

## “Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

December 18, 2016

**Jeremiah 33:1–34:22.** God’s promises to Israel and Judah.

**Romans 8:1–17.** No condemnation.

**Proverbs 22:1–16.** Training up a child.

### COMMENTS.

**Jeremiah 33:1–34:22.** This reading can be divided into three parts. *First*, God promises that Israel and Judah will be restored (**33:1–26**). While Jeremiah is still being detained, he receives a wonderful promise for the future (**33:1–3**). The houses of Jerusalem and the palaces of her king, so brutally destroyed by the Babylonians are to be restored (**33:4–6**). God will give healing and forgiveness, prosperity and joy to Jerusalem—for all the nations of the world to see (**33:7–9**). Normal life will be resumed in the towns of Judah: weddings and harvests will be celebrated (**33:10–11**) and shepherds will tend their flocks (**33:12–13**). God promises that one day He will unite the kingdoms of Israel and Judah under one King. This King will be a strong and healthy branch from David’s family tree. Like David, His reign will be just and righteous; and His people will be secure (**33:14–16**). There will always be a king descended from David and there will always be a high priest from the Levites to offer sacrifices (**33:17–18**). God is doing this to honor his covenant promises to David and the Levites—a bond He can never break (**33:19–26**). *Second*, Jeremiah tells King Zedekiah his fate (**34:1–7**). The Babylonian armies are laying waste the towns of Judah and Jerusalem’s destruction seems certain (**34:1, 6–7**). Jeremiah goes to King Zedekiah to tell him what will happen. Jerusalem will be burned to the ground, but Zedekiah himself will be spared and taken to Babylon (**34:2–3**). *Third*, Jewish slaves should be set free (**34:8–22**). Some of the people of Judah have become slaves—through misfortune or debt. But if the nation is conquered by the Babylonians, the entire population will become slaves. King Zedekiah attempts to win God’s favor by declaring that Hebrew slaves (those of Judean race) shall be set free (**34:8–10**). However, the crisis passes and the reform doesn’t last (**34:11**). God reminds Jeremiah of the old law of Moses: that every seventh year all slaves shall be freed. This is because the Israelites had themselves been rescued from slavery in Egypt (**34:12–14**). Now, if they do not release their brothers and sisters from slavery, God will release punishment on them (**34:15–17**). Those who split from their covenant with God will be split themselves—cut in half like a sacrifice (**34:18–20**). When the Babylonians execute God’s judgment (**34:21–22**), the king and his officials will be severed from their city (**34:21–22**) and the land will be parted from its inhabitants (**34:22**).

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** The third verse in this reading is one of the most fascinating and encouraging verses in the Bible, especially for those who find themselves suffering in difficult situations like the Jews under the yoke of the Babylonians: Jeremiah 33:3, *‘Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.’* Note the means: prayer, the second person relationship with God. The idea is that God’s people do not learn great and mighty things by some conduit system. They learn the otherwise hidden things by second person relationship with Him. Just as Jeremiah asked the Lord to teach him, God showed him “hidden things” that related to the future of his people. The prophet knew that the city

was destined for judgment (33:4–5), but the Lord gave him further words of assurance and encouragement—promises that relate to the end times—like the defiled nation would be healed and cleansed (33:6–8), and the disgraceful city would bring joy and renown to the Lord and be a testimony to all the nations of the world of the marvelous goodness and grace of God (33:9). The greatest blessing of all will be their promised King reigning in righteousness! (33:14–16). Jeremiah already told us that His name is “The Lord our Righteousness” (33:6). While we cannot expect extra revelation when we walk with the Lord *in proper knowledge and proper love*, we can expect more enlightenment on the things of God that have been reserved for those who love Him: 1 Corinthians 2:9, *But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who are loving Him (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν)."* By the way, these supernatural “things” from God are things revealed in this life.

**Romans 8:1–17.** Paul focuses on the ministry of the Holy Spirit who brings spiritual power for the children of God. Paul tells us that if believers live according to their fallen natures, they will die (functionally as to the spiritual life and perspective); but if by the Spirit believers put to death the misdeeds of the body, they will live (8:13). In contrast to the control of sin, which enslaves to the point of fear, believers have received the Spirit of adoption. So, instead of retreating in fear, Christians can approach God in an intimate way, calling Him “Abba, Father” (8:15–17). “Abba” (αββα) is a transliteration of the Aramaic term for father, implying great familiarity, intimacy, security, leadership, and family.

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** The fact that there is no condemnation for those in Christ is a blessing beyond measure. All Christians fail and sin far more than they should. Abraham lied about his wife; David committed adultery; Peter tried to kill a man with his sword and denied the Lord. To be sure, they suffered consequences because of their sins, but they did not suffer condemnation. The Law condemns; but the believer has a new relationship to the Law, and therefore he cannot be condemned. This new relationship with the Law is that the Law cannot claim us (2), condemn us (3), or control us (4). The legalist tries to obey God in his own strength and fails to measure up to the righteousness that God demands. The Spirit-led Christian lives in God *by proper knowledge and proper love* as a response to God’s marvelous, matchless grace and by doing so partakes of the life of God and enjoys the reality of the “God who works in in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). Not only has all condemnation been removed, the believer has the privilege of partaking of the nature of God (2 Pet. 1:4), who is subsistent Goodness just as He is subsistent Truth and subsistent Being.

**Proverbs 22:1–16.** This reading contains a variety of personal proverbs on the poor, humility, the wicked, child training, the rich, generosity, God’s omniscience, and adultery,

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** Verse 6 has been the object of great misunderstanding and angst among the people of God through the ages: *Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.* Many Christian parents have experienced much grief after training up their children in the Lord only to see them stray from the Lord. It is a common experience not only of today but it goes back the beginning of time, to Cain. Parents tend to beat themselves up by questioning whether they trained them right. Two things need to be understood with respect to this passage and promise. First, like other proverbs (even in this section), they only give general truths, not guaranteed truths. Second, the idea in this verse cannot extend to life in God *by proper knowledge and proper love.* No parent can give any child that kind of life. Proper knowledge and proper love are spiritual principles that must come from each person’s immaterial soul in concurrence with God, who alone supernaturally raises up the intellect and will. A parent cannot posit in his child the supernatural power that is required to personally know and love God. This superpower only comes from God. All a parent can do is train the child in the sense of “narrowing” a child’s conduct away from evil and toward godliness and starting him in the right direction. Ultimately, every child has an immaterial soul with an immaterial intellect and will and must choose his own good without coercion, not even coercion from God Himself. In short, a parent can teach a child basic principles of morality and spirituality so that the child will have the advantage of knowing the good and Good; but in the end, it is the child who must choose God as his Good or reject what he has been taught and begin the autophagic process of his spiritual heritage. Again, not even God can cause someone to freely love Him—to force someone to love is a contradiction of love itself. Each person chooses his own way and those who do not choose God end up under the sway of money, sense appetites, and mechanism (material pragmatism), which is but a march to the materializing of the intellect and will as to their basic orientation, and thus a descent from the true dignity of man to the level of orientation to the level animal appetites and earthly orientation.

*Life in God by second person proper knowledge and by proper love,*

*Pastor Don*