

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

April 7, 2016

- ✓ Deuteronomy 11:1-12:28 –Obedience and blessings.
- ✓ 2 Corinthians 3:9-18– Ever-increasing glory of the New Covenant.
- ✓ Psalm 35:12-28— Unjust suffering.

REFLECTIONS:

Deuteronomy 11:1-12:28. The first thirty-two verses of this reading deals with obedience and disobedience and their rewards. The blessing and cursing here are in accordance with Israel’s attitude toward (1) the Lord’s dealings with His people in the past (1-7), (2) His promise to them of a good land (8-17), and the teaching their children of the next generation (18-25). The people are commanded to love the Lord, a love that would result in keeping His commandments. Moses makes it clear that obedience to the Lord would grant Israel supernatural success against superior (larger and stronger) enemy armies (11:22-25). There was also the danger of worshipping false gods (11:16-21). Note the emphasis on the Word of God to protect them: they were to let God’s Word invaded every area of their lives and homes by diligently teaching them to their children. The same principle applies to Christians today: Commitment to know and obey the Scriptures keeps believers from contemporary forms of false worship (cf. 2 Tim. 3:1–9 with 2 Tim. 3:14–17)—which is why Paul exhorted all Christians to “let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly” (Col. 3:16).

2 Corinthians 3:9-18. In this section Paul makes several comparisons between the glory of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Paul recognizes that the old covenant was accompanied by glory, but he argues that the new covenant is accompanied by far greater glory. The superiority of the new covenant is argued on three counts: the ministry of the Spirit is more splendid than the ministry that brought death (7–8); the ministry that brings righteousness is more splendid than the ministry that condemns (9); and the ministry which lasts is more splendid than that which was fading away (11). The ministry of the old covenant, in which the law condemned transgressors, faded away at the coming of Christ. The ministry of the new covenant is carried out in the power of the Spirit; it gives people a right standing before God, and it lasts because it will not be superseded by another. Following this (vss. 7-11), Paul analogously compares the veiling of Moses’ face to a veil which lay over the minds of many of his Jewish contemporaries, who could not properly understand the law of Moses when it was read in their synagogues (14–15). Believers, those who have turned to the Lord, have the veil removed from their minds (16), and so with unveiled faces they reflect the glory of the Lord, and in so doing are being transformed into his likeness (18)—what a blessing to know that God’s plan for our lives is for us to be transformed into the very character of Jesus Christ. What a privilege! in fact, the greatest of all blessings to be sure!

Psalm 35:12-28. In verses 11-18 David laments over unjust suffering at the hands of evildoers. For example, although he prayed for them and fasted when they were sick, they rewarded him with evil for his good. Moreover, when he was in adversity, they rejoiced and gathered against him. Instead of gossiping or fretting about those who set themselves against him, David turned to the Lord and asked Him to vindicate him. Great advice! For example, when people whom we have done so much for turn on us in our time of vulnerability, and “stab is in the back,” we should avoid gossiping or fretting, and turn to the Lord to make things right. God must always be the focal point of our trust, not man! We must seek our vindication in God, and not waste our time going around feeling sorry for ourselves or seeking the vindication or favor of man. What matter is what the Lord thinks, not others. Times of undeserved suffering can be used as opportunities to parlay evil into good, which is always a good thing. Also, note in light of our recent studies, that David did not say that God purposefully sent this evil in order to test David. God is the source of deliverance not evil.

All because of Christ,

Pastor Don