

March 11-17 2019

Matthew 10—12; Mark 2; Luke 7; 11

“These Twelve Jesus Sent Forth”

Summary: *Jesus instructs and empowers the Twelve Apostles and sends them forth to preach, minister, and heal the sick—Those who receive the Twelve receive the Lord.*

Jesus acclaims John as more than a prophet—The cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum are rebuked for unbelief—The Son reveals the Father—The yoke of Christ is easy, and His burden is light.

Jesus proclaims Himself Lord of the Sabbath and heals on the Sabbath day—He is accused of casting out devils through the power of Beelzebub—He speaks of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost and says that an evil and adulterous generation seeks signs.

Jesus forgives sins, heals a paralytic, eats with tax gatherers and sinners, and announces that He is Lord of the Sabbath.

Jesus heals the centurion's servant—Jesus raises from death the son of the widow of Nain—He praises John the Baptist as more than a prophet—A woman anoints Jesus' feet, and He forgives her sins.

Jesus gives the Lord's Prayer—He discusses the casting out of devils—He acclaims Himself as greater than Jonah and Solomon—He rebukes the Pharisees and says that the blood of all the prophets may be required of their generation.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

How is leading the sheep done in Israel today?

All over Israel, as well as on the hills of Bethlehem, near Jerusalem is an Arab house with more than a hundred sheep. A boy shepherd leads them out every morning and returns in the late afternoon. Leading sheep is typical in this country. Usually there are about a dozen lead sheep, older ones from last year's flock. The shepherd often has them marked with bells around their necks. It is common to hear the boy talk to his sheep. He calls them when it's time to move on, and that's when the lead sheep immediately respond, ringing their bells as they run toward their shepherd. The ringing alerts the other sheep, and, like a wave, they follow the others.

How is ancient temple practice described?

The shepherd's model is like an ancient biblical temple practice. For example, in the inner courtyard of the temple, the chief priest would light a fire and burn incense to signal his readiness for a sacrifice. That would alert the twelve priests in the next courtyard to wash and ready themselves. Their signal to the congregation was the ringing of bells. The multitudes would then follow the priests to participate in the ritual. **(Alfred Edersheim *The Temple—Its Ministry and Services, The Second Lot*)**

What are the consistent parallel organization in Old and New Testament and today?

The organization and growth of the Church in the Meridian of Times parallels the organization of the Church in ancient and modern times. These were and are men, in their respective times, who had authority from God to bring light and truth to the people. Anciently, Moses had a “First Presidency:” two assistants, Aaron and Hur. Additionally, he had an organization of Twelve and

Seventy. "And he said unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you: and, behold, Aaron and Hur are with you: if any man have matters to do, let him come unto them." **(Exodus 24:14)** "These are those that were numbered . . . and the princes of Israel, being twelve men: each one was for the house of his fathers." **(Numbers 1:44)** "And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off." **(Exodus 24:1)** The parallel organization is seen in the primitive Church with Peter, James and John appearing as a "First Presidency" within the original Twelve. "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come." **(Luke 10:1)**

What are the offices restored in Jesus' time as well as today?

And, of course, we see a similar structure today in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. "Of the Melchizedek Priesthood, three Presiding High Priests, chosen by the body, appointed and ordained to that office, and upheld by the confidence, faith, and prayer of the church, form a quorum of the Presidency of the Church. -- The twelve traveling councilors are called to be the Twelve Apostles, or special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world--thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling. -- And they form a quorum, equal in authority and power to the three presidents previously mentioned. -- The Seventy are also called to preach the gospel, and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles and in all the world--thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling." **(Doctrine & Covenants 107:22-25)** In that sense, the organization today gives us insight to what was happening in former days.

How is the Centurion's Servant story explained?

To sense the personal gracious nature of Jesus' relationships, let's consider the account of a Roman centurion whose servant was gravely ill. **(Luke 7:1-10)** According to Jewish practices in those days, it was not proper for a Jew to come into the house of a foreigner. (Peter reiterated that custom when he spoke to another centurion in Caesarea.) "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation." **(Acts 10:28)** However, Jesus graciously acquiesced to come to the centurion's house. The Roman graciously constrained Jesus from compromising Jewish custom by asking Him to bless his servant from a distance. His belief was so strong that he trusted the Savior's power. His love for the Jews was so strong that he built their meeting house. Even today the remains of the synagogue at Capernaum reveal the Roman construction and style. Archaeology confirms the written scriptural account.

How can a yoke be a positive metaphor?

There is a Mosaic law that relates to a yoke of unlike animals. The unfairness of plowing with a donkey and an ox is clearly visible when looking at the lesser creature. "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together." **(Deuteronomy 22:10)** Consider that the Lord wants to relieve us of the unfairness in life. He is saying, in effect, "I am carrying the burden; take advantage of it." In learning this principle, following Him and giving our burdens to Him (after all, He has paid for them already), we cleanse our inner selves and are able to better serve Him. "Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." **(Psalms 55:22)** The prophet Isaiah taught us that the Lord would relieve us from the yoke of our burdens. "For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden . . ." **(Isaiah 9:4)**

What is included as a capital offense?

Stoning is a capital punishment indicated in the Mosaic Law. Biblical punishments were based on the crime, unlike today's punishments, which are based on the person or the circumstances. Stoning was the punishment for a number of capital sins including murder (**Numbers 35:30**), adultery (**Deuteronomy 22:22-24**), blasphemy (**Leviticus 24:16**), breaking the Sabbath (**Numbers 15:32-35**), apostasy (**Deuteronomy 13:6-10**), and rebellion against parents (**Deuteronomy 21:18-21**).

A better insight to capital punishment can be seen in the Talmud. Rabbinic interpretations of the ancient Jewish law of stoning indicate that it was required that the convicted person be thrown over a cliff. One of at least two witnesses (and thereby accusers) was responsible to make sure the criminal was dead. The aversion to directly taking another's life would motivate having the fall cause the death of the accused. A witness/accuser always had to cast the first stone and then all others threw stones to cover the body (the burial). Abandoned quarries (where the "stone was rejected") would be likely locations for such rare executions.

Who was the Sabbath made for, God or man?

There is a village called Turan, close to Nazareth and Cana in Galilee, that is the traditional spot where Jesus was accused of not preventing His disciples from harvesting, threshing, and winnowing grain on the Sabbath day. They were doing this for their own refreshment, needing to eat. There is still a huge stone quarry at Turan which provides a visual connection to the Pharisees and their "death accusation." "And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." (**Mark 2:27-28**) Several times in the New Testament, Jesus is identified as the Lord of the Sabbath. "For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." (**Matthew 12:8**) "And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." (**Luke 6:5**)

What ordinance makes the Sabbath an eternal covenant?

"Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually . . . by an everlasting covenant." (**Leviticus 24:8**) An integral part of ancient Sabbath observance has been the pouring and blessing of wine followed by the breaking and blessing of bread. There is a specific order to dignify the Sabbath and remind us to make it holy. "The table is set for the festive meal, with the Sabbath candles glowing in polished holders. The family stands and the father raises the brimming silver cup to say *Kiddush*, the blessing and sanctification over wine. This age-old ceremony is in fulfillment of the biblical command, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8). "Remember it," said the rabbi, "over wine," for wine is the symbol of joy." "Two loaves appear on the Sabbath table. They recall the double portion of manna which the Israelites in the desert gathered on the eve of the Sabbath for the next day." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

What are the symbolic meanings for the Sabbath?

The Sabbath is to be kept in remembrance of the creation. "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep

the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed. **(Exodus 31:13-17)**

The Sabbath is to be kept in remembrance of being delivered from bondage in Egypt. “But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.” **(Deuteronomy 5:14-15)**

The Sabbath is to be kept in anticipation (before the Messiah) and in remembrance of the atonement (after the mortal Messiah). “So important is Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) that it is the only fast day which may be observed on the Sabbath and is never postponed until the next day. Moreover, the Torah describes the holiness of Yom Kippur by calling it the “Sabbath of Sabbaths.” **(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)** “The Sabbath bears record of Christ: from Adam to Moses it was the 7th day to signify that our Lord rested on that day from his creative labors (Ex. 20:8-11); from Moses to Christ, the Sabbath day was a different day each year to commemorate our Lord's leading of the children of Israel out of bondage (Deut. 5:12-15); and from the apostolic day until now, the Sabbath has been the first day of the week to point attention to our Lord's resurrection on his holy day.” **(Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Pg.452)**

What ordinance is also kept on the Sabbath?

To the Jews who commemorate the first two reasons for the Sabbath, a sip of wine is partaken, followed by bread. The prayers recited include a recollection of the past, with an eye to the future where an even greater deliverance is anticipated. In this sense, it is a chiasm that focuses on the atonement in the center. The Savior's atonement began with suffering and bleeding from every pore, (symbolized by wine) and then followed by giving his body, (symbolized by broken bread). To those who truly believe in the Messiah, the Sabbath day is commemorated by partaking of a morsel of bread followed by a sip of wine. The prayers are in remembrance of the greatest deliverance eternity will ever know. Before the Saviors' atonement, wine and bread (anticipation) then, after the atonement, bread and wine (remembrance); these are the symbols of the Sabbath, a joyful thought of redemption! “The Sabbath and the festivals are particularly times of joy, and indeed it is a positive commandment, often difficult to observe, to be happy on them. The joy required is not frivolity but, contradictory though it may sound, a serious happiness.” **(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)**

What is the Sabbath of Sabbaths?

One of the most important holidays in Judaism is Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement. Fasting, special prayers, and the reading of the Book of Jonah establish a symbol that will eventually be used to recognize the Atoner. The sign of the prophet Jonah was not and is still not recognized by many, neither were nor are the connections between the way temple sacrifices were carried out and the ultimate sacrifice made on Mount Moriah and the Mount of Olives.

What was the only sign given to the Pharisees?

It is scripturally noted that there were two Sabbaths in a row that year (the Passover Sabbath, called the High Day, and the regular seventh-day-of-the-week Sabbath). In that sense, Jesus was crucified on what we call a Thursday. (This fits in the time reckoning of Palm Sunday being five days before the Passover). Then in fulfillment of prophecy, He really was in the tomb three nights; and on the third day He arose. **(Matthew 16:21; 17:23, Mark 9:31)** This is also the only "sign" Jesus gave the Pharisees. **(Matthew 12:38-40)** In speaking to the Pharisees, He specifically connected himself with Jonah, who was in a great fish . . . " . . . three days and three nights." **(Jonah 1:17)**

How is Jewish tradition preparing a part of the House of Israel to recognize the atonement?

The atonement has been the central issue of true religion from the beginning of man's mortal sojourn through eternity. In Judaism, a special day was established as a Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. "The tenth of the Hebrew month of Tishrei is Yom Kippur, a day of fasting and prayer for all Israel, a day which has been significant to Jews throughout the ages. The Day of Atonement is the last of the Ten Days of Penitence which begin with Rosh Ha-Shanah, and is the climax of the repentance and soul-searching incumbent on every Jew during this period."

"The essence of the day and the reasons for its special prayers and ceremony are expressed in the Torah: "For on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins shall ye be clean before the Lord." "So important is Yom Kippur that it is the only fast day which may be observed on the Sabbath and is never postponed until the next day. Moreover, the Torah describes the holiness of Yom Kippur by calling it the "Sabbath of Sabbaths."

"In ancient literature there are several stories of people being rescued from inside fish (Heracles the Hesione, Perseus, and Andromeda); but only in that of Jonah was the rescue effected by prayer and not by force. The book is to be understood as a lesson in Divine forgiveness and mercy -- to Jonah as well as to the people of Nineveh -- and as a lesson in obedience to God's will. As a symbol of the effectiveness of repentance it is read as the *haftarah* at the afternoon service of the Day of Atonement."

"Jonah is known for the incident involving the whale, or large fish, but that episode is secondary to the lesson the Book comes to teach. Jonah learned through bitter experience that non-Jews are also God's creatures and one must not begrudge them God's love and forgiveness. Also to be learned is the fact that true repentance is accepted by God and earns His pardon for almost any sin. Because of its theme of sin, repentance, and forgiveness the Book of Jonah is read every Day of Atonement at the *Minhah* service." "Repentance consists of several stages -- firstly the sinner must reflect on his actions and realize that he has indeed done the wrong thing. He must then make up his mind never to do it again, and confess his sin. This confession is not made to any other human being but is made by the sinner directly to God. On this basis the two confessions *Ashamnu* and *Al-Het* were introduced into the prayers for the Day of Atonement which is a special occasion for repentance and forgiveness. However, even when a sinner has done all these things, his repentance is still not final until he has been exposed to the same temptation and withstood it. Of course, he should not deliberately put himself on that spot again." **(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)**