

FEB 16

SIRACH 15:15-20 (see attachment: SIRACH for why it is an *Apocryphal Book*)

If you choose you can keep the commandments, **they will save you;**

if you trust in God, **you too shall live;**

he has set before you **fire and water**

to whichever you choose, stretch forth your hand. **Two clear choices!**

Before man are **life and death, good and evil,**

whichever he chooses shall be given him.

Immense is the **wisdom** of the Lord;

he is **mighty** in power, and **all-seeing**.

The **eyes** of God are on those who fear him;

he **understands** man's every deed.

No one does he command to **act unjustly,**

to none does he give license **to sin.**

Note the poetic

Parallelism

Which I show by colors.

This FREEDOM

is the **essence** of SS

PSALM 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34

R. (1b) **Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!**

Blessed are they whose way is blameless,

who walk in the law of the LORD.

Blessed are they who observe his decrees,

who seek him with all their heart. **Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord**

You have commanded that your precepts

be diligently kept.

Oh, that I might be firm in the ways

of keeping your statutes! **Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!**

Be good to your servant, that I may live

and keep your words.

Open my eyes, that I may consider

the wonders of your law. **Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!**

Instruct me, O LORD, in the way of your statutes,

that I may exactly observe them.

Give me discernment, that I may observe your law

and keep it with all my heart. **Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!**

From Paul's First Letter to the CORINTHIANS 2:6-10

Brothers and sisters:

We speak a wisdom to those who are mature,

not a wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away.

Rather, we speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden, which God predetermined before the ages for our glory, and which none of the rulers of this age knew;

for, if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But as it is written:

*What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard,
and what has not entered the human heart,
what God has prepared for those who love him,*

*{Here Paul quotes Isaiah:
Wait, and IF you LOVE God,
you will understand}*

This God has revealed to us through the Spirit.

For the Spirit ***scrutinizes** everything, even the depths of God.

{ ***scrutinizes** means *looks carefully*

and *examines everything*—helped by the *Spirit*.

The Greeks says; *pneuma/ πνεῦμα = breath, wind.*

The same *πνεῦμα* that “moved over the waters” in Genesis.}

Alleluia MT 11:25

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth;

you have revealed ***to little ones** the mysteries of the kingdom.

Alleluia, Alleluia.

*Who will come to understand?
Only the pure of heart, those who
approach God, simply!
Like ***a little child**, eager to learn!*

Gospel MT 5:17-37 OR 5:20-22A, 27-28, 33-34A, 37

***This** illuminates the MAIN points of MT.

{see my explanation of the history of the Gospel of Matthew}

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets.

I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.

Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away,

not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter

will pass from the law,

until all things have taken place.

Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments

and teaches others to do so

will be called least in the kingdom of heaven.

But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments

will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

***I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses**

that of the scribes and Pharisees,

you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

***“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors,**

You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.

But I say to you,

whoever is angry with his brother

will be liable to judgment;

and whoever says to his brother, **‘Raqa,’** “Idiot” or “nut case”

will be answerable to the **Sanhedrin**;

and whoever says, **‘You fool,’**

will be liable to fiery **Gehenna**.

Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar,

and there recall that your brother

has anything against you,

leave your gift there at the altar,

go first and be reconciled with your brother,

and then come and offer your gift.

*Why is this so bad?
Because it HURTS another.*

{note the parallelism between **Raqa** and **You Fool**
and **Sanhedrin** and **Gehenna**.

Gehenna was the garbage dump outside
Jerusalem. Rotting food produced methane
gas which burned and smelled at night.}

Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court.
Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge,
and the judge will hand you over to the guard,
and you will be thrown into prison.
Amen, I say to you,
you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.

*"You have heard that it was said,
You shall not commit adultery.
But I say to you,
everyone who looks at a woman with lust
has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
If your right eye causes you to sin,
tear it out and throw it away.
It is better for you to lose one of your members
than to have your whole body thrown into Gehenna.
And if your right hand causes you to sin,
cut it off and throw it away.
It is better for you to lose one of your members
than to have your whole body go into Gehenna.

Here Matthew, who is a
Jew, concedes that
although we should see
the choices: Good or Evil
are clear, the "simplistic"
view of things is not
realistic either.

"It was also said,
Whoever divorces his wife must give her a bill of divorce.
But I say to you,
whoever divorces his wife—unless the marriage is unlawful—
causes her to commit adultery,
and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

*"Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors,
Do not take a false oath,
but make good to the Lord all that you vow.
But I say to you, do not swear at all;
not by heaven, for it is God's throne;
nor by the earth, for it is his footstool;
nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.
Do not swear by your head,
for you cannot make a single hair white or black.
*Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.'
Anything more is from the evil one."

It is not all that confusing. Basically Matt says what Sirach did.
The choice is clear. Chose between GOOD and EVIL.
The Psalm says: If you choose GOOD, you will be blessed.
Paul: For those who do find the WISDOM of God no one knows
the JOY they will find.
[remember Hagia Sophia, Holy Wisdom, is another 'name' for Holy Spirit]