**Listen! Look!**

**Luke!**

**Midrashing the Third Gospel**

**SESSION #2**

**Where’s that Sermon again? Midrashing the “Beatitudes”**

Today we’ll hear Luke’s Jesus in ‘rabbinic’ mode – teaching about the Dream/Way of God. We’ll also compare Luke’s version with Matthew’s, and use this comparison to explore the way in which the timeless Gospel takes on nuance when it meets different contexts.

**Midrashing Luke 6:17-49**

1. Hearing/Reading and Marking the Text
2. Minding the gap – what’s missing, what don’t you know?
3. Texturing the Text- Contexts: Who can help mind the gap?

Which community wrote it?

Which communities passed it on?

What other communities have read?

What community (individual) is reading it now?

1. Following the Rabbit – what intrigues you enough to follow it?
2. (re)Telling the Story
   * Stories within the story
   * Stories beyond the story
   * What story would you tell?

**1. Hearing/Marking the text**

*For those who were able to prepare ahead of time, share your “markings” with the group.*

* This step prepares us to “mind the gaps” by getting close enough to the text to ask questions of it, react to it, turn it this way and that.

**2. Minding the Gaps,**

Are there fact gaps we can fill to help us prepare to texture this text?

* Textual Gaps:
  + “Blessed”
  + But I say to you….
  + What’s with all the “woes”
  + Where did all this “Jesus teaching” material come from?
    - Is there a common source for Matthew and Luke that Mark didn’t have?
    - Or is Luke using “Matthew” as his source?
* “Canonical” Meaning Gaps:
  + Did Jesus “repeat” teachings in different places? (Matthew’s mountain, and Luke’s Level Ground)
  + Who was listening to this teaching? (v.17) Is there any significance to these geo-cultural groups?
  + Do Luke and Matthew have different “agendas”?
  + If this is part of an “orderly account”, what are the odds that Jesus actually said all this ‘then’ in one go? Does it matter?

**3. Texturing the Text. Reading the text in context(s)**

* If Luke/Matthew have agendas in using Jesus’ teaching agendas, might we also be doing the same?
  + e.g. the “command” to love (v.27), is it a charitable option or something stronger?
* How have earlier Christian communities interpreted the “Sermon on the Plain”? Why is this one less well known than the “Sermon on the Mount”?
* How does CPU read this text? How might other faith communities (like St. George’s Anglican!!) read it? Similarly? Differently? Shall we see?
* What has happened in Luke 6:20, Matthew 5:3, and Christian interpretation? Is this about social or spiritual poverty?

**4. Which Rabbit would you follow?**

* Groups discussing which rabbits, and why.
* Sharing the rabbits in large group (and for RevE who has to preach it in 10 days!)

**5.** **Re-Telling the Story**

* With a partner, try re-telling the “Woes” part (vv.24-26) using contemporary hooks and references. If it helps, be a bit outrageous!
* What does this exercise do to help you see the original portion in a new light? (If anything).

**For NEXT TIME**

We will be midrashing the Gospel reading to be used in worship later on in Lent, but reading it in its contextual context of the entire 15th chapter.

“The way the Gospels are crafted…. they tell us about how we live, about how we can follow this path…. to live well so that heaven is now.” Alexander John Shaia (TWOTP)

1. Read (or Listen) to Luke 15. Choose a portion of the Gospel to mark and midrash. Print out a few verses and mark your text, minding your gaps.

To help you:

Bible Gateway has texts and audios in some English Versions (KJV, NLT, MSG, eg. [https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke+1%3A1-4&version=NLT))

2. Choose one of your gaps and see if you can do some “texturing” of the text, JUST by using the information you have about the Gospel of Luke from sessions 1 and 2, and the handouts, and from the introduction to the Gospel that you might find in a Study Bible if you have one. Even if you can’t come up with full-blown “textures”, just being able to identify a contextual layer is key.

3. Read or listen to Matthew 5-7. Do you hear similarities? Differences? If you were to describe Jesus in Luke’s account and in Matthew’s, what differences (if any) would you note?

4. Luke’s 15th Chapter is framed around a common theme, which could well be expressed in this image. Do you see that theme? How does it help you to understand the chapter, and what does it teach you about Jesus?

