

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
May 14, 2016

- ✓ **1 Chronicles 1:1-54.** Patriarchal genealogies: from Adam to Israel/Jacob.
- ✓ **1 Tim. 2:1-15.** Pray for all people, especially our leaders.
- ✓ **Psalms 74:1-23.** Asaph’s prayer in light of devastation of Israel in 586 B.C.

COMMENTS:

1 Chronicles 1:1-54. These genealogies serve to establish Israel’s place in the world. It provided Israel with a sense of God’s universal and ongoing work in the world through them throughout the Old Testament. Human history is not random. God is in control as the efficient and final cause of all things as He works through the free choices (formal causes) of His people. These genealogies would give the Israelites, who lived after the exile, a sense of history and legitimacy. With these roots, God’s people knew who they were and how they were to live. These genealogies served to remind them that they were not only a people with a rich history, but that their history was God’s history. As they looked around and observed more powerful nations around them, like the Persian empire, they could look at the genealogies and be comforted by the fact that they were in the hands of the God who controls all history from generation to generation. Most of us are not Jewish and therefore are not part of the genealogies, and have not given promises regarding land in the Millennium. We have been given greater promises because of Christ’s grace in grafting us into His people and plan (Rom. 11:17). Paul says that we should not boast over Israel because we are indebted to Israel, not Israel to us (11:18). Or as Jesus put it, “salvation is from the Jews” (John 4:22)—it was from the Jews that God brought forth the Savior of the world. A final point: in these genealogies we have good and evil people. If we looked at our own genealogies, we would probably find the same. The question, then, is what category will we fall into when our future generations reflect on our place in the family tree?

1 Tim. 2:1-15. Paul instructs believers to pray for everyone, but especially for the leaders of civil government. He does not provide the specific content of prayer, but we do see him mentioning God’s will for all to be saved. So, one can safely infer that prayers are made for the salvation of rulers. He also provides a goal for such prayer—that Christians be able to live peaceful lives in all godliness and holiness. So, the purpose of a good and friendly government was not primarily financial—so the believer could pursue more Mammon. Let us not lose sight of the fact that the peaceful and quiet lives is connected to “godliness and holiness.” In verse 3, Paul says it is a beautiful (καλὸν) thing before the Lord when His people pray for their evil rulers. Paul was just released from prison and was very well aware of the deteriorating political atmosphere. However, as we have studied, it is not like God *directly* forced Nero to persecute Christians to test and refine their faith. God does not *directly* bring any evil suffering into any life, nor does He guarantee that any suffering will automatically turn out for the good—financially or spiritually. The only guarantee we have of goodness is the Lord Himself as He allows human choices to play out in history. He is there to deliver believers in the sense of redeeming them by turning evil to good, but let us not accuse God of needing evil to attain any good. We *can* grow and flourish in ‘peaceful and quiet times,’ if we live in godliness and holiness as per Paul’s prayer. If we absolutely needed suffering for spiritual growth, why in the world would Paul pray for peaceful and quiet times? Since spiritual growth is the most important thing, one would

expect for him to pray that God would “bring it on.” *Pace* modern Christians, let us stop this nonsense of God being the Author of Evil. It is Satan, not God, who deserves the title “Tempter.”

Psalm 74:1-23. Asaph asked God to remember His people as he reflects on how the enemy of Israel had destroyed the sanctuary. This occurred in 586 B.C. In verse 9 the psalmist is troubled because it seemed that there was no prophet to give spiritual counsel to the people or to explain how long this problem would last. Is it not interesting that *most* of the people of God do not give a flip about what a prophet or pastor has to say unless and until there is devastation? After 9/11, for example, churches were filled with people “looking for answers” and comfort. However, that was short-lived because in such times most people are really still occupied with “stuff” rather than God Himself as indicated by them going back to their old world-worshipping ways rather than to the God who made them.

Romans 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.

Pastor Don