

Week 9 Psalm 16, Mark 12-16, Psalm 17

Psalm 16— This Psalm is quoted by both Peter and Paul as prophetic, foretelling the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and his ascension to God’s right hand. ***What are the blessings we receive because we have set the Lord always before us (see verses 8, 9, and 11)***

Mark 12— during this final week before His death, Jesus has a series of confrontations with the Jewish leaders who were desperate to find a way to kill Him. He gives them the parable of the Evil Farmers, and they understand He is talking about them (vv. 1-12). Now, even more offended and anxious to destroy Him, they try to trap Him in His own words by asking Him if it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not. Jesus amazed them with His answer (vv. 13-17). Then the Sadducees, who reject the resurrection, give Him a hypothetical case of a woman who was married to seven different men (one at a time) and each in time died. “In the resurrection, whose wife will the woman be?” Jesus made it clear that there would be no marriage in resurrection and then cited Moses to prove there will be a resurrection (vv. 18-27). Surprisingly, a scribe asks Jesus a great question as to which command is the most important of all (vv. 28-34). Then Jesus turns on the religious leaders asking them a difficult question and riddle about the relationship of David and the Messiah from Psalm 110:1 (vv. 35-37). Jesus then condemns the scribes for their desire for recognition, their hypocrisy, exploitation of widows, ostentatious dress, and greed. In comparison, a poor widow is commended for her generosity because she gave all that she had (vv. 38-44). In verse 34 Jesus said that the scribe who had answered correctly was “not far from the kingdom of God.” ***What does it mean that a person is “not far from the kingdom of God,” and what would be necessary for that person to be a part of kingdom of God?***

Mark 13— Jesus gives His Olivet Discourse (taught from the Mount of Olives) to His disciples, prophesying events in the future that will take place before His second coming. He says that although the years ahead will be marked by false messiahs, wars, disasters, growing wickedness, and persecution of God’s people, they still have not come to the final day of God’s wrath that will be poured out in an unprecedented fashion during the Tribulation period when Israel sees the abomination of desolation (vv. 14, 19) that was spoken by Daniel the prophet (Daniel 9:24-27). Since we don’t know when Christ will come back, we need to be faithful, watchful, and ready for His imminent (any moment) coming. The context of this chapter is especially to be applied to the nation of Israel who will need to be prepared to flee Judea for protection when they see the man of lawlessness appear in the temple and demand to be worshipped as God (II Thessalonians 2:1-12). The key words for all of us regarding Christ’s second coming are to “Be Alert and on guard” and to “Watch out/Stay awake (vv. 5, 9, 23, 33, 35, and 37).” ***What are the signs Jesus gave to signal the end of the age?***

Mark 14— The Jewish leaders had determined that they must get rid of Jesus because He was becoming more and more confrontational about their evil practices. A woman (Mary - John 12:3) anoints Jesus with costly perfume for His burial which He predicts would be proclaimed to the whole world in memory of her (vv. 1-9). The chief priests are overjoyed that Judas was breaking rank and willing to betray the Lord. Jesus sends two disciples to go and prepare for the Passover in a large upper room. He inaugurates the Lord’s Supper with His disciples and points out that one of them will betray Him. Jesus foretells Peter’s denial and then agonizes in prayer in the

garden of Gethsemane, knowing of His forthcoming suffering and death. Although Jesus prays that the Father will take away this cup of suffering from Him, He says, “Nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will (vv 10-42).” Awakening His disciples, Judas and a crowd come to arrest Jesus and take Him away to the high priest’s house. Upon hearing from Jesus that He is the Son of God, the Jewish leaders have the evidence they need to accuse Him of blasphemy and then bring Him to Pilate. Peter denied Jesus three times and then weeps bitterly (vv. 43-72). Judas betrayed Jesus, and Peter denied Him. ***Explain how the betrayal of Judas was different from Peter’s denial.***

Mark 15— The assembly of Jewish leaders takes Jesus to Pilate and accuses Him of subverting the nation and many other things, but Jesus would not answer them. Knowing that He was innocent and that the chief priests were envious of Him, Pilate tried to liberate Jesus by offering to release Him instead of the evil Barabbas, but religious leaders would have none of it. Because of the continual cries of the mob to crucify Him, Pilate gives Jesus over to their will and delivers Him up to be crucified (vv. 1-15). He is mocked and beaten by the soldiers and then delivered over to death. Jesus was led away towards the place called “The Skull” (Golgotha/Calvary), and Simon from Cyrene helped Him carry His cross. Jesus is hanged between two criminals and is taunted by the chief priests, those who passed by, and even those with whom He was crucified. At three in the afternoon after darkness had covered the land for three hours, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “My God, My God why have You forsaken me?” Then Jesus again cried out with a loud voice and breathed His last. The curtain in front of the Holy of Holies in the temple was split in two from top to bottom (vv. 16-39). Joseph of Arimathea asks and receives permission from Pilate to take the body of Jesus and hurries to wrap it in fine linen and place it in a tomb cut out of the rock. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where His burial tomb was located (vv. 40-47). ***1. Jesus cried out, “My God, My God why have you forsaken me?” Was Jesus actually abandoned by His Father? Explain. 2. Why did the curtain in the temple split in two from top to bottom?***

Mark 16— On the day after the Sabbath at sunrise, Mary Magdalene and the other women go to the tomb with spices to anoint the body of Jesus. Coming to the tomb, they find that the large stone that covered it was rolled away, and a young man in a white robe was sitting in the tomb. They are told that Jesus the Nazarene has been resurrected and that they are to go and tell the disciples and Peter to meet Him in Galilee. The women were completely astonished and overwhelmed by the words (vv. 1-8). Most reliable manuscripts of the book of Mark finish the book at verse 8 but verses 9-20 were most likely added later to give the book completeness. The book closes with the appearance of Jesus with Mary Magdalene, the two men walking on the road, and Jesus appearing to the eleven apostles. The Great Commission is given by Jesus with the mention of signs that accompany those who believe. The book ends with the ascension of Jesus to heaven and then sitting at the right hand of God (vv. 9-20). Verse 16 says, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” ***Does the Bible teach that water baptism is necessary to be saved?***

Psalms 17 — “Though you test me, you will find nothing...” Oh how I wish I could utter such words! David seems to be extremely arrogant, claiming to be righteous, free from sin, and steadfast in following God’s decrees. As arrogant as that may seem,

God called him a man after his own heart. David, although not sinless, was truly exceptional. *Is there a way you can improve your walk with God?*

Week 10 Psalm 18, Luke 1-5, Psalm 19

Psalm 18 — This Psalm is about God. Written by the newly elected king David, he recalls all that God has done for him. These deeds include protection from the insanity of Saul and numerous military victories. God performed miraculous deeds for a little shepherd from the hill country of Judah. ***Take a moment and list what you are grateful for.***

Luke— This book is an orderly account of the life of Christ by Doctor Luke, a Gentile who traveled with the Apostle Paul on his journeys. The recipient of the letter was Theophilus who later received a second installment from Luke called the book of Acts. Written sometime between 58 AD. and 62 AD., Luke adds a lot of additional material not given by the other gospels, including events about Jesus birth, some miracles, and many parables. Written in the best Greek of all the New Testament writers, this book was given particularly to the non-Jewish world to stress the theme that “the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost (19:10).”

Luke 1— Because of Daniel’s prophecy of 70 weeks (490 years- Daniel 9:24-27), there was an anticipation of the coming of the Messiah. The last prophet to appear 400 years earlier was Malachi who predicted the coming of the forerunner of the Messiah (Malachi 4:4-6), who was John the Baptist. The angel Gabriel appears to the elderly Zechariah telling him that he and his wife will have a son who will prepare the people for the Messiah. In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, Gabriel then appears to Mary and announces that though she as a virgin, she will have a child who will be the Son of the Most High whose kingdom will have no end. Mary travels from Nazareth to the home of Zachariah and Elizabeth to announce her divine pregnancy and gives a song of praise to the greatness of God. When John was born, Zechariah’s mouth was opened and he gives praise to God and prophecy about the ministry of John. The angel Gabriel told Zechariah that his prayers had been heard (v.13) and that he and Elizabeth would have a son. ***Why did Zechariah not believe Gabriel if he had been praying about it? Why do you think Mary believed Gabriel when he told her of the news of the virgin birth?***

Luke 2— Each person in the whole Roman Empire was required to return to their town of origin and register for tax purposes. Although she was in the last days of her pregnancy, Mary went with Joseph to Bethlehem and gave birth to God’s son in a stable and laid Him in a feeding trough. A host of angels appeared to the shepherds in a nearby field announcing the birth of the Messiah that happened that very night. The shepherds then hurried off to see this announced Christ child. After the 40 days of their purification, Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem to dedicate Him and offer a sacrifice. In the temple, the Holy Spirit guided both Simeon and Anna to recognize the long promised Messiah and prophesy about Jesus. At the age of 12, Jesus was taken to Jerusalem for the Passover where He astonished the teachers at His depth of knowledge and wisdom. ***1. After reading this chapter where do you see: (1) God’s sovereign hand, (2) the humble and ordinary details of the birth of God’s Son, and (3) the miraculous things Mary treasured in her heart?***

Luke 3— John the Baptist appears as the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah (Isaiah 40:3-5) and preaches the judgment of God by calling on the people to proclaim their repentance by

being baptized. When asked if he might be the Messiah, John clearly stated that there was one coming who was greater than he, and this person would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with the fire of the God's wrath and judgment. It was at this time Jesus came to be baptized by John. The Holy Spirit and the Father authenticated Jesus and His ministry. John was locked in prison for rebuking Herod about marrying Herodias, his brother's wife. Luke records the genealogy of Jesus all the way back to Adam. **1. Where in the New Testament do we see the evidences of the doctrine of Holy Trinity? 2. How were the genealogies of Matthew (chapter 1) and Luke different? What was the purpose of each genealogy?**

Luke 4— Jesus is led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness for 40 days to be tempted by the Devil (vv. 1-13). He returns to Nazareth and proclaims Himself the fulfillment of Isaiah 61:1-2. Becoming furious with His words, the people of Nazareth try to kill him (vv. 14-30). Coming to Capernaum, Jesus casts an evil spirit out of a man on the Sabbath day, and everyone marvels at His authority and power (vv. 31-36). Jesus heals Simon Peter's mother-in-law and others as well as casting out demons (vv. 37-44). **What were the three ways that Satan tempted Jesus? Amplify the meaning of scripture He quoted. Extra Question: In verses 18-19, Jesus quoted Isaiah 61:1-2. Comparing these two passages, what did He leave out, and why is that significant?**

Luke 5— In chapter 4, Jesus is a solitary teacher who preaches and teaches in the synagogues and to great crowds. In this chapter He calls His disciples to be with Him, to learn from Him, and to prepare for their future ministry when He is gone. Peter, James, and John leave everything and follow Christ after they see the miraculous catch of fish when they obeyed His command (vv. 1-11). The teachers and the Pharisees begin to demonstrate their opposition when Jesus doesn't conform to their rules and norms. The Pharisees are scandalized when Jesus forgives the sins of the paralyzed man before healing him. They are appalled when He calls a tax collector by the name of Levi (Matthew) to be one of His disciples, and then has a party with His tax collector friends (vv. 12-32). Our Lord gives a parable of the old and new wineskins (vv. 33-39). Jesus told the disciples that they would now be fishers of men (and women). All Christians have been called to win and disciple people for Christ. What are the reasons why most Christians are not active in winning people to Christ? Extra Question: This chapter shows that Jesus desired to reach all people, including the outcasts such as lepers, tax collectors, and the worst of sinners. **Who are the outcasts in our world, nation, and city today, and what do we need to do to reach them for Christ?**

Psalms 19 — God's majesty is shouted in the heavens and written in scripture. This demands an allegiance to the one who redeems our soul. **In what ways did David want to be pleasing to God? See verse 1**

Week 11 Psalm 20 Luke 6-10, Psalm 21

Psalm 20— David calls upon God’s protection and favor. There are two assumptions here. First that God’s help is sufficient to resolve any problem we face. Second is that God will act on our behalf. ***List some of the reasons David gives to assure us that God will respond to his prayer***

Luke 6— This chapter begins with a heated disagreement between Jesus and the Pharisees concerning the Sabbath day since His disciples picked heads of grain to eat, and Jesus healed the man with the paralyzed hand, both on the Sabbath (vv. 1-11). After spending the night in prayer, Jesus chose twelve of His disciples to be apostles (vv. 12-16). A large crowd of His disciples and others came to Jesus to be taught, healed, and cured of evil spirits. In this “Sermon on the Plain (level place),” Jesus taught His disciples the principles and values of His kingdom similar to that which He taught in Matthew 5-7 (vv. 17-49). In verse 38, Jesus taught a very important principle on giving. ***What is the principle He taught, and give and explain other verses in the New Testament on the topic of giving that amplify the meaning of this verse? See II Corinthians 9:6-8. Extra Question: What are reasons and principles Jesus gave concerning what was legitimate to do on the Sabbath? See verses 1-11.***

Luke 7— The Roman Centurion requests through envoys that Jesus would heal his servant. Before healing his servant, Jesus marvels at the great faith of the officer who would be an example of millions of Gentiles who would put their faith in Christ in the future (vv. 1-10). Jesus travels to Nain where he stops a funeral procession and raises a widow’s only son from the dead (vv. 11-17). Our Lord graciously answers the questions and doubts of John the Baptist as to whether He is the Messiah or not. The twisted minds of the Pharisees are exposed by Jesus as they justify their rejection of John and Jesus for complete opposite reasons (vv. 18-35). While dining in the home of Simon the Pharisee, a sinful woman anoints the feet of Jesus, is commended by Him for her action and receives forgiveness of sins (vv. 36-50). Verse 28 says, “...yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” ***How are the least in the kingdom of God greater than John the Baptist?***

Luke 8— This chapter shows that a large group accompanied Jesus on His journey, including women who played a vital role by supporting Jesus and His disciples in their ministry. The Lord tells the parable of the four soils to a large crowd and then explains the meaning to His disciples. His mother and brothers try to see Him but He declares to the crowd the importance of a spiritual relationship with Him, and obeying His word (vv. 1-21). “Jesus then showed His total authority by exhibiting sovereignty over nature (vv. 22-25), over demons (vv. 26-39), and over disease and death (vv. 40-56). All forces of life bow at His feet.” ***What is one important teaching of Jesus to consider in each of the following passages: (1) verses 16-18, (2) verses 19-21, and (3) verses 22-25? Extra Question: Verses 1-4 indicate that Jesus had a large group with Him as He travelled from place to place, including women. What part did women play in His ministry? How was His treatment of women different from the rest of society in the first century? How should Christian men treat women today?***

Luke 9— Jesus sends out His disciples with His power and authority to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom, to heal the sick, and cast out demons. Five thousand men (plus women and

children) are fed by Jesus through the multiplication of the five loaves and two fish (vv. 1-17). After Peter declares that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus reveals to the disciples of His coming rejection, death, and resurrection. He then gives to all hearing Him a call to total discipleship and obedience (vv. 18-27). Taking Peter, James, and John on a mountain with Him to pray, Jesus was transfigured before their eyes, and His clothing became dazzling white. Returning from the mountain, a large crowd meets Him, and He heals a demon-possessed boy who His disciples could not heal (vv. 28-45). His disciples argue about who is the greatest among them, but Jesus instructs them about who really is greatest in the kingdom. Knowing His time to suffer and die is close at hand, Jesus determines to head toward Jerusalem for His final journey (vv. 46-62). In verse 23, Jesus says that in order to be His disciple, we must deny ourselves, take up our cross daily, and follow Him. ***Explain in detail the meaning and cost of discipleship. Can a person be a born-again Christian and not be a disciple? Extra Question: What does welcoming a child have to do with spiritual greatness?***

Luke 10— After sending out the Twelve Apostles in chapter 9, Jesus sends out Seventy-two of His disciples to proclaim the gospel, and do miracles of healing, and cast out demons. Upon their return, the disciples rejoice that the demons were subject to them, but Jesus tells them that their real joy should come from the fact that their names are written in heaven (vv. 1-24). An expert in the law tries to test Jesus, but Jesus tests him by telling him the story of the Good Samaritan (vv. 25-37). Martha shows hospitality to Jesus, but then complains to Him that Mary is sitting and listening to Him instead of helping her in the preparation of the meal (vv. 38-42). ***1. What is the main point of the parable of the Good Samaritan? 2. What is the principle lesson Jesus wanted Martha to learn (vv. 38-42).***

Psalm 21— It is commonplace for people to forget God when they achieve their dreams, as if these things were accomplished by our own abilities. Not so with David, for he knows the depths of despair and sorrow, and savors the sweet triumph accomplished by God. ***List some of the blessings of God in this chapter.***

Week 12 Psalm 22, Luke 11-15, Psalm 23

Psalm 22 — This is obviously a Messianic psalm. Jesus even quotes the first verse on the cross. The description of suffering here is consistent with the torment of crucifixion. We too may feel abandoned by God at some point. However, for him to do so would be to deny his promise, “Lo I am with you always to the very end of the age.” **Have you ever felt abandoned by God? What can we rely on to get us through those seasons of struggle?**

Luke 11— Upon a request by one of His disciples, Jesus teaches them how to pray and the importance of consistent and persistent prayer, knowing that the Heavenly Father so desires to give us good gifts, including the gift of the Holy Spirit (vv. 1-13). Upon driving a demon out of the mute man, the Pharisees and teachers of the Law become hostile and accuse Jesus of driving out demons through the power of Satan. Jesus shows the absurdity of Satan undermining his own work through partnership with Him. He also shows that reformation without inward transformation will result in a worse condition than before (vv. 14-26). Again, Jesus refuses to honor His mother above those who hear the Word of God and keep it. He warns against unbelief and their response to the light that Christ gives them (vv. 27-36). Dining with a Pharisee, He gives a scathing denunciation against the evil and hypocritical actions of the Pharisees and the experts of the law (vv. 37-54). *What lessons and promises did Jesus teach on prayer, and what is the Heavenly Father’s response to it? Extra Question: In verses 42 to 52, why did Jesus harshly criticize the Pharisees and experts in the law?*

Luke 12— Our Lord gives specific instructions to His disciples about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and preparation for their future suffering. “Only confidence in our value to God can free us from the fear of other human beings and help us to take a bold stand that openly affirms our trust in Christ (vv. 1-12).” Jesus speaks about the evilness of greed and the disastrous effect of fixing one’s heart toward material things instead of finding our riches in God. He tells his disciples not to worry about anything since God is faithful to provide everything we need, but instead to seek first His kingdom (vv. 13-34). Christ teaches about our proper stewardship as the Lord’s servants, and the fact that each would be judged by his faithfulness to the stewardship he or she is given (vv. 35-48). Jesus talks of the division He will cause in families and warns them that though they have great skills in interpreting signs of impending weather, they are slow to understand signs of the times and the coming judgment (vv. 49-59). *How do we acknowledge Jesus before men, and how do we deny Him before men (vv. 8-9)? Extra Questions: What lessons about material possessions, greed, and worry did Jesus teach in verses 13 to 34?*

Luke 13— Jesus calls the people to repentance by stating that tragedies such as the one where the Galileans were killed by Pilate’s men are not necessarily a sign that these people were greater sinners than others. The parable in verse six says that God is giving Israel its last chance to produce fruit before Israel will be cut down like the fig tree in the parable (vv. 1-9). Christ heals the crippled woman on the Sabbath in the synagogue. Hearing the reaction of the synagogue leader, Jesus powerfully condemns him for his hypocrisy (vv. 10-17). Our Lord gives the parable of the mustard seed and the leaven (vv. 18-20). As Jesus journeys on toward Jerusalem, He visits the towns and villages on the way. Being asked the question about if few people will be saved, Jesus responds that only those who enter the narrow door (gate) will be saved. Our Lord grieves

over Jerusalem for rejecting Him but finishes with the hope that one day far into the future they will say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord (vv. 21-35).” ***Explain the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven. Extra Question: What is the narrow door of salvation that Jesus was speaking about?***

Luke 14— As Jesus winds His way to Jerusalem to face death and the cross, he minces no words when visiting the home of a leading Pharisee (vv. 1-25) or with the large crowds that travelled with Him (vv. 26-35). He fearlessly challenges the religious elite by healing a man with swollen limbs on the Sabbath, and then confronts their pride of wanting the best place and the highest social status when attending a wedding banquet. When giving a dinner, one should invite the poor, lame, and blind, not their friends who can repay them. The blessed by God are those who respond to God’s invitation to come to the banquet even though they may have been outcasts and not to those who are invited to the banquet but don’t come and then make flimsy excuses (vv. 1-25). Jesus made it clear exactly what were the qualifications of being a disciple and then makes the Pharisees aware He is not intimidated by them (26-35). After reading verses 26-27, and 33, ***what are the requirements to be a fully committed disciple of Christ? Is there an area where you really need to grow?***

Luke 15— Almost like no other, the teaching of Jesus on the parables of the (1) Lost Sheep, (2) the Lost Coin, and (3) the Lost Son, reflect the heart of God the Father toward the lost and His outrageous love He has for them. In each of the parables there is a celebration when that which was lost is found. In the parables of the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin, we see that God rejoices when just one sinner repents of his sins. In the story of the Lost Son (the Prodigal Son), the father allows the younger son to take his share of the inheritance and leave. After squandering his money in foolish living and without anything to eat, he returns to his father and repents of the evil he had done. His father not only forgives him but throws a party on his behalf. Instead of rejoicing, the older son is angry that the father is forgiving and takes no joy in his brother’s return. As you read the story of the Lost Son, ***what do we learn about the person, character, and attributes of God the Father? Extra Question: What attitude do we see in the actions of the older brother? Who did the older brother represent?***

Psalm 23 — This is one of the most cherished of the Psalms and for good reason. We see in this Psalm the protection of our Great Shepherd, in good times or bad, He is ever present with us. **List the actions God takes on our behalf.**