Now, only a few miles before reaching the Dead Sea, the group crosses over to the western bank near the oasis city of Jericho.

Jesus heals two blind men

Two blind men: "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" Jesus: "What do you want me to do for you?"

They said to him, "Lord, let our eyes be opened." Matthew 20:29-34

...they received their sight and followed him.

The Davidic Messiah

In that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book, and out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall see. Isaiah 29:18 To address Jesus as Son of David is to confess him as the Davidic Messiah, the one chosen by God to redeem Israel...

Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem - Chapter 21

Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey. Matt 21:5. Citation to Zechariah 9:9

Other great (clear) prophecy Messiah's being sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:13)

The Prophet Zechariah, his name means "God remembers"

Time period: the exiles returning to Jerusalem from Babylon.

His Theme: God remembers His covenant promises to bless Israel.

His language is full of symbols and visions.

Messianic prophecies (9x): (3:1-2; 3:8-9; 6:12-13; 9:9-10; 10:4; 11:4-13; 13:1; 13:7, 14:4-9)

Kreeft, Peter. You Can Understand the Bible: A Practical Guide to Each Book in the Bible. Ignatius Press, 2005.

The Temple of Jerusalem

The Temple of Solomon (ca. 960–586 B.C.), which was destroyed when the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem.

The Second Temple (ca. 515–19 B.C.), built on the ruins of the first after the Exile.

The Temple of Herod (19 B.C.–A.D. 70), an extensive renovation and enlargement of the 2nd. CBD

Tent of Meeting or Tabernacle, The Temple in Jerusalem—the heart of Israel’s religious life and worship.

Dedication of the Temple 1 Kings 8:10–11.

And when the priests came out of the holy place, a cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

God is really and truly present in the 1st Holy Temple of Jerusalem.

I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. Matt 12:6, see Hebrews 9:4, 1 Cor 3:16,

Second Temple defiled in 167 BC 2 Maccabees 2,

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

“It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer’ Matt 21:13

every one who keeps the sabbath, and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant— these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer;... their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Isaiah 56:6-7

Jesus curses the fig tree Matt 21:18–19.

He (Jesus) was hungry. 19 And seeing a fig tree by the wayside he went to it, and found nothing on it but leaves only. And he said to it, “May no fruit ever come from you again!” And the fig tree withered at once.

The fig tree is a metaphor for our lives

Three possibilities for the fig tree:

Produce fruit : what we were created for

Produce no fruit : apathy -the absence of a good

Produce bad (poison) fruit : sin of malice

Sin is the absence of a good, a good that should be there

The Question about Man’s Resurrection

But Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not God of the dead, but of the living.”

Matt 22:29–32. Jesus replies to the Sadducees - Exodus 3:6 The Burning Bush

The Greatest Commandment

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.” Matt 22:36–40. Deut 6:5 and Lev 19:18

Covenant view love Father and love brother/sister

The 7 “Woes” of Matthew 23

A declaration of doom upon sinners who stand in the gravest danger of facing God’s judgment. This type of woe was prominent in Israel’s prophetic tradition, where it served to alert transgressors that the Lord was about to put the curses of the covenant into effect (Isaiah 5:8–22; Amos 5:18; Habakkuk 2:6–19). Prophetic declarations of woe are closest to what we find in Matt 23. Jesus uses them to denounce the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees in the strongest possible terms.

Old Covenant - Blessings and Curses Deut. 27-30 Deut. Moses’ farewell sermon

And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God. Deut 28:2.

“But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command you this day, then all these curses shall come upon you... Deut 28:15.

Blessing = Life Curse = Death

But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you this day, that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land which you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live, Deut 30:17–19.

Covenant - Old vs New

Old Covenant - Blessing and Curses

New Covenant - Grace from the Sacraments

Ultimate blessing - eternity with God (Heaven) Ultimate curse - eternity without God (Hell)

