

Weekly Gospel Readings

4th Sunday of Hathor

The Danger of Riches

This Sunday (12/3/2023) is the Fourth Sunday of Hathor, and the Gospel comes from [Mark 10:17-31](#). In this passage, we read about the man who asked Jesus about what he should do to obtain eternal life ([Mark 10:17](#)). In response, Jesus said to follow commandments. However, when this man said he followed those commandments, Jesus said to Him “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” ([Mark 10:21](#)). Upon hearing this, the man was disheartened ([Mark 10:22](#)). When talking to His disciples about this interaction, Jesus emphasizes that it is hard for those who are rich enter the Kingdom of God ([Mark 10:23-24](#)). Finally, this passage concludes with Jesus sharing the reward for those who forsake all to follow him: “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life” ([Mark 10:29-30](#)).

Quite frequently, when referring to this passage, we tend to emphasize the part about trusting in riches. After all, the reason this conversation with the disciples started was because a rich man walked away sorrowful because Jesus told him to get rid of what he has. However, when looking at the themes of the other liturgical readings for today, there is a much deeper meaning that the Church is trying to get at.

In the Pauline Epistle, St. Paul talks about his sufferings and sacrifice: “To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things” ([1 Corinthians 4:11-13](#)). Additionally, at the end of this Epistle, St. Paul encourages the people of Corinth to imitate his actions ([1 Corinthians 4:16](#)).

Additionally, in the Praxis (Acts) readings for today, we read about when the Jews attacked Jason and fellow Christians in Thessalonica. It is interesting hearing about the reasoning of the perpetrators: “These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus.” ([Acts 17:6-7](#)). In this verse, “these men” refer to Sts. Paul and Barnabas. The Jews attacked Jason then because he helped those that are preaching about Christ.

Finally, going back to the Gospel, Jesus is contrasting the rich man and the Disciples. The rich man was not comfortable making any sacrifice—after all, the rich man walked away upset when Jesus told Him to sell his goods—whereas the disciples sacrificed all. Jesus acknowledges the Disciple’s reward by saying “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers

or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time" ([Mark 10:29-30](#)).

The common thread between all the readings is not about the love of money but rather sacrifice. The Pauline Epistle is about St. Paul's sacrifices in ministry, the Acts is about Jason's sacrifice by housing St. Paul in Thessalonica, and today's Gospel emphasizes the reward for those who give up everything they have for Him.

In all our struggles and sacrifices (financial or otherwise), no matter how hard they may be, may we always continue to persevere.

Sources:

- Bible, English Standard Version (ESV)
- Bible, New King James Version (NKJV)