

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

March 23, 2016

- ✓ Numbers 27:1-23 – Transfer of leadership from Moses to Joshua.
- ✓ 1 Corinthians 10:1-22 – The example of the evil Exodus generation.
- ✓ Psalm 22:14-31 – Evil suffering of the righteous.

REFLECTIONS:

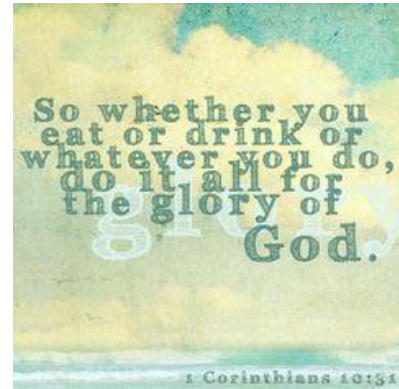
Numbers 27:1-23. After covering the laws of inheritance for families without sons (27:1-11), we have the succession of Joshua to Moses (12-23). Both Moses and Aaron had disqualified

themselves from entering the Promised Land when they failed to honor the Lord by striking the rock at Meribah. Aaron had already died (chapter 20), and the Lord allows Moses a glimpse of Canaan from afar. Rather than lapsing into self-pity as a lesser man might have done, Moses expressed his concern that Israel have a good leader to take his place. He prayed to God to select a new leader. The title “the God of the spirits of all mankind” refers to God’s omniscience understanding of everyone, which guaranteed the wisdom of His choice. Moses said the leader should be like a shepherd who would lead Israel. The

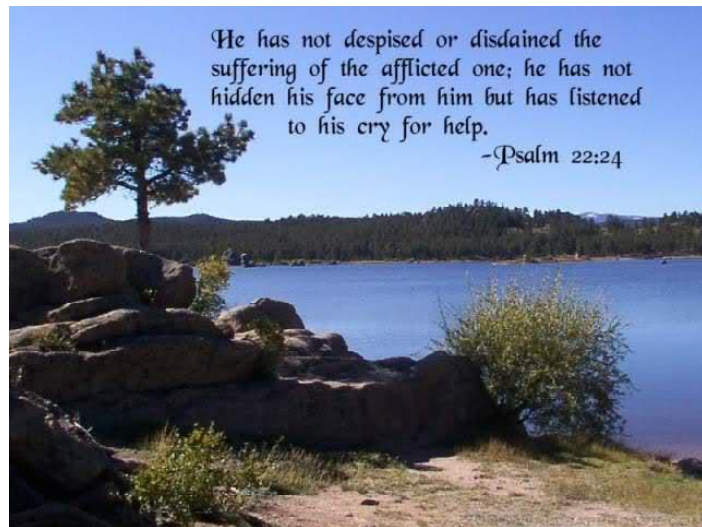


Lord’s response was immediate: Take Joshua the son of Nun, “the man in whom is the Spirit.” God the Holy Spirit was working in Joshua, providing the efficient cause of raising up Joshua’s mind and will in concurrence with Joshua’s formal causes of loving, faith-obedience. As Joshua sought the Lord, the Holy Spirit supernaturally empowered his life making God more real, which supernaturally gave him the ability to love, trust, and live for God. Without the Holy Spirit, man simply does not have the supernatural power it takes to have an intimate second person love relationship with the Lord, which is what is required to consciously live in His presence. Moses laid his hand on Joshua publicly so the community would know Joshua was entitled to the same respect as Moses.

1 Corinthians 10:1-22. Five advantages that *all* the liberated Israelites had are listed in this passage: supernatural guidance and protection of the pillar of cloud, baptism with the leadership of Moses, supernatural bread from Heaven, and supernatural water from a rock. However, the presence of supernatural privileges among the people of God did not produce automatic success. All but two, Joshua and Caleb, were disqualified from entering into the Promised Land. There is no success without the Holy Spirit's efficient causation in the life, and He does not provide efficient causation to those who resist and complain about the plan of God. Paralleling the fivefold blessings enjoyed by Israel, Paul recounts a fivefold failure: 1) craving meat, 2) idolatry, 3) sexual immorality, 4) questioning God's path for their lives, and 5) speaking against God's appointed leaders. The Corinthians were repeating the same sins and so Paul tells them that the example of the Israelites was more than historical curiosity. They were examples and warnings for the Corinthians. They are also warnings for us. Let us turn our wills (formal causes) away from lusting things of the world (materialism, food, illicit sex) and questioning God's plan or speaking against His leaders, and turn to the Lord, a turn which brings the efficient cause of the Holy Spirit in every area of life to make possible *1 Corinthians 10:31* Therefore, *whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*



Psalms 22:14-31. David describes his enemies and his agony. His enemies tortured him and watched him insensitively. He compared them to dogs (20), who are by nature scavengers. Like dogs, his foes surrounded him, waiting till he was dead so they could tear at his limbs. The piercing of hands and feet depict tearing as if by animals. Of course in the New Testament, these words have reference to Jesus Christ with far greater significance as the God-man was crucified. In light of our recent studies on the problem of evil, note here and in all of the psalms that deal with suffering that the suffering did not come from God. God did not order the pain and suffering of David or Christ. In other words, He did not bring evil into their lives to get them to trust the Lord. God as *Esse* upholds our fallen world and lets it play out and is always there to bring a greater good. The point is that the evil does not come from God for a greater good. God is not the source, Satan and fallen man in a corrupt world are the sources. We need to stop blaming God for putting evil suffering into our lives to get us to trust Him. This is a horrible way to view God and one that you do not find in this passage or any other. God does not need evil to get some greater good. He does not to give people cancer for the purpose of getting them to trust Him. But what about those who get cancer and end up trusting God? Does that not show that God gave them the cancer to get them to trust Him? No! It is fallacious to take a result, like



trusting God, and conclude that that was why the evil was given, yet believers do this all of the time *and with God!* Maybe a person got cancer from other factors and it just happens God did not choose to intervene in the natural order to cure them. Of course, God is always there to redeem anyone out of evil suffering by His own goodness—as with Job. The opportunity is always there, but not everyone takes advantage of it. In our text, David asks for intervention, which does not make sense if God sent the evil suffering in the first place. While evil suffering can make certain truths more personal, believers do not need evil suffering to trust and love God. A believer can grow in trust and love for God by means of the Holy Spirit, who is a great deal more powerful than human experiences of suffering. In sum, there are three choices on the source of evil suffering: 1) Satan's power over God's power (Charismatics); 2) God sends evil suffering for a greater good (most Christians); and 3) they are the result of a broken, fallen world and the interplay of natural and moral evil (free will and Satan's activity), which God allows to play out and who stands ready to redeem anyone out of by being his greatest good (Job and *Esse metaphysics*).

All because of Christ,

Pastor Don