

The Twenty-First Sunday After Pentecost—October 25, 2020

First Lesson

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

Moses was not allowed to enter the promised land, but he was granted the right to see it from Mount Nebo before he died. The statement that no prophet has arisen in Israel like Moses (34:10) stands in tension with Deuteronomy 18:15 (God will “raise up for you a prophet like me”) and led to the expectation that another Moses would still come. In several New Testament passages Jesus is identified as that prophet.

¹Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho, and the LORD showed him the whole land: Gilead as far as Dan, ²all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, ³the Negeb, and the Plain—that is, the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees—as far as Zoar. ⁴The LORD said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants’; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there.” ⁵Then Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there in the land of Moab, at the LORD’s command. ⁶He was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor, but no one knows his burial place to this day. ⁷Moses was one hundred twenty years old when he died; his sight was unimpaired and his vigor had not abated. ⁸The Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the period of mourning for Moses was ended.

(Continued) 

⁹Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him; and the Israelites obeyed him, doing as the LORD had commanded Moses.

¹⁰Never since has there arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face. ¹¹He was unequaled for all the signs and wonders that the LORD sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants and his entire land, ¹²and for all the mighty deeds and all the terrifying displays of power that Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

The Word of the Lord.

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Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17

Read responsively

- A ¹Lord, you have been our refuge
from one generation to another.
- C ²Before the mountains were brought forth,
or the land and the earth were born,
from age to age you are God.
- A ³You turn us back to the dust and say,
“Turn back, O children of earth.”
- C ⁴For a thousand years in your sight
are like yesterday when it is past
and like a watch in the night;
- A ⁵you sweep them away like a dream,
they fade away suddenly like the grass:
- C ⁶in the morning it is green and flourishes;
in the evening it is dried up and withered.
- A ¹³Return, O LORD; how long will you tarry?
Be gracious to your servants.
- C ¹⁴Satisfy us by your steadfast love in the morning;
so shall we rejoice and be glad all our days.
- A ¹⁵Make us glad as many days as you afflicted us
and as many years as we suffered adversity.
- C ¹⁶Show your servants your works,
and your splendor to their children.
- A ¹⁷May the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us;
prosper the work of our hands; prosper our handiwork.

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Second Lesson

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Paul uses maternal imagery to depict the caring and nurturing relationship he shares with the Thessalonian Christians. When he first came to their city it was not to benefit himself but to share the gospel with them, which was his responsibility as an apostle of Christ.

¹You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, ²but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. ³For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, ⁴but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. ⁵As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; ⁶nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, ⁷though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. ⁸So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

The Word of the Lord.

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**Holy Gospel*

Matthew 22:34-46

Put on the spot by the Pharisees, Jesus displays wisdom by summarizing the law of God in just two commandments and by demonstrating the Messiah must be more than the son of David.

³⁴When the Pharisees heard that [Jesus] had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, ³⁵and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” ³⁷He said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ³⁸This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

⁴¹Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: ⁴²“What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” ⁴³He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying,

⁴⁴‘The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet”’?

⁴⁵If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?” ⁴⁶No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

The Gospel of the Lord.