

Day 20 of “Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

Jan. 20, 2016

- Genesis 32-33– Jacob and Esau.
- Matthew 24:29-25:13 – The coming of the Son of Man and the faithful servant.
- Ecclesiastes 7:22-29 – Seeking out our own schemes?

Reflections:

1. Genesis 32-33. In this section we see the actions of a cowardly believer who, unlike his father Abraham, never really grew up spiritually. However, to his credit, when he fought with the Lord and was crippled by Him, he still held on to his Assailant for blessings. The blessing took the form of a new name, Israel, which means “God fights.” As the Lord indicates, he was given that name because he fought with God and man. He fought with God in always trying to get a blessing rather than relying on God’s grace. He was too proud and self-willed to really trust the Lord and this led to his scheming throughout his life. “God fights” refers to God fighting against Jacob, but it now means, also, that God would fight for Israel.
 - Apologetics. **Problem:** In Gen. 32:30 Jacob said that he has seen God face to face. The same thing is said of Moses in Deut. 5:4. Yet, God has made it clear that “no man can see Me, and live” (Ex. 33:20). **Solution:** It is possible for a blind person to speak face to face with someone without seeing his face. The phrase “face to face” means personally, directly, and intimately. Moses had this kind of unmediated relationship with God. But neither Jacob, Moses, nor any human being ever saw the “face” of God in the sense of seeing His very essence, *Esse*, directly.
2. Matthew 24:29-25:13. In this section Jesus speaks directly about His return to earth. He gives practical applications and instructions in light of His return. One should keep in mind that the primary application of this section is directed toward the future generation that will experience the days of the Tribulation and will be looking forward to the immediate coming of the King in glory. A secondary application of this passage, as with much of Scripture, is to believers living today who comprise the body of Christ, the church. The church is not in view in these verses. But just as God’s people in a future time are told to be prepared, watchful, and faithful, so too believers today should also be faithful and alert.
3. Ecclesiastes 7:22-29. In verse 29 Solomon notes that the reason for man’s universal perversion was man’s devising, not God’s. God made mankind upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes which causes him to lack true uprightness, true righteousness, and true wisdom, and to fail to please God. There is a phrase that was used by my former pastor, Robert Thieme, that describes this activity perfectly: “frantic search for happiness.”

In 'Ehyeh,
Pastor Don