

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

Feb. 20, 2016

- Leviticus 7:1-8:36 – Priestly and sacrificial regulations.
- John 7:44-52 – The unbelief of those in authority.
- Song of Solomon 6:11-13 – The lovers’ reconciliation.

Commentary:

1. Leviticus 7:1-8:36. Throughout this section we have several regulations regarding the priests and sacrifices. They embraced every aspect in which Israel was to manifest its true relation to the Lord its God—depicting salvation, fellowship, sanctification, and devotion to God. They were all symbols of God’s matchless grace so that the sinner could attain once more to the unrestricted enjoyment of the covenant of grace. Nevertheless, these sacrifices could not make one perfect in and of themselves (see Heb. 9:9; 10:1), because the blood of bulls and of goats could not possibly take away sin (Heb. 10:4). The forgiveness of sin which the atoning sacrifices depicted was only temporary in anticipation of the true sacrifice of Christ. Moreover, they all anticipated a greater fellowship and life with God because of Christ and the fuller ministry of the Holy Spirit than was ever dreamed of during this period. We live in the age of grace rather than the age of ritual that pointed to grace. We are freer to grow in God than any time in the past *through knowledge and through love*.



2. John 7:44-52. Jesus’ dramatic invitation to come to Him for living water provokes strong reactions. Some in the crowd believe He is from God, but for others Jesus’ is disqualified because of where he is from as per verse 44. The Pharisees are certain He is not from God and are desperate to arrest Him, despite the witness of their own guards and Nicodemus, one of their own members, cf., verses 45–52. Thus, the pattern of events earlier in the chapter is repeated, but this time there is the added problem concerning Jesus’ origin and more detail concerning the leaders’ rejection of Jesus. The point here is that the light is shining, but the leaders of God’s people are showing a determined preference for the darkness rather than the light of Jesus Christ as pointed out in 3:19. John describes the crowd’s very mixed response to Jesus. The words Jesus had spoken led some in the crowd to affirm that Jesus is the

prophet like Moses. Perhaps Jesus' offer of water is seen as a claim to be a second Moses, one who would repeat Moses' miracle of bring water from the rock. Others in the crowd draw the conclusion that Jesus is the Messiah (7:41). These reactions reflect the variety of views within Judaism concerning the one God would send to rescue his people. Despite this diversity, Jesus' words and deeds revealed Him to be the expected one. Those in the crowd who recognize him as the Prophet or the Messiah still do not fully realize who it is they are dealing with any more than the Samaritan woman did when she accepted him as the Messiah. But such faith is the right start and true as far as it goes. The sower has sown seed, and some of it is producing fruit. John, then, turns to those who reject the idea that Jesus is the Messiah. Earlier some people rejected Jesus because they knew where he came from and Messiah's origin was to be unknown (7:27). Now a different tradition is in view—that Messiah was to come from Bethlehem since he was the Son of David (v. 42; cf. Mic 5.2). Both conclusions are ironic. Earlier the people thought Jesus' origins were known when in fact they were unknown, for he came from the Father. Now those who reject Jesus do so because he is not from Bethlehem, when in fact he is. Suppression of truth takes on many forms, but the result is always the same: darkness! There are a million ways to suppress truth, but only one way not to suppress truth: embrace Total Truth!



"Never man spake like this man."
- John 7:46b

3. Song of Solomon 6:11-13. These verses tell the story of the couple's reconciliation from the beloved's point of view. She knew that he had "gone down to his garden" (v. 2). So she went there to see if their love was still in bloom (v. 11). As a person would look in the spring for new growth, buds on grape vines, and pomegranate blossoms, so she looked for fresh evidence of their love. When she found him there his first words were words of praise (vv. 4–10), indicating that their love was in fact flourishing. One of the most difficult verses in the Bible to interpret is verse 12. The Hebrew can be translated in several ways. The idea can be expressed with "I became enraptured, for you placed me on



the chariots of the people of the prince.” When the husband’s first words in the garden were words of praise, she “became enraptured”; she was beside herself with joy. He then placed her on his own chariot at the head of his entourage. As they left, the inhabitants begged her to stay (“come back” is stated four times in v. 13) and the lover noted the intensity of their desire to gaze on the Shulammitte. The Hebrew word rendered “Shulammitte” is actually the feminine form of the name Solomon. Thus it means the “Solomoness.” “How you gaze ...?” (v. 13b) is a better translation than “why would you gaze?” They gazed at her and her beauty, he said, as if they were viewing a graceful dance compared to the town of Mahanaim.

On the Glory Road,

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