

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
August 27, 2016

Isaiah 55:1–57:21. Salvation and blessings for the Gentiles.

Luke 21:25–22:23. More of Jesus’ teachings on the end times.

Job 12:13–25. Job speaks of God’s power and sovereignty.

COMMENTS:

Isaiah 55:1–57:21. Chapter 55 describes the invitation of salvation to the Gentiles. **Chapter 56** shows how Gentiles will be included in Israel’s blessings (**56:1-8**) and God’s condemnation of the wicked (**56:9-57:21**). Note carefully **55:6-13**: (1) the need to seek the Lord “while He may be found,” which indicates that if man does not take His invitation of grace seriously, the invitation may cease while one he is delaying (**55:6-7**); (2) the higher ways of God (**55:8-9**), which extend far beyond our capacity, which is why we need His grace to raise up our intellects and wills, for the natural man has no clue regarding the love, grace, wisdom, or goodness of God—all of this God-stuff is foolishness to the natural man, he simply does not get it for he is limited to the world of the phenomena; (3) the power of the Word of God (**55:10-11**). Just as the rain and snow are never wasted but accomplish His purposes, so His Word never fails. “The Word of our God shall stand forever” (Isa. 40:8). We never know how God will use even one concept in the Word of God to totally transform our lives—a Gestalt experience of sorts, but based on the structure of the Whole Truth of the Word of God. The Word of God is food for the nourishment of the soul. We need it every single day. To grow spiritually, we *must* treasure it above any all temporal things, the world of the phenomena, note Matthew 4:1-11. Yes, the Word of God is more important than your family, job, friends, and recreation. It is the fool who does not think he needs the Word of God daily. To say that one does not have time for the Word of God is like saying one does not have time to take a shower or brush his teeth or eat. We make time for our top priorities—for what we really value!

Luke 21:25–22:23. In this first part of this section we have more prophecy of the end times. The phrase “this generation (ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη) will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened,” has caused much controversy. Some think Jesus was telling His disciples that their generation would see the destruction of the Temple. That interpretation stems primarily from **21:5–7** and the discussion pertained to the Temple’s destruction. However, because of **21:31** (in which Jesus spoke of the coming of the *kingdom of God*), and because of Matthew 24:34, it definitely refers to the generation living at the time of the cosmological events that will just precede His second coming. That generation will actually see the founding of the kingdom of God—something every generation of Jewish citizens has longed for throughout the nation’s history. After teaching eschatology, Jesus institutes the Lord’s Supper (**22:1-13**). Consider Judas, the world’s most infamous betrayer. Why did Judas betray the Lord Jesus? We know that he was a thief (John 12:4–6) and that money played a part in his terrible deed. The fact that he was a thief points to his continual habituation in evil. He put money above the spiritual—a curse especially prevalent today. But thirty pieces of silver was not a large payment for such a great crime; there had to be something more involved. It is possible that Judas saw in Jesus the salvation of the Jewish nation and, therefore, he followed Him because he hoped to hold an

office in the kingdom. Keep in mind that the Twelve often argued over who was the greatest in the kingdom, and Judas, the treasurer, surely participated in those important discussions. When Judas understood that Jesus would not establish the kingdom but rather would surrender to the authorities, he turned against Him in bitter retaliation. The “leaven” in his life grew quietly and secretly until it produced “malice and wickedness” (1 Cor. 5:6–8). When you cooperate with Satan, you pay dearly, and Judas ended up destroying himself (Matt. 27:3–5). Satan is a liar and a murderer (John 8:44), and he reproduced himself perfectly in Judas. As Judas habitualized evil in his life, he became a vessel for Satan (John 13:2, 27), for he never was a true believer in Jesus Christ. His sins had never been cleansed by the Lord (John 13:10–11), and he had never believed and received eternal life (John 6:64–71). Yet none of the other Apostles had the least suspicion that Judas was a traitor. We have every reason to believe that Judas had been given the same authority as the other men and that he had preached the same message and performed the same miracles. It shows how close a person can come to God’s kingdom and still be lost (Matt. 7:21–29). I wonder how many believers have no idea that they are enemies of the cross because of their occupation with their sense desires and the world of the phenomena (Philip. 3:17-20). I wonder how many “believers,” especially in liberal churches, are not really believers.

Job 12:13–25. In these verses Job describes the wisdom and power of God. Job pointed out that God is completely sovereign in what He does with nature (14–15) and with people (16–25). What He destroys cannot be rebuilt, and what He locks up cannot be released. He can send drought or flood, and nobody can stop Him (15). He has the wisdom to know what to do, and He has the power to accomplish it (13, 16). In His sovereignty over people, no matter what their status, God is in control. Job’s argument is that all kinds of people experience difficulties in life because God can do what He pleases. He is no respecter of persons and is not impressed by a person’s rank, wealth, or social status. For example, if it is God’s will, king’s counselors will lose their authority and wealth, and judges will become confused and mad. In fact, kings themselves will lose their girdles (an insignia of authority), and priests (19) will be stripped and become captives. Wise people like counselors and elders will be silenced (20), and princes (nobles) and the mighty (21) will lose their respect and strength. But God is sovereign over nations as well as individuals (23–25). He can enlarge a nation or destroy it, or give it freedom or bondage. All He has to do is take wisdom away from the leaders, and the nation’s destruction is sure. Proud people don’t like to hear this message. Ever since the city of Enoch (Gen. 4:16–18) and the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1–9), mankind has been trying to build and manage things without God; and the end has always been failure and judgment. God help America!

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

Pastor Don