

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
August 11, 2016

Isaiah 23:1–24:23. More divine judgment.

Luke 8:16–56. Jesus’ power.

Job 5:17–27. Eliphaz tells Job divine discipline is a good thing.

COMMENTS:

Isaiah 23:1–24:23. Chapter 23 covers prophecy over Phoenicia. The Phoenicians were a merchant people whose land approximated what is today known as Lebanon. Their ships plied the Mediterranean coasts, where their many colonies assured them of an abundant supply of the world’s wealth. Tyre and Sidon were key cities. Both David and Solomon made use of workers and building materials from Phoenicia. King Ahab married the Phoenician princess Jezebel, who promoted Baal worship in Israel. These last eleven chapters in Isaiah has taught us some important lessons regarding nations. First, God is in control of the nations of the world, and He can do with them what He pleases—“though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small.” Second, God especially hates the sin of pride (**Isa. 13:11; 16:6; 23:9**). When nations turn from the living God to trust their wealth and their armaments, God must show them that He is the only sure refuge. Our great country is in a very vulnerable position due to our pride. Third, God judges the nations according to natural law. Judah was the only nation mentioned that had God’s Law, yet God held the other ten Gentile nations accountable for what they did. “For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law” (Rom. 2:12). Finally, God always gives a word of promise and hope to His people. Babylon will fall, but God will care for Judah (**Isa. 14:1–3, 32**). Moab will not accept sanctuary from Jerusalem, but God will one day establish Messiah’s throne there (**Isa. 16:5**). Assyria and Egypt may be avowed enemies of the Jews, but one day the three nations will together glorify God (**Isa. 19:23–25**).

Chapter 24: After prophesying concerning eleven different nations, Isaiah enlarged his prophecy and described a judgment that would fall on the whole world. This global judgment that will end with the destruction of God’s enemies and the restoration of God’s people Israel in their land (in this chapter and the next three). Isaiah makes three declarations that will comfort God’s chosen people in that awesome day of judgment. These declarations also encourage us as we see the world continuing to plunge headlong into rebellion against God: (1) The Lord will judge His enemies (Isa. 24:1–23); (2) The Lord will preserve His people (Isa. 25:1–12); (3) The Lord will restore the nation (Isa. 26:1–27:13)

Luke 8:16–56. Verses 16-18: It is stupid to light a lamp and then hide it. Those who have the light of Christ should let their faith shine out, so that others can come to Him. As I noted in our last Bible class, Jesus taught that His followers should always be noted for their excellence! With all of the grace that we have received, we should all be exceptional human beings, as the grace of God continues to perfect our intellects in knowing Truth and wills in loving the good and being disgusted with the filth of sin. It is excellence, empowered by grace, that shines the light of the Lord. Grace was not given to us so we could be lazy slobs who only care about going to Heaven. You will never find that kind of idea anywhere in the Bible, at least presented as anything but in shame and disgrace. In **8:22-25** the disciples are caught in one of Galilee’s sudden storms. They are afraid they will capsize and drown—yet Jesus sleeps peacefully through it all. When they wake Him, He quiets the tempest with a word of rebuke—and asks the disciples why they haven’t trusted God in the crisis. The disciples realize that Jesus has God’s power over wind and water. Of course, the rebuke was for their sake. It is not like the storm heard Him. Jesus is the incarnation of *Esse* and as such is the existential and efficient cause of all that exists. He also rebukes their faith. As we have seen, the issue of faith is primarily an issue of the will, not the intellect, when it pertains to God. Those who do not believe have corrupted wills. They refuse to really see God as Good and as He is because of taste for other “goods”—licit or otherwise (John 3:19). In **8:26-39** we see His power over demons, which is followed by His power over death (**8:40-56**)

Job 5:17–27. Eliphaz said Job’s problems were disciplinary: God was straightening him out, so Job should welcome His discipline, not despise it. The idea is that if Job would have the right attitude, God would bless him. Though God punishes, He also restores (binds up) and heals. He delivers from six calamities and even seven. Eliphaz, then, mentioned famine, war, slander, destruction, and wild beasts. Job would have good crops (stones would not hinder his farming); security/tent, numerous descendants, health, and a long life. Going to the grave in full vigor like stacked sheaves of grain beautifully pictures a life lived to the full and ready to be ended. Eliphaz smugly concluded his first speech by reminding Job of the authority of his observations and urged Job to heed them. Of course, at the time none of the Bible was written so Joab would not have had the benefit to check those “observations” and “dreams” against written revelation from God.

Romans 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Pastor Don