

## 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time – C

Note: Where a Scripture text is underlined in the body of this discussion, it is recommended that the reader look up and read that passage.

### 1st Reading - Zechariah 12:10-11

The Book of Zechariah (Zechariah means “Yahweh Remembers”) comes chronologically after that of Haggai. The prophet Zechariah belonged to a priestly family which had returned from the Babylonian exile. Like Haggai, he was called by God in 520 B.C. He probably lived until very near the time the new Temple was finished.

When the Jews returned to Jerusalem after being released by Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, an altar was immediately erected on the ruins of the Temple of Solomon and sacrifices were offered to Yahweh. Then the building of a new Temple was begun. But after the foundations had been laid, the work was interrupted and finally stopped by the interference of the Samaritans. Haggai had given the first impulse to the building of the temple, Zechariah saw to it that the people and their leaders did not lose courage as the work slowly progressed and the opposition of the Samaritans increased. Like Haggai, Zechariah saw in the completion of the Temple the prelude to the new and glorious age of the Messiah.

Again and again in the course of his prophecy Zechariah seeks to revive the chosen people’s faith in their glorious destiny by picturing the doom of their oppressions and the great peace of the Messianic Kingdom.

#### **<sup>10</sup> I will pour out**

A phrase found frequently in eschatological passages. It helps to maintain the setting of the last days of the Lord.

#### **on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and petition;**

That God will pour a spirit into people means that He will take the initiative in bringing about in them a new interior attitude. The tenor of this section indicates that the new attitude must be one flowing from repentance for some wrongdoing which sprang from an evil attitude.

#### **and they shall look on him**

All the ancient versions have “to me” which expresses the basic turning or converting toward God. Removing “to me” and placing “on him” in its place gives the sense of the quotation of this in John 19:37. A translation with “to me” would read “*and they shall look to me, and they shall mourn for him whom they have thrust through as one mourns for an only son.*” Either translation may be correct.

**whom they have thrust through, and they shall mourn for him as one mourns for an only son, and they shall grieve over him as one grieves over a first-born.<sup>11</sup> On that day the mourning in Jerusalem shall be as great as the mourning of Hadadrimmon**

Can be either the storm-god Hadad or the chief deity of Damascus, Rimmon (2 Kings 5:18), whose death was mourned each year at the return of the dry season. Jerome identified the term as a city very near Megiddo, later called Maximianopolis, and today Tel Mutesellim. Because it controlled the trade routes between the countries north and south of Palestine, Megiddo has been the site of great battles throughout sacred and profane history.

**in the plain of Megiddo.**

### **Gospel - Luke 9:18-24**

Luke uses Chapter nine of his gospel to segue (transition) from Jesus' Galilean ministry to His journey to Jerusalem. The themes of Jesus' Galilean ministry where He preached about the fulfillment of God's promise, restored men and women to health, and cast out demons, are now focused through the cross.

**<sup>18</sup> Once when Jesus was praying in solitude,**

In Lucan imagery, when Jesus prays, something very important theologically is about to occur.

**and the disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"<sup>19</sup> They said in reply, "John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others, 'One of the ancient prophets has arisen.'"**

These answers concur with those given to Herod in Luke 9:7-8.

**<sup>20</sup> Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter said in reply, "The Messiah of God."**

Peter is the spokesperson for the disciples. In the Lucan story line, Peter's answer is dependent on what he has seen Jesus do and what he himself has done in Jesus' name. Thus, Peter's answer focuses on Jesus' power to save needy people from the forces of evil.

**<sup>21</sup> He rebuked them and directed them not to tell this to anyone.**

Jesus at once demands silence, lest the crowds acclaim Him according to their false political or national ideas. His kingdom is not of this earth. The "Messianic Secret" of Mark thus becomes in Luke the mystery of the suffering Messiah.

**<sup>22</sup> He said, "The Son of Man must**

All three synoptic gospels use the word "must" here, emphasizing the necessity of Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf.

**suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised.”**

See Psalm 118:22. Luke omits Peter’s blustering remonstrance and Jesus’ stern reply (Matthew 16:22f; Mark 8:32f).

**<sup>23</sup> Then he said to all,**

In Luke’s gospel, the reference to “all” would be to those who were fed at the multiplication of loaves, thereby linking the sacrifice of the cross with the Eucharistic symbolism of the miraculous feeding.

**“If anyone wishes to come after me,**

Luke has not only left out Peter’s contradiction, he now proceeds to apply the message of the cross to all Christians.

**he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.**

To be a follower requires that we walk in His footsteps and suffer the same indignities for truth – even to death.

**<sup>24</sup> For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.**

Few sayings of Jesus are so well attested as this. It occurs in Matthew 10:39 and 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24 (here) and 17:33. Luke omits “and for the gospel” which occurs after “for my sake” in Mark 8:35 thus Luke concentrates attention much more personally upon Jesus. The remainder of this teaching is contained in verses 25-27:

**<sup>25</sup> What profit is there for one to gain the whole world yet lose or forfeit himself? <sup>26</sup> Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. <sup>27</sup> Truly I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.”**

**Praying with Scripture**Modified *Lectio Divina* (Divine Reading)*Read*

**1. Read the passage out loud (if possible), slowly, simply to become familiar with it.**

*Reflect*

**2. Read the passage again, silently.**

**Ask the Lord to let you read and “hear” it as if this was the first time; what does it mean? How would you tell/explain this story in your own words?**

(Not more than 5 or 6 sentences.)

*Spontaneous* **3. Pick one person from the passage: \_\_\_\_\_.**

*Prayer*

**Imagine that you are in this person’s “shoes.”**

(Note: If the passage does not specifically name persons in its text, simply see if the words themselves evoke any particular feeling. Does it call to mind a previous, or presently occurring, incident or relationship in your life?)

**A. How does it feel to be in this situation?**

**B. Does it remind you of something or someone in your life?**

**C. Is there anything you would say or do differently?**

**D. Have a “heart to Heart” talk with Jesus** sharing your honest feelings about anything that has come to mind in reference to your reflecting on this passage. It might be something that is weighing heavily on your heart, or something that moves you to a deep sense of gratitude and joyful praise.

**Choose one word or phrase from this passage that has a special meaning for you \_\_\_\_\_.**

*Resting in God* **4. Read the passage again. Close your eyes. Think of your favorite picture of Jesus and LISTEN to HIM.**

(Spend this time in simple silence, waiting and quietly listening for whatever the Lord might “whisper” in your heart.)

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