Study Notes for the Sunday Mass Published by Christians for Christ Ministries. We are a non-denominational Christian ministry that seeks to encourage and facilitate Christians in studying the Holy Scriptures. **"For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus."** 1 Timothy 2:5

Sunday Mass Study Notes for Lectionary 671: 11/09/2025



Welcome back to the Sunday Mass notes for 11-9-2014. This week, we open with the first reading from the Prophet Ezekiel, move to the second reading from Second Corinthians Chapter 3, and close with the Gospel lesson from the Second Chapter of John.

Introduction to the First Reading:

The first reading is from the Prophet Ezekiel. The context of the reading is Ezekiel's prophecy concerning a restored temple in Jerusalem. The most likely interpretation of this text is that this is the "Millennial Temple" because its construction coincides with the beginning of the Lord Jesus' thousand-year (millennium) reign after the end of the tribulation period. This follows the conclusion of a period of judgment known as the "Day of the Lord," a prominent theme throughout the Old Testament. This period was first mentioned by the Prophet Isaiah who said, "For the LORD of hosts will have a day of reckoning against everyone who is proud and lofty and against everyone who is lifted up, That he may be abased" (Isaiah 2:12). The Day of the Lord, or DOL, is mentioned at least

another 18 times in the Old Testament including Ezekiel 13:5, "You have not gone up into the breaches, nor did you build the wall around the house of Israel to stand in the battle on the **day of the LORD**" (emphasis added). This time, also known as the time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30:7), is the conclusion of the period of time during which God will pour out His judgments upon the unbelieving world left after the church has been "caught up" from the earth as described by Saint Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. After Jesus returns with His church (Revelation 19:11,14) the world is restored to a time of worldwide peace under the rulership of the Lord Jesus Christ for a period of one thousand years (Revelation 20:4). The reading for today is in the section that describes how life-giving water will flow from the temple to renew the salt-laden Dead Sea. *Note that the omitted verses 3-7 and 10 were included in order to provide the proper context.*

First Reading:

> *1 Then he brought me back to the door of the house; and behold, water was flowing from under the threshold of the house toward the east, for the house faced east. And the water was flowing down from under, from the right side of the house, from south of the altar. 2 He brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate by way of the gate that faces east. And behold, water was trickling from the south side. 3 When the man went out toward the east with a line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he led me through the water, water reaching the ankles. 4 Again he measured a thousand and led me through the water, water reaching the knees. Again he measured a thousand and led me through the water, water reaching the loins. 5 Again he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not ford, for the water had risen, enough water to swim in, a river that could not be forded. 6 He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?" Then he brought me back to the bank of the river. 7 Now when I had returned, behold, on the bank of the river there were very many trees on the one side and on the other. 8 Then he said to me, "These waters go out toward the eastern region and go down into the Arabah; then they go toward the sea, being made to flow into the sea, and the waters of the sea become fresh. 9 It will come about that every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes, will live. And there will be very many fish, for these waters go there and the others become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes. 10 And it will come about that fishermen will stand beside it; from Engedi to Eneglaim there will be a place for the spreading of nets. Their fish will be according to their kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea, very many. 11 But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt. 12 By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing." (Ezekiel 47:1-12)*

The water flowing from the temple comes from an elevated position since the temple is where all nations will eventually come to worship. John said in Revelation, "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED" (Revelation 15:4). The Millennial Temple will be elevated, both physically as well as spiritually, the place where Jesus reign will be central. As the life-giving fresh water flows from God downhill towards the salt-laden Dead Sea, the water becomes deeper and deeper until it disappears down into the depths of the now freshwater lake. The Dead Sea will become fresh and a source of fish, with water providing nourishment for trees that will also flourish in this formerly dead region. The application of this is that all life is from God, water is life, and this comes from God out of the Millennial temple. God can heal the fallen creation and reverse the curse of Adam. This should encourage us because sin is not the last word written in the history of the world.

Introduction to the Second Reading:

The second reading is from Saint Paul's Letter to the Corinthians. The overall context of Chapter 3 is the theological concept of "carnality". Paul addressed the problem of Christians who are immature in their faith, which resulted in the Corinthian believers indulging in the things from their old lives of sin. Paul warned that believers needed to be careful because they would all stand before the Lord, give an account, and receive a reward for what they did for God. What was at stake was not their salvation, but their eternal rewards. *Note: Verses 12-15 omitted from the reading were included to provide the proper context.*

Second Reading:

> *9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. 11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. 15 If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. 16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are. (1 Corinthians 3:9-17).*

Paul said that all of the believers were working together to build God's church (v. 9). This project of building for God was something that was empowered by God's variety of gifts given to each believer (v. 10a, "according to the grace given"). Paul said that it wasn't as important as **what** we did, but rather our heart and motivation in **why** we did it (vv. 12-15). Paul reminded us that as believers, we are a temple of God, and we are to use the gifts given to us through God's grace to accomplish the work He has for us. God will test our works against His gold standard, that of perfect knowledge of our motives. This is something that the Corinthian church needed very much to understand, as they were struggling with carnal living in their culture that was filled with idolatry in their crossroads city. Later in this Book Paul explained to the Corinthian believers more about the coming judgment. Believers will be judged at what is called the "Bema Seat Judgment" found in 2 Corinthians 5:10. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." Paul also described it in Romans. "But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God" (Romans 14:10). This judgment is not about salvation, that was something that was determined by Jesus Who died on our behalf (1 John 2:2) and when we trusted in Him (John 3:16). Instead, the point of the Bema Seat Judgment is to reward believers based on how faithful they were in serving the Lord. We see this clearly in the last Book of the Bible where Jesus said, "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done" (Revelation 22:12). The Bema Seat of Christ should provide extra encouragement for us to steward our gifts and talents according to God's value system and not the world's value system. As we go about our lives as Christians, we must remember to test our motives and use our spiritual gifts in the service of the Lord.

Introduction to the Gospel Reading:

The Gospel reading is from John Chapter 2. The central theme of the Gospel of John is to show that Jesus is the Christ and that Jesus is the incarnation of God, the "logos" or "the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14a). Jesus declares throughout the Book that He is God, for example John 10:30, "I and the Father are One." Chapter 1 summarizes God's plan of redemption through the birth, life (and eventual death) of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the One Who "came to His own, and His own people (the Jews) did not receive Him" (John 1:11). John showed that God's plan of salvation was for people to find life through Jesus' giving of His own life, not as a victim (John 10:18) in a sacrificial offering but as One who willingly offered Himself as a final sacrifice for the sin of the world once and for all (Hebrews 10:12). John said, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13). The first chapter of John also introduced the person of John the Baptist, Jesus' cousin, who was God's appointed forerunner who came in the spirit of Elijah to fulfil the Old Testament prophecy in Malachi 4:5-6. John the Baptist came "to bear witness of the Light, that all through Him might believe" (John 1:7).

Finally, the opening chapter of John's Gospel introduced Jesus' ministry by revealing His calling of the first disciples. Peter the Rock was first and was given this new name by Jesus (1:42), followed by Philip (v. 43) and finally Nathanael (v. 45). Jesus' first recorded miracle was shared in the closing section of the chapter when Jesus revealed to Nathanael how He had seen him standing under the fig tree. Since Jesus wasn't in close enough proximity for this to have occurred naturally, Nathaniel received this as a miracle (John 1:48). This impressed Nathanael so much that he declared the Rabbi Jesus to be the Son of God, which was the first affirmation of Jesus' divinity in this Gospel.

Chapter 2, from which today's reading is found, opens with the miracle of Jesus turning the water into wine at the wedding in Cana in the region of Galilee near the Sea of Galilee (John 2:1-11). After Jesus did this miracle, John recorded that "His disciples believed in Him" (John 2:11c). After the wedding celebration concluded, which according to Jewish tradition would have gone on just short of a week, Jesus traveled with His mother, brothers, and disciples to Capernaum. This brings us to the reading for today.

Gospel Reading:

> *13 The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. 15 And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; 16 and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business." 17 His disciples remembered that it was written, "ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME." 18 The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?" 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" 21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body. 22 So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken. (John 2:13-22)*

The first point from the text is that Jesus's actions revealed his high reverence for God and correct worship in the temple. This is the first of three Passover celebrations that are mentioned in the Gospels (v. 13, John 6:4, John 11:55). The first of two times that Jesus drove the money changers from the temple (v. 14, Matthew 21:12). The money changers were in the outer courts of the temple, preying on the Jewish pilgrims coming from various countries to observe the Passover. This

pilgrimage was required for every adult over 12 years old (Exodus 23:14-17). One reason that Jesus was angry, in addition to the fact that commerce was being conducted in the temple that included the sale of sacrificial animals, was that the money changers swindled their clients and took advantage of the fact that they had no other choice but to buy their sacrifices from these temple crooks. Jesus called this a "robbers' den" in Matthew's Gospel. On that occasion Jesus proclaimed to them, "It is written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER'; but you are making it a ROBBERS' DEN" (Matthew 21:13). In the reading Jesus told them, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business" (v. 16b). (John 4:24). Jesus would not tolerate commerce in the temple, especially that of crooked money changers. Again, Jesus' actions of driving out the money changers from the temple indicated His reverence for His Father God.

The way Jesus drove the shady currency exchange merchants from the temple gives us an insight into the second point that arises from the text: Jesus' supernatural power and inherent authority. John said, "And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables" (v. 15). The Passover was a hectic season in Jerusalem with the arrival of thousands of pilgrims from around the Roman world. A large contingent of Roman soldiers would have stood guard outside the temple. Jesus must have driven out the money changers with such power that they could not raise any objection with the Roman authorities, who would have responded quickly to the situation. John said, ''His disciples remembered that it was written, 'ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME,'" a quote from the Messianic Psalm 69. Even Jesus' disciples didn't realize all of these things right away, but they were humble enough to insert this insight into the record once they did. The way Jesus drove the money changers away revealed the tremendous power He wielded from His Father God and His inherent authority as the author of true worship.

The third and final point from the text is the introduction of Jesus' "parabolic" teaching method. The parable in the reading today is more indirect than the "kingdom parables" in Matthew 13. Jesus told the Jews in the temple, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (v. 19). Even though the temple repair project had been ongoing for 46 years, the renovation had still not been completed. The Jewish historian Josephus writes that the renovation continued all the way up until the siege of Jerusalem that began in the year 67 and concluded with the destruction of the temple in 70. Instead of meaning the Temple building, Jesus was referring to His own body, which would be given over to death, and then would be resurrected in three days. The Jews misunderstood Jesus; something that we find out later in Matthew's Gospel was His intention by teaching this way. In that text when His disciples came to Him and asked Him why he taught the people in parables He answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted" (Matthew 13:11). Jesus' reason for obscuring the truth to those who won't believe is that it shields them from further judgment when they will stand before the Lord.

The first two chapters of John mark a series of firsts: the first disciples, the first miracles, the first display of Jesus' power, and the first use of His marvelous teaching method in parables. We can rejoice that we can model Jesus' reverence for His Father God when we worship God. We can minister to others through the same power of the Holy Spirit that Jesus Himself possessed. Finally, we can meditate and learn from Jesus' teaching in the Gospels. Something about Jesus' teaching method makes us understand the concept even more clearly than if He had told us the truths directly.

Have a great week.

Bottom Line: Questions for Reflection

1. In all three readings, we see a display of God's power:

Ezekiel shows us that God's life-giving water will resurrect the Dead Sea

Paul shows us in 1 Corinthians that all Christians will face a time of giving an account for what we have done with the gifts and talents entrusted to us.

John records a display of power when Jesus cleansed the Temple and predicted His resurrection power.

As you think about these three passages and the incredible display of power, what areas of your life need God's resurrection power? How do you respond to God's power?

2. Jesus had a zeal for worship to be pure, not tainted by selfish motives. This theme was also discussed in 1 Corinthians, since our motives will be laid bare at the Bema Seat of Christ. What do you want God to change in your life to purify your worship and your motives, so that you will not be ashamed at the Bema Seat of Christ? Talk to Him about this area that you would like Him to purify and cleanse—and ask Him what your role is in making life-giving changes.