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

Mass Study Notes for Sunday 5-31-2015



Welcome back to the Sunday Mass notes for **5-31-2015**. Our first reading is from one of the first five books of Bible, often referred to as the Books of the Law. The second reading is from the letter of St. Paul to the church in Rome, which explains the basic elements of the gospel. Finally, the reading from St. Matthew includes the final instructions of Jesus to his disciples.

The name Deuteronomy means "second law." In reading Deuteronomy it's helpful to remember that God is not only reminding Israel the law but also of her special place in his love; they are his chosen people. Furthermore, in this repeating of the law given to Moses, God is reminding the nation of their responsibility to live within the sphere of that love. Special privilege (as God's chosen people) always means increased spiritual responsibility.

In this particular passage, God reminds his people of his miraculous care for them up to this point as they journey on to the Promised Land. He has provided for them as for no other people. He delivered them miraculously from slavery in Egypt, and He was delivering them from nations much larger and more powerful than they. He has spoken to them through Moses, and He had disciplined them for their failures, but always to restore them.

God promises his people that if they keep his commandments and obey Him fully, it will go well with them and their children; they will live long in their own land, which He has promised to them "for all time." As you read the passage, reflect on God's special love for those who follow Him.

First Reading

Deuteronomy 4:32-40 NAS95 32 "Indeed, ask now concerning the former days which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and inquire from one end of the heavens to the other. Has anything been done like this great thing, or has anything been heard like it? 33 Has any people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard it, and survived? 34 Or has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within another nation by trials, by signs and wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm and by great terrors, as the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? 35 To you it was shown that you might know that the LORD, He is God; there is no other besides Him. 36 Out of the heavens He let you hear His voice to discipline you; and on earth He let you see His great fire, and you heard His words from the midst of the fire. 37 Because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them. And He personally brought you from Egypt by His great power, 38 driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in and to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is today. 39 Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the LORD, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other. 40 So you shall keep His statutes and His commandments which I am giving you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may live long on the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time."

As you read the verses from Romans, note the relationship of the Christian to God. It's not an association of fear, as one who is under the bond of slavery. Rather, the person who is "led by the Spirit of God" is considered an adopted son and can rightfully speak of God as his father. What's more, as an adopted son, he is also an heir; he has an unspeakable inheritance (which Paul writes about in his letter to the Ephesians). In fact, the Christian is a co-heir with Christ. All that God has planned for Jesus, who obeyed the Father even to His death and resurrection, will be shared with his adopted brothers.

There is a word of caution, however. Paul writes that the Christina may suffer with Christ and later be glorified with Him. If our faith in Jesus is genuine, we will be willing to suffer for Him, not to earn salvation in any way, because He has paid the full price for that, but to demonstrate our love, obedience, and loyalty to Him.

Second Reading

Romans 8:14-17 NAS95 14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

The question of obedience is also mentioned in the Gospel reading. In these few verses, we hear Jesus making His final appeal to his disciples, giving them instructions, clearly stating what his

purpose is for them—and, by extension—for his people today, too.

To settle the doubts of some, Jesus makes it abundantly clear that He has all necessary authority to commission them, and, what's more, He assures them of his presence with them throughout the future. He had promised (especially in John's Gospel) that He would send his Holy Spirit to lead, teach, and counsel them in his absence. Sandwiched between the statement of his authority and the promise of his presence is the distinct purpose which He has for his followers on earth.

We are to make disciples, that is, we are to take the gospel message to the world and encourage them to put their faith in the Son of God who sacrificed his life to pay the penalty for mankind's sin. The evidence of that believing faith is baptism into the name of the triune God. But there's something beyond faith and baptism. We are to teach new disciples "to observe (or obey) all" of Christ's commands. That's a lot to think about isn't it? Note the Gospel reading carefully.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 28:16-20 NAS95 16 But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. 17 When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful. 18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Bottom Line: Questions for Reflection

1. The Law of God is very far reaching. How do I stack up when I compare my life with the 10 Commandments?

2. Do I have fear about my spiritual condition or do I have confidence that I am an adopted son of God? List two ways in which I am being led by God's Holy Spirit?

3. Am I a true disciple of Jesus? List at least one way in which I am seeking to make other disciples, and teaching them to obey Jesus in all things?

Readings for the Week

Note: For a listing of readings for the Roman Catholic Mass visit this web site:

http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/053115.cfm

First Reading DT 4:32-34, 39-40

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Second Reading ROM 8:14-17

Gospel Reading MT 28:16-20

Source(s):

Online Scripture verses for most Bible versions can be found at: http://www.biblegateway.com/

Scripture quotations taken from the NASB