

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
October 13, 2016

Ezekiel 26:1–27:36. Judgment against Tyre.

Revelation 13:1–10. The Beast from the sea.

Job 36:13–23. Money cannot save us from our true predicament.

COMMENTS.

Ezekiel 26:1–27:36. These chapters describe God’s judgment on Tyre. A distinctive feature of Tyre was its physical location on a rocky island just off the Phoenician coast. Its natural and artificial harbors provided her with economic advantages and military security. The proud and magnificent port of Tyre has rejoiced at Jerusalem’s fall. She expects to gain from it in plunder and trade (26:2). But, after his destruction of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar will turn his attention to Tyre. He will lay siege to her for thirteen years. God is against Tyre and will subject her to overwhelming waves of attack. The armies of Babylon will crash over her. She will be broken down and eroded until she becomes merely a bare rock on which to dry fishing nets (26:3–21). God tells Ezekiel to lament the destruction of such a thriving community. She is like a great trading ship, laden with merchandise, which sinks within sight of the shore (27:1–36).

Live in God by proper knowledge and by proper love. Tyre was at the center of all merchandising along the Mediterranean coast and did business with every known country, her fall was devastating to the economy. There wasn’t a “ripple effect”; there was a tidal wave! Their partners in business—called “princes” (26:16) and “kings” (27:35)—had lost everything and could only lament the great tragedy that had struck. People along the coast trembled as they wondered what would happen to the economy now that the great mercantile network was destroyed. Our world today is united in a series of electronic networks that can transfer information, money, and orders for merchandise with such speed that it’s scarcely possible to register them. Imagine what would happen in the world’s economy if all these electronic business connections in New York City alone were dissolved. This reminds us that in the end times, when the Antichrist has organized his great world network called “Babylon,” the Lord will destroy the whole thing and leave the business people desolate and in mourning. Much of the American spirit is guilty of the same “spirit” as Tyre—pride and materialism. Many today would gladly attend a financial or political meeting if that meeting was about how to save money through tax loopholes or on tips on how to gain more temporal freedom. However, they would not be motivated to attend a meeting of the teaching of the Word of God that deals with true wealth and freedom. Compare the passion Christians have for political issues to the apathy they have toward spiritual issues. Only by walking with God *by proper knowledge or proper love* can a believer really treasure the things of God. Without a will that desires God’s goodness, that will will always get the intellect to make other choices, excuses, for other “goods.” We always choose what our wills like the most. There are no exceptions! *Quo Vadis?*

Revelation 13:1–10. John sees a beast coming out of the sea. With horns and heads and crowns, like the creatures in the book of Daniel. Horns stand for power, heads stand for intelligence and identity and crowns stand for authority. This beast represents all worldly power which sets itself up against God. The peoples of earth worship this beast, with its military might and godless values. His code number is 666. If seven is the number of God, then six is the number of human beings. This beast pretends to have the power and glory of God, but falls short in every way. The Church must stay true to God in love, faith, and hope.

Life in God by proper knowledge and by proper love. Note how the world accepts Satan’s counterfeit Christ as they marvel at and follow the beast (3). Note how the world follows his words (5-6). Almost all dictators have risen to power by controlling people with their words. Recall how Adolf Hitler rose to power, and how he mesmerized huge crowds with his speeches. Satan will make “the beast” a great orator, whose addresses will blaspheme God, His name, His tabernacle (heaven), and the saints in heaven. Any time one rejects the goodness of God and His Word, the desire of the will becomes debased and will love evil as a good. Only *by walking with God in proper knowledge and proper love* can the believer protect his will and enhance it for the true good of God. The issue really is not about having power to resist temptation of evil, as it is perceived as a good in some way; rather, it is about seeing evil for what it is and seeking true good instead, which possible by the ministry of the Holy Spirit as we walk *with God by proper knowledge and by proper love* in concurrence.

Job 36:13–23. Elihu continues to describe God’s discipline to God. Elihu wanted Job to interpret his troubles as God’s nudging him toward repentance. It is a doctrine that comes logically right after that of theological retribution. Evil merits punishment. Good brings blessing. But repentance can turn wrath into wealth, curse into grace, and death into life, or, in the poetry of the middle line, from “restriction” to “a spacious place. He cautioned him against “turning to evil,” something he believed Job did by complaining to God. Elihu even thought that Job chose evil over “affliction,” that is, that he would rather suffer and challenge God’s justice than repent and find freedom, health, and restoration. Job’s problem with this latter option was that it involved compromising his integrity. He would have to fabricate something to repent of, and such a fabrication would in itself be a sin. It would be a lie and a sham.

Life in God by proper knowledge and by proper love. Note the point of verses 18-19. Elihu is absolute right: money is of no help to one’s true predicament before God. It really is madness for man to seek Mammon as if it would resolve his most significant and pressing problems and needs. Christ constantly warned about putting materialism before God. The last Church in Revelation stands as a warning to all believers about putting the material over the spiritual, and the apathy for the Christian life it always creates. 1 John 2:15-16 says that those who love the world do not love God. One would think that such a message would cause Christians to repent and even weep at how they are wasting their lives living for the world. However, even the most debased will has incredible power to bribe and deceive the intellect and be so blind to it all. Only life in God *by proper knowledge and by proper love* brings one out of the darkness and into the light (1 John 1:7; Matt 6:19-24). Note the two options of light and darkness that Jesus presents to us: Matthew 6:19 *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust*

destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 22 "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! Are you living in God's light or great darkness? In dark excuses or in the light of God Himself?

Life in God by proper knowledge and by proper love,

Pastor Don