

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
October 19, 2016**

Ezekiel 38:1–39:24. The Final Destruction of the Nations.

Revelation 19:1–10. Heaven will rejoice.

Job 38:12–24. God, the existential cause of all beings.

COMMENTS.

Ezekiel 38:1–39:24. These chapters describe an invasion of Israel by distant nations, led by “Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.” Ezekiel envisioned a time when the armies of these nations would attack unsuspecting Israel. The Lord would intervene in power and miraculously deliver His people. A mighty earthquake would shake the land, and the enemy armies would turn in panic on each other. The Lord would rain down hail and sulfur upon them. The slaughter would be comparable to a great sacrifice. Birds and wild animals would devour the flesh and blood of the enemy warriors. Even with this assistance from the animal kingdom, it would take the people of Israel seven months to dispose of all the corpses. The enemy’s weapons would provide God’s people with a supply of fuel that would last seven years. This prophecy does not correspond to any known historical event, it is still awaiting fulfillment. Gog and his hordes are symbolic of the end time opposition to God’s kingdom which will be violently crushed as noted in Rev 20:8–9.

Life in God by 2nd person knowledge and love. Why does God bring Gog and his armies against to Israel? Why does God bring so much pain and misery on His people? What is the source of most all of our problems, either divine discipline or self-imposed misery? Ezekiel 39:23 *“The Gentiles shall know that the house of **Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they were unfaithful to Me, therefore I hid My face from them. I gave them into the hand of their enemies, and they all fell by the sword.** What is the solution? What does God want more than anything else? What is the point of life? Why are we alive? Ezekiel 37:27 *“My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people.* How does a believer have such a relationship with God? by *second person proper knowledge and proper love.**

Revelation 19:1–10. Heaven now begins to rejoice because Babylon the Great has fallen and it is time for the appearing of the Lamb’s bride. The great marriage supper of salvation is ready to commence. John is now prepared to describe the glories of the Lord’s appearance. All of Heaven rejoices over the righteous judgment of God upon evil (**19:1–6**). The Lamb’s bride, the people of God, has made herself ready by her faithfulness to her Lord through the hour of suffering. *And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints (Rev. 19:8).*

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. As per verse 8, our attire in the next life will reflect how we live our lives on Earth. 1 Corinthians 13 tells us that anything that we do that is not out of love is worthless. Hence, our attire for all eternity will reflect our love for the Lord that we had during this life. As we have noted in our intellect and will studies, we are always seeking our good (love) in all that we do.

Everything we do, our works, are reflections of our true love. Making God the focus of our lives in a very personal love relationship, just is what life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love really is all about.

Job 38:12–24. These questions from God relate to the vast dimensions of creation. God shows Job the vastness of his creation—the foundations of the earth, the springs of the sea, the abode of light and the gates of death. He reviews its splendor: the storehouses of the snow, the networks of stars, the complexities of nature and of the human heart. Look at any of God’s creatures—and wonder at the mind and majesty of the Creator!

Life in God by 2nd person proper knowledge and proper love. A Thomist really enjoys a very rich appreciation of all of creation as he sees God as the existential cause of all things. Modern science is wonderful, but it is only a quantitative slice of reality and can never tell us the whatness (essences) of things as such or deal with immaterial things like love and justice. Only philosophy of nature and metaphysics can do that. Thomism provides a complete account of all reality in the 3 degrees of knowledge: (1) *physica*: the whatness of beings, (2) *mathematica*: the quantity of beings, (3) *metaphysica*: principles of causality of beings. Modern science only deals with the quantitative, for example how many atoms are in a man. Thomism gives a complete account from the bottom to the top of all things under three co-principles: (1) existence/essence, (2) matter/form, (3) substance/accidence. All one has to do is look at the world around him filled with beings. Note that they are always changing, and yet retain some sense of stability (consider the changing apple). All around us beings are coming into existence and going out of existence. What accounts of the existence of anything that exists? It is self-evident that the essence of something and its existence are not the same thing (the essence of a unicorn is not the same thing as its existence). There is no created being wherein by its own nature it has the reason for its own existence. God is Existence (Exodus 3:14) and the existential cause of all that exists—continuously! This is the point God is making to Job: God gives all things existence and is the necessary cause for all of its natural properties. To realize that God gives us existence every instant (our human nature does not have within it the power for its own existence as such), and then to take that to a second person love truly is life transforming. It is to see Him as our ultimate good as “we live and move and have our being (exist, be) in Him” (Acts 17:28). Any view of creation or God that is less than God as the ongoing existential cause of all that exists collapses into deism, into a god who is not as close as our own very existence. I, for one, do not see how any Christian can have an intimate relationship with a deistic god—who is simply too removed and disconnected from it all. A little metaphysics provides a powerful foundation for a *second person proper knowledge and proper love of God*. Praise the Lord! (Yes, we can thank, talk to, and pray to Jesus Christ directly—as per the testimony of the Bible and Christian history—as we have recently discovered at FBC☺)

Life in God by proper knowledge and by proper love,

Pastor Don