

Bible Study #8

11/1/21

Catholic Bible Study Criteria

- **How, as Catholics, is the Sacred Scripture to be read?**
 - Inspired and infallible
 - Containing three criteria for its interpretation
 - Content and unity of whole Scripture
 - Living tradition of the whole Church as interpreted by the *Magesterium*
 - Analogy of Faith
 - Possessing **four senses of Scripture**
 - **Literal** – who, what, when, where, how
 - **Allegorical** – as related to Jesus
 - **Moral** – a related to our moral lives
 - **Anagogical** – as related to leading us to heaven
 - Christocentric

John 3

John 3

- In this chapter, John presents the visit of *Nicodemus the Pharisee* to Jesus at night (**John 3:1-21**)
- This proves that not all *Pharisees* opposed Jesus
- *Nicodemus* asked Jesus how one entered into the kingdom
- Jesus responded that it was by *water and the spirit*, and by *being born a second time*
- *Nicodemus* asked how this was possible
- Jesus responded that it was a birth “from above”

John 3 (Cont)

- Father reminded us that we had discussed in the *prologue* how we can become “children of God,” not by flesh and blood, not being born a second time from your mother’s womb, but from the Spirit of God
- We saw the answer in **John 1**, where we learned that the Spirit descended on Jesus, the Son of God at His baptism
- But further, it was also by the water and the spirit
- So, Jesus told *Nicodemus* that he could get into the kingdom of God by water and the spirit

John 3 (Cont)

- We first saw this in the creation story in **Genesis 1:2** where we hear about the spirit hovering over the water, and making it the source of a new creation
- Thus, everything (all of creation) came out of this water
- We will now move to **John 4**

John 4

John 4

- **John 4:1-24** *“Now when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John... God is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth”*
 - In this section John presents the story of Jesus and His disciples going through *Samaria*, where He met the *Samaritan* woman at the well
 - On the way from *Jerusalem*, (to *Galilee*) Jesus stopped at a well in *Samaria*, sent his disciples into a town for provisions, and gave advice and encouragement to a *Samaritan* woman
 - When the disciples returned, they found Jesus speaking to her, and they were appalled

The Story of the Samaritans

The Woman At The Well

Jn 4:4-5

- Jn 4:5 “So he came to a city of Samaria, called Sychar”
 - A hot and thirsty Jesus, a Jew, stops at high noon by Jacob’s well in Samaria where a Samaritan woman shows up
 - What is the story of the Samaritans?
 - This is critical for understanding the NT
 - Contrast the “birthright” and the “blessing”

The Story of Ephraim

- Joseph, the dreamer, & favorite son of Jacob (Israel):
 - Was sold into Egypt by his brothers
 - Became the *El Bieath* of Egypt
 - Married the daughter of an Egyptian priest
 - Had two sons named Manasseh and Ephraim
 - Caused all of his clan to move to Egypt (Gn 37-50)
- Jacob (Israel)
 - Makes Joseph's son Ephraim equal to his son Judah
 - Blesses Ephraim, the youngest, over his older brother Manasseh
 - Promised that the tribe of Judah would rule until the arrival of a great and final ruler

The Story of Ephraim (Cont)

- Blesses his fourth born son Judah because:
 - Reuben (1st born) slept with his father's concubine
 - Simeon (2nd born) and Levi (3rd born) killed the man who violated their sister
- Gives the first born blessing to Ephraim (2nd born of Joseph) and Judah (4th born of Leah)
- Promised that the scepter shall not depart from the family of David

The Story of The Samaritans

- King Solomon turned his heart from God and worshiped other gods (1K11:9-43)
 - God responded by raising up **Jeroboam** (an **Ephraimite**) as an adversary (*satanine*)
 - Solomon, as king, favored the tribes of Judah & Benjamin over the other 10 tribes
 - After a conflict with Solomon, **Jeroboam** fled to his ancestral homeland - Egypt

The Story of The Samaritans (Cont)

- Upon his death, Solomon is succeeded by his son ***Rehoboam*** in the line of **Judah** who (1K 12:1f)
 - Favored harsher treatment for the 10 tribes of the North than his father had administered
- ***Jeroboam***
 - Rebelled against the king of Judah and thus against the future “Christ,” who will be from the tribe of Judah
 - Instituted a civil war dividing God’s chosen people into the 10 tribes in the North (Israel) against the 2 tribes in the South (Judah)

The Story of The Samaritans (Cont)

- Built and made *Shechem* (Sychar) his capital (1K12:25)
- Set up an alternate religion with temples to the Golden Calf (Egyptian God *Apis*) at *Bethel* and *Dan* to avoid complying with Ex 23, which required all worship to be in Jerusalem

The Story of The Samaritans (Cont)

- Jeroboam dies and division breaks out among his successors:
 - Nadab (909-908 B.C.) son of Jeroboam
 - Baasha (909-886 B.C.) overthrows Nadab
 - Elah (886-885 B.C.) son of Baasha
 - Zimri (885 B.C.) overthrows Elah
 - Omri (885-874 B.C.) overthrows Zimri
 - Ahab (874-853 B.C.) son of Omri; husband of Jezebel

The Story of The Samaritans (Cont)

- *King Omri* (885-874 B.C.) eventually consolidated the North where:
 - He bought the hill called *Samaria* from *Shemer* for two talents of silver
 - He built a fortified city called *Samaria*
- After this, the northern territories were called either *Samaria* or Israel
- The north, after the evil rule of 12 additional kings and ignoring the call of four prophets, was overrun and assimilated by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.

The Story of The Samaritans (Cont)

- The Assyrians brought representatives from five other nations into Samaria along with their gods
- The people of Samaria remained a syncretism religious group, while Israel was enduring the Babylonian captivity
- Israel refused to allow the Samaritans to assist in the reconstruction of Jerusalem and the Temple
- The hated division of the two peoples remained active at the time of Christ
 - A good Israelite would not even walk through the land of Samaria or have anything to do with a Samaritan

John 4 (Cont)

- Father pointed out how John was demonstrating to the Dualist, the humanness of Jesus who was both tired and thirsty
- To properly understand this setting, we must be aware of the relationship between the Jews and the Samaritans, and how the Jews considered all Samaritans as being “unclean”
- We need to remember from the Prologue that the “word” was a gift from God, but the true gift from God was Jesus
- Jesus told the woman at the well that if she understood the gift of God she would be asking Him for a drink of the water of eternal life

John 4 (Cont)

- In the **Exodus** story, we see God attracting the Hebrew people to Mt Sinai by creating a river of flowing water from the rock of Sinai
- Living water was flowing water
- Thus, the Law of God (the Word of God) was seen as the source of the living water, the source of the spirit
- In the New Testament, we see Jesus as the anointed Messiah in the spirit (more on this in **John 7**)
- At this point, the woman believed that Jesus must be a prophet because He knew her life's story (including the fact that she had had five husbands)

John 4 (Cont)

- Jesus revealed that He was more than a prophet, and that salvation was not from the Samaritans, but from the Jews (review this history between the Jews and Samaritans)
- Father pointed out that this was the reason we spent so much time studying this history of these two groups of people
- Salvation was from the Jews because the Messiah was to come from the line of David

John 4 (Cont)

- **John 4:25-40** *“The woman said to him, ‘I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when he comes, he will show us all things...and he stayed there two days”*
 - Father pointed out that the Samaritans only believed in the five books of Moses
 - But, they had been around the Jews long enough to know that they believed in the coming Messiah, and that he was the anointed king who was going to return
 - John related this because this is all about the fact that salvation was to be from the Jews
 - In speaking to the woman Jesus said: *“I who speak to you am he”*
 - He was telling her that He was in fact the Messiah (but, something more is contained in this passage)

John 4 (Cont)

- Here, Jesus said in the Greek “*Ego eimi*,” “I AM
- In a normal Greek phrase, this simply means I am, but in Jewish literature it means something much greater
- When we look at the Septuagint (Jewish scripture in Greek) **Exodus 3:14**, we find the revelation of the Divine name as “*ego eimi ho on*” (I am the one who is)
- Thus, throughout the Gospel of John, we hear over and over the phrase *ego eimi*
- The Jews would have totally understood what John was saying
- In fact, the Jews wanted to kill Jesus because he was identifying himself as God

John 4 (Cont)

- He was not only the human king (Messiah), but also the divine king from all eternity
- The disciples were appalled when they returned from the village and witnessed Jesus talking to the Samaritan woman in public
- They then informed Jesus that they had some food for Him from the village
- He replied that He was not hungry
- They believed that He might have eaten some unclean food from this unclean woman
- Jesus told them that His food was to do the will of the one who sent him (His father)
- Suddenly, the entire village came to see Him based on the testimony of the woman

John 4 (Cont)

- Father said that these professional evangelists went into a village and only brought back something to eat, while this unclean pagan woman invited the entire village to come and meet Jesus

John 4 (Cont)

- **John 4: 41-42** *“And many more believed because of his word...Savior of the world”*
 - Many believed because of the word and not because of signs
 - This means that the Samaritans had perfect belief
 - They said that they knew that He was the savior of the world (Messiah)
 - Father said he wished that we had time to read the entire passage, but we should take away this idea of belief from the word rather than from signs
 - The Samaritans believed the word, while the Jews needed signs (**John 4:48**)
 - Next, we will look at in John 5