

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”**  
**August 3, 2016**

**Isaiah 5:1–6:13.** God’s vineyard and Isaiah’s vision.

**Luke 1:67–2:21.** Zechariah’s prophecy and psalm.

**Job 2:1–10.** Round 2 of the angelic conflict.

**COMMENTS:**

**Isaiah 5:1–6:13.** In **chapter 5** we have a divine love song that hits a sour note. The song tells of a farmer (the Lord) who clears land for a vineyard (God’s people). Having made all the necessary preparations, he expected the vineyard to yield good grapes. Instead it produced only rotten grapes. God established Israel to be a model of justice and righteousness. Israel rewarded God’s efforts with violent deeds and injustice. The farmer’s only alternative was to destroy a fruitless vineyard. So the Lord had to judge His sinful people. A series of judgment speeches follows, each of which begins with the word “woe.” Ancient Israelites used this word (יָהִי, οὐαὶ in the LXX) when mourning the death of a friend or loved one. By employing this word, the prophet was, as it were, acting out the nation’s funeral in advance and thereby emphasizing the inevitability of judgment. In these woe-speeches, Isaiah condemned several sins, including socioeconomic injustice, corruption of the legal system, the carousing of the rich, and their spiritual insensitivity. Note the irony: Those who accumulated land and houses at the poor’s expense would not prosper from their acquisitions. Those who wine and dined would die of hunger and thirst in exile and would themselves be devoured by the grave. Those who challenged the Lord to “hurry” (**5:19**) would soon see His instrument of judgment, the Assyrian hordes, advancing “swiftly and speedily” (**5:26**). Finally, those who “put darkness for light and light for darkness” in moral and ethical matters (**5:20**) would find their sphere of sinful activity darkened by the clouds of judgment (**5:30**). As I noted in Bible class today, this ‘calling evil good and good evil’ is rampant today as many liberals in high government places increasingly see Christians and traditional family values as evil and things such as homosexuality and even attacks on law enforcement as good (at least in some way). God help us! After describing how the people of God rejected their “Holy One” (**1-5**), **Isaiah 6** records Isaiah’s face-to-face encounter with this Holy God. Three things struck Isaiah about God: (1) He was seated on a throne, (2) He was high and exalted, which symbolized His position before the nation, and (3) the train of His robe filled the temple, which speaks of His royalty and majesty. Following this vision, we see Isaiah’s response of contrition, humility, cleansing, and enthusiasm for the Lord’s ministry. There is nothing like the motivation that truth (understanding God and reality) and grace (forgiveness of sin and empowerment) provide.

**Luke 1:67–2:21.** In Zechariah’s psalm or hymn, he reiterated the hope in national, Davidic terms and set forth the superior relationship of Jesus to John (1:67–79). Structurally, Zechariah’s hymn (1:67–80) can be divided into two parts. In the first part of the hymn Zechariah praises God for the redemption he has accomplished through the house of David (1:68–75). In the second part of the hymn he focuses on the role of John (1:76–79). Like the Magnificat, this hymn is full of Old Testament allusions. Both Mary and Zechariah spent an enormous time in God’s Word, which is a requisite for any healthy spiritual life. Following this, we have the shepherds (2:8–20). They were *not* selected for the visitation because they were sinners or poor but because of their lowly status. The shepherds would take turns watching the flock at night to guard against wolves and thieves. The text does not indicate the time of year, although December would be an unusual time of year to be outside at night. The shepherds are told that the good news is for all the people (2:10). The significance of the birth is plainly revealed to the shepherds as Jesus is called *Savior*, *Christ*, and *Lord* (2:11). “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests!*” In sum, the story shows the spontaneous obedience of the shepherds (2:15), the amazement of those who heard the report of the shepherds (2:17–18), and Mary’s careful reflection over the events that were occurring (2:19). Her love for the Word of God is reflected in the fact that she ‘pondered these things in her heart.’ What a beautiful soul!

**Job 2:1–10.** In this section, we have round two in the angelic conflict, which includes: (1) the council meeting (2:1-5), Job’s illness (2:6-8), and Job’s reaction (2:9-10). Job’s wife asks the question: “*Are you still holding on to your integrity?*” Whatever the full implication of the meaning of her question, her recommendation is clear: Job should kill himself. Job’s characterization of his wife, “foolish woman,” is not so much a reflection on her intelligence as it is on her morality and spirituality. Every wife has enormous influence on her husband and she should do all that she can to encourage him in the spiritual life. The wife who becomes a distraction or obstacle for her husband’s spiritual development not only will suffer from the lack of his developed leadership, she will fail to be the godly wife God called her to be. The word Job used, “foolish,” is used to designate the fool who says that there is no God (Ps. 14:1). Job again suggests that it is appropriate to receive not only good from God but also trouble. Satan had predicted that Job would sin with his lips; yet Job does not sin in what he says. Job was a man of virtue: right thinking, right wishing, and right affections. This cannot be produced by some type of conduit system as per “problem solving” devices or other *modern* techniques devised by Christians. Nothing less than spiritual virtue of viewing God as one’s greatest good can achieve such greatness.

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

*Pastor Don*