

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

March 27, 2016

- ✓ Numbers 31:1-54 – God’s judgment on the Midianites.
- ✓ 1 Corinthians 14:1-25 – Love and spiritual gifts.
- ✓ Psalm 26:1-12 – Integrity and prayer.

REFLECTIONS:

Numbers 31:1-54. This chapter is a frequent chapter used by atheists in their charge that the God of the Old Testament is a moral monster. One problem is that modern theists have departed from the classical view of God, which recognizes that the category of human morality does not apply to God.

Putting God in a moral category to make Him more relatable just makes things worse. It is not that He is immoral. It is just that morality is a human category that does not apply to God. The correct category of God in this area is righteousness. He is absolutely



righteous and executed righteous judgment on the Midianites for their evil activity back in chapter 25. Moreover, the Midianites posed an existential threat to Israel’s spiritual and moral life. Recall that with the help of pagan Balaam, the Midianites devised a plan to lead Israel into pagan worship. This included ritual sex, feasting before their Baal, and bowing and sacrificing to him as per Numbers 25:1-2; 31:16. This is why Moses gives the command, “Now kill all the boys. And kill every woman who has slept with a man, but save for yourselves every girl who has never slept with a man (Num. 31:17-18). This command must be understood in the context of Numbers 25. At Peor, the Midianite women deliberately seduced the Israelite men into orgiastic adultery as well as Baal worship. The death sentence for *all* males is unusual. However, it must be remembered that these males were potential enemies and God is just in that the *Israelite males* who participated in the seduction were also put to death. But what about the taking of young virgins in this chapter? Atheists often crassly suggest that the Jews were free to grab and rape young virgins. Not so! Actually, the truth is that they were saved *precisely* because they had not degraded themselves by seducing Jewish men. Moreover, according to Deuteronomy 21:10-14 a female prisoner of war could not be used as a sex slave. A Jew had to follow proper procedures before taking her *as a wife*. In light of the highly sensitive nature of sexual purity, rape was certainly excluded as an extracurricular activity in warfare.

1 Corinthians 14:1-25. The key to understanding the first twenty-five verses in this chapter is that they relate integrally to what Paul has said about love in the previous chapter. 1 Corinthians 14:1-25 focuses on the building up of the other. Edifying and encouraging each other are expressions of love for each other. Paul says that the gift of prophecy is greater than tongues because it edifies *others*. We also see a parallel of ideas between chapter 13 and 14 in that Corinthians are commanded to stop thinking childishly (14:20-22), which goes back in 13:11. The bottom line is that every believer is to love other believers, especially in a local church family, and God has given each believer with spiritual gifts for that purpose—not for self!

Love
Let love be our
highest goal
1 Corinthians 14:1

Psalms 26:1-12. Note David's strong affirmation of his integrity as he approaches God. Of course, this is not outside of God's grace (loving-kindness). David is so sure of his integrity that he invites God to examine his life. He points out that his integrity is manifested in the fact that he has separated himself from the wicked and deceitful and does not consult with them—in fact he hates their assemblies. There are certain "assemblies" that offer "wisdom" that believer should stay away from—like Freudian psychoanalysis which is based one of the most wicked and evil theories (totally unsubstantiated) known to man (Oedipal complex complete with patricide and cannibalism among baboons as a subliminal basis for death of God on the Cross and communion as celebrated by Christians). As far as David's righteousness and integrity, it is not as if he thought he was sinless; note how he speaks of washing his hands with reference to the sanctuary.



All because of Christ,

Pastor Don