

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
August 25, 2016

Isaiah 50:1–51:23. Prophecy of the Messiah’s physical sufferings.

Luke 20:1–40. The parable of the tenants.

Job 11:12–20. More advice from Zophar.

COMMENTS:

Isaiah 50:1–51:23. The first part of this section (**Isa. 50:4-9**) provides a unique prophecy of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, made seven hundred years before the incarnation. We are informed that God the Father taught the Servant Messiah daily how to comfort the weary (**50:4**). The Servant did not rebel against that instruction (**50:5**). In fact, He even gave His body to those who persecuted Him (**50:6**). Jesus, before He was crucified, was beaten, mocked, and spit on (Mark 14:65; 15:16–20). In extremely difficult circumstances, more difficult than what Isaiah’s original readers were facing, the Servant-Messiah was obedient and submissive (cf., 1 Peter 2:22–23). The Servant-Messiah was convinced that He will be vindicated by the Sovereign Lord who helps Him (**50:7, 9**). Even if it did not seem as if He were winning a battle, He was convinced that He was doing God’s will. The Servant-Messiah was aware that those who falsely accused Him will eventually face Him as their Judge and will come to nothing. Like moth-eaten garments, they will perish (**51:8**). The Servant did all of this by faith in the God the Father (**50:7–11**). He was determined to do God’s will even if it meant going to a cross, for He knew that the Lord God would help Him. Keep in mind that when Jesus Christ was ministering here on earth, He had to live by faith even as we must. He did not use His divine powers selfishly for Himself but trusted God and depended on the power of the Spirit just as we must do. After describing His suffering, Isaiah turns attention to His faithful followers who are to follow His Word (**50:10**). In sum, we learn that (1) the Servant-Messiah listened and learned (**50:4-5**), (2) The Servant-Messiah endured suffering (**50:6**), (3) The Servant-Messiah confidently depended on God (**50:7-9**), and (4) His followers are to follow the Servant’s example (**50:10-11**). Those who live for Jesus Christ *by knowledge and by love* consider it a privilege to follow His example, which in essence just is the *Christian* way of life. In **chapter 51**, God gives several admonitions to His people to “Listen to Me;” note the human examples God gives in **51:1-8**. This command to hearken revolves around both their spiritual apathy as well as words of comfort (**51:12-16**). God is always eager to exhort us so we will make the necessary adjustments upon which we will put ourselves in the position of growing in His grace, which promises a life that is beyond all one could ask or imagine (1 Cor. 2:9).

Luke 20:1–40. Among other things in this reading, we have the parable of the tenants. In sum, Jesus tells a story about a man who planted a vineyard and rented it to some tenants. His Jewish hearers will immediately recognize that Jesus is referring to Israel. Israel is the ‘vineyard’ which God planted in Canaan when he gave his chosen people their Promised Land (Isaiah 5:1–7). The ‘tenants’ are the priests and teachers who should be caring for God’s people. Jesus describes how the owner of the vineyard sent his servants to ask for fruit. This is a picture of God sending his prophets to demand righteousness and justice. But the tenants beat and abused the servants, and sent them away empty-handed. Finally, the owner sent his son, in the hope that the tenants would at least respect him. But the outcome was even worse. The tenants saw their chance to seize the vineyard for themselves, and killed the owner’s son (reference to the crucifixion of Christ). The people listening to Jesus are horrified. God will have no choice but to punish the nation (destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70) that rejects and murders His Son. This is followed by Jesus quoting a prophecy from the Psalms, which predicts that the stone which was once discarded will prove to be the keystone (Psalm 118:22). The builders (the religious leaders) may reject a stone (the Messiah), but they will find it is the most important stone of all—the one which holds the whole building together. Without Jesus Christ, there is no hope for anyone. Of course, with Christ there is always hope.

Job 11:12–20. Zophar continues to tell Job that he is stubborn and should repent (**Job 11:13–20**). “There is hope!” is Zophar’s “encouraging” word to Job (**18**) as he described what Job could experience. God would bless him abundantly, and his troubles would be over. Job could lift up his head again, and his fears would be gone (**15**). He would forget his misery like water gone over the dam (**16**). God would give him a long life, and it would be the dawning of a new day for him (**17**). He would dwell in the light, not in the darkness; and God’s security would put an end to all his fears (**19–20**). But if Job wanted these blessings, he had to get them on Zophar’s terms. Yes, there was hope, but it was hope with a condition attached to it: Job must repent and confess his sins (**13–14**). There is only one problem: Job was not suffering because of his sins.

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

Pastor Don