

Notes for Next Sunday

Seventh Sunday of Easter

The Point of this Week's Readings

First Reading (Acts 1:12-12-26). Jesus had told the apostles to wait until He would send the Holy Spirit. They were doing just that. Our text tells us that they were in constant prayer. They were joined by other disciples and Jesus' earthly family including His mother Mary as well his brothers who by now had come to faith. As they are in this upper room Peter steps forward and addresses the failure of Judas and the need to fill his place to once more to fulfill what had been said in Psalms 69:25 and Psalm 109:8. To "take place in leadership" connects with fact that the number of apostles must be twelve according to the original choosing of Jesus appears to have been taken for granted. That this was necessary in order to match the 12 patriarchs, the 12 tribes of Israel, and the 12 thrones awaiting them to judge these 12 tribes was undoubtedly also the basis for this decision. The "filling" process has the important elements of apostolic standards and prayer. This placed the whole decision procedure into the hands of God.

Epistle (1 Peter 4:12-19; 5:6-11). In the first section of this reading Peter tells them they should not be surprised about the persecutions. Then he makes an improbable suggestion by saying they should rejoice in their suffering because they will one day bask in the glory of eternal life. In the second portion of this text Peter gives them many directions that are meant to keep them from being devoured by the devil's temptations. The primary method is to stay in close touch with the Lord by focusing on God's grace found in the Word.

Gospel (John 17:1-11). This reading has Jesus praying to the Father first in behalf of Himself and secondly for His disciples. Jesus begins by praying for Himself and the mission set before Him. He acknowledged that the time had come for the culmination of His ministry and the fulfillment of His purpose. When Jesus asks the Father to "glorify" Him Jesus is speaking of His eminent death not glory as the world would think. In verses 6-11 Jesus prays for His disciples. First Jesus thanks the Father for giving them to Him. He has given them the truths that the Father had given Him. Jesus asks that the Father to protect them that while He would ascend back into heaven they would left in the hostile world.

For more in-depth commentary on each reading, read the notes found after each text below.

FIRST READING – Acts 1:12-26

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk ^a from the city. ¹³ When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴ They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. ¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) ¹⁶ and said, "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus—¹⁷ he was one of our number and shared in this ministry." ¹⁸ (With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. ¹⁹ Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) ²⁰ "For," said Peter, "it is written in the book of Psalms, "May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it," and, "May another take his place of leadership." ^d ²¹ Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his

resurrection.”²³ **So they proposed two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias.**²⁴ **Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen**²⁵ **to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.”**²⁶ **Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.**

1:12 Sabbath day’s walk. Pious Jews were expected to stay within the permitted distance of 2,000 cubits (just over ½ mi) from home on the holy day. (TLSB)

1:13 room. Possibly the site of the Last Supper, though Luke uses a different word here than in his Gospel. (TLSB)

1:13 Zealot. “the Zealot” is to say that he belonged to a sort of “freedom party” of political activists, people who were not only zealous in the Jewish religion but who also sought freedom from Roman rule. It is a mixed group of ordinary men with ordinary names. The Lord would accomplish extraordinary things through them. (PBC)

1:14 brothers. These brothers would include James, who later became important in the church (12:17; 15:13; Gal 2:9). (CSB)

1:18-19 Luke digresses from Peter’s speech to give an account of Judas’s fate. (TLSB)

1:18 Judas bought a field. Judas bought the field indirectly: The money he returned to the priests (Mt 27:3) was used to purchase the potter’s field (Mt 27:7). (CSB)

1:21 went in and out among us. He was a witness to the whole public activity of Christ, up to the resurrection. “in and out” is a Hebrew idiom encompassing everything Jesus did (cf. Dt. 28:6). (TLSB)

1:22 a witness with us of his resurrection. Apparently several met this requirement. On this occasion, however, the believers were selecting someone to become an official witness to the resurrection—thus, a 12th apostle (v. 25). (CSB)

1:26 cast lots. By casting lots they were able to allow God the right of choice. The use of rocks or sticks to designate the choice was common. This is the Bible’s last mention of casting lots. (CSB)

EPISTLE – 1 Peter 4:12-19; 5:6-11

¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. ¹⁶ However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. ¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And, “If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”¹⁹ So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

4:13 rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ. Suffering for the sake of the Gospel, while unpleasant, is an honor for Christians, who know that their Savior suffered to save them. (TLSB)

4:17 judgment to begin with the family of God. Some will see the effects of their own sin (v 15). God allows us to face such consequences that we might repent. (TLSB)

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. ⁸ Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. ¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹ To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

5:6 lift you up in due time. When it fits God’s purpose and benefits others or ourselves. (TLSB)

5:8 Be self-controlled. See 1Th 5:6, 8. – To be free of cares should not make a Christian complacent or careless. Peter, himself, had a lot of trouble with this. (CSB)

5:8 like a roaring lion. Satan seeks to harm Christians in any way possible. Under Nero, some Christians literally faced death by lions in the Roman arena. The devil “tries every trick and does not stop until he finally wears us out, so that we either renounce our faith or throw up our hands and put up our feet, becoming indifferent or impatient.” (TLSB)

GOSPEL – JOHN 17:1-11

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. ² For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. ³ Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ⁴ I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

17:2 those you have given him. † Again God’s gift of salvation is stressed. (CSB)

17:3 False teachers have abused this passage, using it to question whether Jesus was true God. (TLSB)

⁶ “I have revealed you ^a to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. ⁸ For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. ⁹ I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. ¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one.

17:9 not ... for the world. Jesus did not pray for the world in its opposition to God, though He loves the world (3:16) and prayed it would be saved through the Word that His witnesses share (vv 20–23). (TLSB)

17:11 protect them by the power of your name. His name is his revelation, his Word.