

Jan. 4, 2016

- Genesis 6-7 – Divine judgment and grace.
- Matthew 6-7:11 – Live for the Kingdom and stop being hypercritical of others.
- Ecclesiastes. 2:1-11 – The futility of the temporal perspective.

Reflections:

Genesis 6-7. Note the juxtaposition between corrupt mankind (Genesis 6:5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually) and righteous Noah (Genesis 6:8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. 9 This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God). Rejection of God by rejecting His grace always leads “continual thoughts of evil,” for such is a life without God. Only grace changes the life, enabling man to become ‘just and perfect’ regardless of and even in spite of his corrupted culture. Just because American culture has become increasingly evil does not mean that a believer need to succumb to its pernicious influences. By God’s grace the believer can continue in progressive sanctification and love for the Lord and the things of God. Genesis 6-7 illustrates the point that while God is patient, there will come a time when He will destroy the nation that becomes so evil that the next generation has little to no chance of understanding basic laws of divine establishment. At the rate of America’s corruption, typified by our corrupt political leaders and those who continue to vote in corrupt leaders because of their own interests, it may not be long before God destroys our nation. However, we must always remember that God always provides grace in the midst of judgment. Genesis 6-7 juxtaposes God’s judgment on corrupt, faithless man with His grace on a righteous, faithful believer. In Genesis 6:2 we are told that “sons of God” took daughters of mankind. There are three dominant interpretations regarding this unique passage: 1) Some Bible scholars believe that the “sons of God” refer to the godly line of Seth (from whom the redeemer was to come, Gen. 4:26); 2) other scholars believe that the “sons of God” refers to great men of old—they point to the “giant” or “mighty men” in the context, and 3) still others combine the views and speculate that the “sons of God” were angels who did not keep their first estate (Jude 6) in that they possessed human beings and then motivated them to interbreed with the “daughters of men,” thus producing a superior breed whose offspring were the “giants” and “men of renown.” The third view explains all of the biblical data without the metaphysical problems of angels who are bodiless and sexless cohabiting with humans. Although, I have not studied this issue in great detail, I tend to favor the third view.

Matthew 6-7:11. In chapter 6, Jesus Christ is explicit about living for eternal rewards. One of the problems plaguing modern, worldly motivated Christians is lack of motivation for eternal rewards. It is hard to understand how believers can be so dismissive of these commands of the Lord. It is one thing to find oneself so wrapped up in the world that one does not care about rewards, it is another to continue to be dismissive in the face of Christ’s direct statements. Let us not be deceived: those who do not live for eternal rewards, will by default, live for this temporal life—which is exactly what the Lord warns against in this chapter 6. Matthew 7 begins with judging. While all judging is not condemned, for we are to be discerning of false doctrine and bad influences so we can stay away from them, an judgmental attitude that is characterized by pettiness is condemned. This was the attitude of the Pharisees and any believer who has a carping and captious attitude is only showing off his own self-righteousness. A

hypercritical, nitpicking believer, is always legalist about something. The faultfinding attitude in the Pharisees, at least to some degree, kept them from seeing the goodness of the Lord.

Ecclesiastes. 2:1-11. What a succinct description of the futility of trying to find transcendent happiness, the happiness of God, in the world. No matter what one gains in this world, it will never satisfy him. The rich often are aware of this. It is the poor who often thinks that they would be happy "if only" they could get this or that. In verse 2 of this section we are told that laughter is madness. This is not a categorical prohibition of laughter. Laughter is good when it is an expression of enjoying the blessings of God. However, laughter really is evil when it becomes the goal and end of life itself as per hedonism.

In 'Ehyeh,

Pastor Don