

J: Gen 16-18, Mat 20-21



Genesis 16

1. Polygamy is the result of possessing poor theology in relation to marriage – whose main purpose is close companionship (Gen 2:18, 21-24), not procreation (as was/is the focus of Abraham and Sarai as well as “homers” today, 1-3) or sexual experience (as was the focus of Solomon – 1Ki 11:1-3a).
2. Tension between people is often due to intimidation or envy (4-6; See Mat 27:18; Ecc 4:4).
3. Abusive masters/bosses/authorities are not an excuse to rebel or run away from our obligations to them (6-9; 1Pe 2:13-3:6).
4. We have “seen God” if He is answering our prayers (7-16; “Ishmael” = God hears/answers; “You are a God of seeing” = A God one can know exists, b/c He sees/hears/answers our prayers).

Genesis 17

1. God confirms His covenant w/Abraham by establishing his obligations (and re-iterating His promises) (1-8; see Gen 15:7-18 for covenant initiation).
2. Entering into (saving) covenant relationship w/God (before the New Covenant) required that males take the “sign of the covenant” – i.e. circumcision, whereas today it is the sign of baptism and applies to male and female (9-13; Lev 12:3; Col 2:11-12).
3. Taking God’s covenant signs matter to God so much that if we refuse, He refuses us (14; In this light think about the NC signs of baptism and the LT – Mar 16:16; Joh 13:8 w/Mat 26:20-21).
4. God’s promise to establish covenant w/Isaac thru Sarah, did not mean Ishmael was excluded from covenant or wouldn’t be blessed by God (see v20, 26). Rather it meant God’s specific promises to Abraham regarding the land of Canaan and its possession by his future descendants (as communicated in Gen 15:7-18 and repeated here in v8) would come thru Isaac (not Ishmael) (15-27).

Genesis 18

1. Abraham is only human being to have met the Trinity while living on this earth (1-8).
2. God knows when we don’t take His promises seriously (9-15).
3. A father’s discipleship and demonstration of “righteousness and justice” to his children and household is an important part of his covenant obligations and to realizing God’s blessings (19).
4. The reason some people are not realizing many blessings in this life is b/c they have failed/are failing in their discipleship and demonstration of righteousness and justice to their household and children (19).
5. For a city to experience God’s peace and protection (versus His curse and wrath) requires there be at least ten righteous people in covenant relationship w/Him (20-33; These verses were used by the Jews to determine whether or not God wanted to establish a covenant community – and His presence, in a given location).
6. Church-plants should not be attempted (nor exist) until there are 10 people able to be baptized (20-33).

Matthew 20

1. What we give up in this life is totally worth it based on what we get in the next life. Our ROI could be compared to a guy who only works one hour and yet gets paid a full day’s wage. IOW: there is no comparison between what we give up/lose in this life to follow Jesus and what we will gain in the next b/c of it. Though to the world we may look like we are “last” when it comes to blessings, we are the ones who will be “first” – i.e. the ones w/the most blessings in eternity (1-16; 2Co 4:17).
2. Think about it, Jesus already knew what heaven and the eternal state were like. His resolve therefore to stay the course leading to His tortured death proves that our reward in eternity is totally worth it (17-19).
3. Being the boss means: 1) enforcing God’s rules, not showing partiality or making up your own, 2) being the example of those rules to those you enforce them w/(20-28).
4. Getting Jesus’ help requires: 1) knowing Who He truly is (29-30), 2) letting nothing stop you/get in the way of you seeking Him w/your whole heart (31-32), 3) fully trusting Him (33-34).

Matthew 21

1. Jesus was meek w/those who treated Him like a King but mean to those who mistreated His House (1-13).
2. Those churches truly worshipping Jesus welcome His authority as King – even when that means shaking everything up (1-17, 23-27).
3. When God calls us to minister to Him/for His kingdom: 1) we must be fully trusting Him – otherwise we won’t be faithful or effective, 2) we dare not be unfaithful – otherwise we may never be given another opportunity (18-22).
4. Talk is cheap when it comes to doing God’s will (28-30).
5. The signs of a righteous ministry are: 1) sinners turning from their sins, 2) people embracing the way of righteousness and doing God’s will (31-32).
6. Jesus prophesied that the kingdom of God would be taken away from the Jews (the Old Covenant Community) due to their unfaithfulness to the gospel requirements (i.e. believe and obey Jesus) and given to the Church (the New Covenant Community) (33-46).