

Day 22 of “Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

Jan. 22, 2016

- Genesis 35:16-36:43 – Birth of Benjamin, death of Rachel, death of Isaac; Esau’s descendants.
- Matthew 26:14-56 – Judas, the Passover, and Jesus in Gethsemane.
- Ecclesiastes 8:10-17 – Wicked living longer than the righteous?

Reflections:

1. Genesis 35:16-36:43. In chapter 35, the deaths of Deborah, Rachel and Isaac mark the end of an era. Before their deaths God renewed His promises to Jacob to reassure him, during this very unsettling time, that the twelve sons would in fact settle in the promised land. Notice in 35:20 that Jacob set a pillar over the grave of Rachel. Throughout the Bible there is great respect for the bodies of the dead that is not found among pagan nations. In the New Testament burial is also a sign that points to the death, burial, and resurrection associated with being in Christ. In chapter 36, we have the tracing of the generations of Esau with the listing of difficult, complicated, and half unpronounceable names. Note the mention of powerful *kings* among Esau’s descendent. This is in strong contrast to the descendants of Jacob in the previous chapter who did not have any kings/chiefs. The godless often have very powerful kingdoms. It is an error to think that powerful nations are so because they are filled with godly people.
 - Apologetics. While it is often stated that people in the Old Testament did not believe in soul life immediately after death (until the resurrection when they are raised from the dust), Genesis 35:29 tells us that “Isaac breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people,” which means that he not only continued to exist immediately after death in the interim period, so did “his people.”
2. Matthew 26:14-56. In 26:26-30 Jesus transforms the Passover into the Lord’s Supper. This speaks to His great authority as God. It is God who instituted the Passover that was the key celebratory event for the Jews for over 1,000 years in the Old Testament. Jesus stood up and from it created the Lord’s Supper, which every believer should observe with fellow believers in a local church. Although it is mandated, it is better to think of it as a privilege to be able to reflect on the Lord in this special way. He is the one who brought God’s grace to us so we could have a relationship with God. Note the love of Jesus Christ in 26:31 and 26:56: He knew and watched all of the disciples leave Him, but His love for them remained nonetheless. As we noted in Bible class last evening, it is the knowledge and love of God that gives us existence at every moment. God’s knowledge and love truly are causative. There is no hint of deism in true Christianity.
3. Ecclesiastes 8:10-17. In verse 12 Solomon told us that the lives of the wicked are prolonged. Yet, elsewhere the Bible says that “the years of the wicked will be shortened” (Prov. 10:27), which Solomon earlier stated as well (Ecc. 8:13). The passages which teach that the wicked live shorter lives are the general principle, but there are exceptions to this general rule. God in His grace writes the story of the life of every individual and

His plan, at times, does include wicked living longer to provide them more opportunities for grace. The bottom line, however, is to remember that not all justice is accomplished in this life. There is an eternity awaiting every person.

In 'Ehyeh,

Pastor Don