

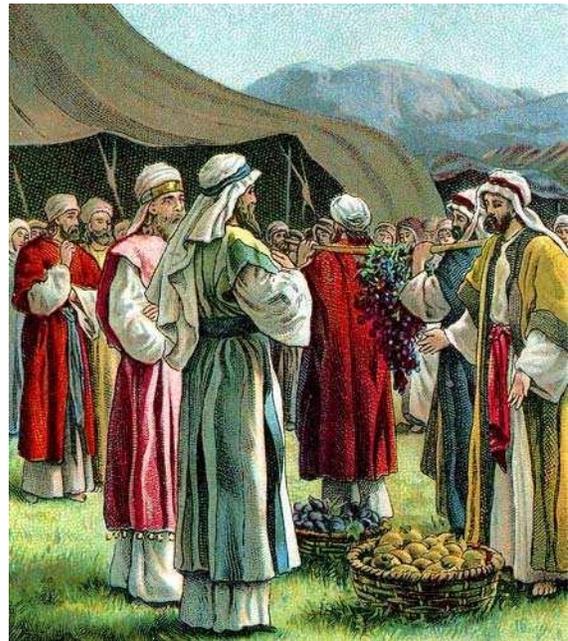
“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

March 12, 2016

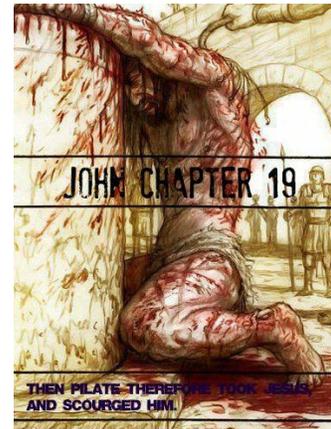
- ✓ Numbers 13:1-33– Spies sent out into the land and their report.
- ✓ John 18:25-19:16 – Jesus is sadistically beaten and unjustly sentenced.
- ✓ Psalm 13:1-6 – Prayer for deliverance.

REFLECTIONS:

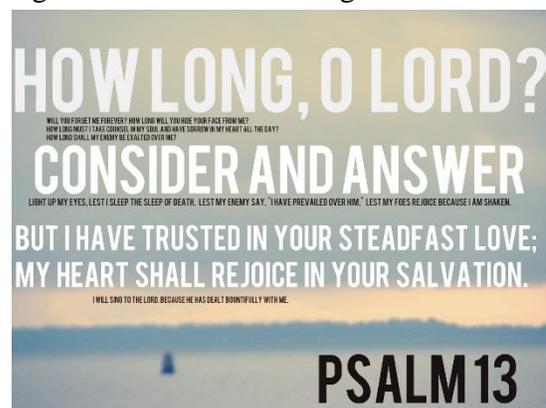
Numbers 13:1-33. God’s people stand on the edge of the Promised Land. Their cowardice is but the result of failure to develop a relationship with God through the previous tests. Note carefully how they acknowledge that the Land was indeed as God has said, ‘flowing with milk and honey.’ How many believers are quick to say, ‘of course, the plan of God is the best, but I simply cannot move forward, I am too afraid.’ What nonsense! Anytime the Word of God is suppressed the intellect is corrupted so that a person is no longer able to make a proper judgment as to the good in life as indicated by their desire to go back to the slavery of Egypt rather than moving forward and entering into God’s land of milk and honey. There simply is no excuse. Had they not seen the power of God again and again, starting with the parting of the Red Sea and the pillar of cloud that guided them? Observe the altogether different attitude of Caleb: *“Let us go up and occupy it, for we are well able to conquer it.”* Such an attitude requires a different character, one that has been actualized with regard to the good of God and His plan. Every choice we make for God actualizes spiritual integrity in the life. Every sin or act of evil only makes us weaker and enslaves us to our passions. *Quo Vadis?*



John 18:25-19:16. In the nineteenth chapter of John, Jesus is beaten and sentenced. The cruel scourging, which, in Roman hands, was a much more severe punishment than the Jewish ‘beating with rods,’ and often ended in death. Christ endures it silently and unresistingly. After they had executed Pilate’s orders to scourge Him, they covered the bleeding wounds with a robe and crushed the twisted wreath of a thorn-branch down on the brows, to make fresh wounds there as well. Note the mockery and utter callousness of the crowd as they watch the brutality on what seemed like a helpless victim. So much fun to look at? Note Pilate’s pity in “behold the man” as if to say ‘Is this poor, beaten, humble, sufferer worth all of your hate or fear? Does He look like a King or a dangerous enemy?’ What was the response? Fresh hate! Like wild animals in a frenzy after their prey they yell sadistically, “Crucify, crucify,” in the face of Pilate’s testimony: “I find no guilt in Him.”



Psalms 13:1-6. The psalmist recognizes that things are not the way they are to supposed to be: *How long must I take counsel in my soul, and sorrow in my heart all the day?* (13:2). We live in a broken, fallen world that offers no guarantees that things will work out for the good in this life. In fact, the only ones who can even be assured that things will work out for the good are those who are loving the Lord (Rom. 8:28). This psalmist certainly falls in that category as evidenced by the fact that he calls him “my God,” asks God to raise up his intellect (“enlighten my eyes,” 13:3), and as demonstrated by the fact that he recognizes that God has dealt bountifully with him (13:6). God owes us nothing. It is unfortunate that so many well-meaning Christians think that God owes them a nice, comfortable life filled with nothing but happiness with everything working out perfectly. The problem is that we live in a broken world, which should remind us not to put our hope in this life but in the life to come, which is really what Romans 8:28 is all about anyway. Moreover, instead of thinking that God brings evil/suffering into our lives to make us better (all the while incoherently praying that God would keep evil/suffering from touching us and our loved ones and thanking Him for not bringing the evil that would have made us better) how about understanding that God maintains our chaotic, cursed, and fallen world and much of our difficulties and suffering/evil comes from that world that He maintains rather than directly from Him for some higher good. He is not the Author of Evil! He does not need to put Evil and Suffering into our lives to make us better. The Charismatics teach that the devil puts evil, suffering, and disease into the lives of human beings—this is false! The Calvinists teach that God puts evil, suffering, and disease into the lives of human beings for His greater good—this is false! The correct view is that God maintains the fallen, broken, and cursed world, which is the source of evil and suffering, and which *incidentally* provides an opportunity to turn evil into good, but only for those who love the Lord. To think this way is to stop incoherent prayers filled with thanks for protection from evil



and suffering that would have produced a greater good. Does it really make sense to thank God for withholding a greater good regardless of the means of getting that good?

In, by, with, through, and for *Esse*,

Pastor Don