

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
August 8, 2016

Isaiah 14:24-16:14. Prophecies against foreign nations.

Luke 6:1–49. Sabbath, means vs. goal/end (God).

Job 4:12-21. Eliphaz’s “vision.”

COMMENTS:

Isaiah 14:24-16:14. Isaiah shows that God’s judgments extend to heathen nations. In this section, we see prophecy of God’s judgment on the Philistines (14:29-32) and Moab (15:1-16:14). The prophecy came in the year that King Ahaz died (715 B. C.), **Isa. 14:28.** God condemned the Philistine cities for thinking they were safe from destruction. They were rejoicing that the **rod** that struck them was broken. This “rod” does not refer to Israel, or to Judah’s King Ahaz, but to Assyria (**14:29**). Assyria defeated Ashdod and made Philistia an Assyrian province. This happened under Assyria’s ruler Sargon II (722–705; cf. 20:1). Therefore, Philistia had felt secure (**14:30**) but it would suffer defeat by famine and the sword. Philistia should wail since Assyria was coming like an uncontrollable cloud of smoke. However, Zion (Jerusalem) need not fear for it would not fall till much later to Babylon (586 B.C.). As far as Moab, for centuries Moab, east of the Dead Sea, had been an enemy of Israel. The destruction of Moab described in **Isaiah 15–16** caused the Moabites, under Assyrian attack, to flee south to Edom. Note the pride of Moab in **Isaiah 16:6**. Let this be a warning to any nation, including our own. As I mentioned in our last Bible class, I do believe that our nation is under divine discipline for its pride as evidence by the lack of character of those who Americans have selected for the highest office in our land, and in light of our nation’s rejection of divine establishment principles related to freedom, marriage, family, attitude toward Israel, animus toward Christians and God, and unnecessary divine intervention abroad. As believers we should redouble our efforts regarding the spiritual life and pray for our leaders: **1 Timothy 2:1** *Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.*

Luke 6:1–49. This section begins with showing how Christ is Lord over the Sabbath and closes with a sermon from the Lord, the Sermon on the Plain, that focuses on virtue and its blessedness as well as pronouncements of cursedness for vice and being a damned foolish builder. In light of the attitude of the legalistic Pharisees in making the Sabbath the issue instead of the Lord, and in light of the high requirements of unconditional love mandated for the believer (**6:27-34**), it is helpful to consider how the metaphysics of the 5 levels of human action, that we noted in our last few Bible classes, can help us keep the “means” and “end” distinct—so we can keep the proper end, God, firmly in focus. For example, it is often taught that unless one has the right attitude in doing something like Bible study, it is a waste of time. The contention is often made that if one reads the Bible or attends church out of a sense of obligation, then it is worthless. This generally collapses into the idea that unless one really feels excited about reading the Bible or attending Bible class, then it is a waste of time. In other words, feelings become the determiner of whether it is a good activity or a wasteful one. Note how understanding the 5 levels of human activity help us have the proper perspective regarding all of our *obligations* before the Lord. For

example, when God is the goal and the Bible is the means, then it really does not matter how one “feels” when one studies the Bible. The Bible is a means to a greater good, namely to get closer to God. As I have noted, if I needed money to feed my family and someone offered me money to clean out his stables, I would see the means as a good. Of course, cleaning out the stables in and of itself could never be seen as a good. The point here is that when God is the goal and the Bible is the means, then one will love the Bible as a means. However, I will still see Bible study as a requirement, but because God is the goal it is not legalistic. It is just one of the necessary means of getting closer to God. If the Pharisees in this section had understood that the Sabbath was but a means of pleasing God, then they would not have so distorted it to cause them to put it above human life and the Lord Jesus Christ by making it the goal instead of a means to another good, God.

Job 4:12-21. Having appealed to reason or tradition, Eliphaz tried a new tack. One cannot be certain whether Eliphaz really had the vision he described here or whether he fabricated it for the purpose of bolstering his presentation to Job. It is hard to argue with people who claim to have special revelation. Such people cannot be easily dissuaded of their convictions, even though it is obvious that the dream or vision often corroborates what they otherwise believe or want to do. The vision or spirit gave no new information. Not surprisingly it agreed with what Eliphaz and his friends said throughout the debate cycle. For that reason, Eliphaz’s testimony is not entirely trustworthy. The essence of the message is that humankind is inherently displeasing to God and very frail and transitory. Eliphaz wants to make sure that Job knows that human life is too brief to understand the ways of God. He drives home the point that man is immature, unenlightened, and ignorant of the ways of God. It is a depressing note but not unlike others that sound from the mouths of the other two friends as well as from Job. God save us from “friends” like Eliphaz who only add to our misery by providing only partial truth instead of the whole truth, the total truth.

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

Pastor Don