

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
October 20, 2016

Ezekiel 39:25–40:49. A New Temple.

Revelation 19:11–20:6. King of kings and Lord of lords.

Job 38:25–33. The splendor of creation.

COMMENTS.

Ezekiel 39:25–40:49. The defeat of Gog will hasten God’s plans to restore the Israelites from other nations; **39:25-29** look ahead to the end of the Tribulation when God will restore the nation from her final dispersion. Note the pouring of the Holy Spirit on them to enlighten their intellects and to enhance their wills for God as their absolute good. **Chapter 40** describes the new temple. Note that animal sacrifices are reinstated during the Millennium. Many have objected to the thought of animal sacrifices being reinstated during the Millennium. Since these sacrifices, it is argued, revert back to the Levitical sacrificial system, they would seem to be out of place in the Millennium. This has caused some to take the passage symbolically rather than literally. However, no difficulty exists if one understands the proper function of these sacrifices. First, animal sacrifices never took away human sin; only the sacrifice of Christ can do that (Heb. 10:1–4, 10). In Old Testament times Israelites were saved by grace through faith, and the sacrifices helped restore a believer’s fellowship with God. Second, even after the church began, Jewish believers did not hesitate to take part in the temple worship (Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:42) and even to offer sacrifices (Acts 21:26). They could do this because they viewed the sacrifices as memorials of Christ’s death. Levitical sacrifices were connected with Israel’s worship of God. When the church supplanted Israel in God’s program (Rom. 11:11–24) a new economy or dispensation began. The Levitical sacrificial system, which looked forward to Christ, was replaced by the Lord’s Supper, which looked back to His death and forward to His second coming (1 Cor. 11:24, 26).

Life in God by 2nd person proper knowledge and proper love. It is important to remember the central points of this temple: to give His people a visible manifestation of restoration and the blessedness of the presence of His glory in the Temple with His people, united in communion with Him and each other. He wants us to fellowship with other believers as we walk in the Lord. He wants us to enjoy harmony and agreement as we live, move, and have our being in Him. When we try to walk with the world and with the Lord at the same time, we break this spiritual fellowship and create discord and division with Him and other believers. What He desires is for believers to walk with Him *by knowledge and love* and so when they come together they bring this blessed influence to each other rather than griping and complaining about the kosmos and the details of life. Believers who love the Lord always enjoy each other’s company. Believers who are caught up in the world are the ones who bring angst to the local church rather than the love of God. As far as this passage, there will a time when the Jews will come together in love and worship of God and as such will love each other and enjoy a unity that pleases the Lord.

Revelation 19:11–20:6. John sees Heaven opening up and the scene is now dominated by a rider on a white horse. This is Christ himself, with blazing eyes and crowned head, and his name is the ‘Word of God’. He rides ahead of armies of faithful martyrs and witnesses, dressed in white linen—the livery of heaven. The gentle, patient and compassionate Jesus is also the Christ who judges and rules all things. His sword is his word. What he says is done. As John watches, the beast and his evil armies are overwhelmed and destroyed. An angel summons the carrion birds to devour the flesh of the corpses. Then, Satan is bound for 1,000 years (**20:1-6**).

By knowledge and by love. Note the emphasis on Jesus’ names (**Rev. 19:11–13, 16**). He is “Faithful and True,” in contrast to “the beast” who was unfaithful (he broke the covenant with Israel) and false (he ruled by means of deception and idolatry). We all need to remember, especially in times of suffering, that God is faithful and will not desert us, because His promises are true. However, most importantly we need to remember that Christ’s most important name is “King of kings, and Lord of lords” (**Rev. 19:16**). We belong to Him. He is the Boss. It is His plan, not ours. We need to stop trying to run things and insisting that things go our way. We need to give ourselves wholly unto the Lord. However, it is impossible to totally give ourselves to the Lord (Rom 12:1-2) apart from loving Him as our greatest good. Moreover, we are simply too fragmented with vagrant lusts for other “goods” in our desires to be able see Him as our irresistible good apart from the ministry of the Holy Spirit to unite our minds and wills around the Lord as we seek to love Him. No one can love the Lord in his own power. The efficient cause must come from God. All we can provide is the formal cause.

Job 38:25–33. God sends the rain to areas not inhabited by humans (**26–27**), the point being that God does care about animals, even the animals of the desert. Further, God can distribute the rain as he chooses. He is not compelled to cause it to fall in areas inhabited by humans. Continuing his interrogation, the Lord now questions Job about the paternity of the rain and dew and the maternity of the ice and frost. The language is clearly poetic, but its intent is clear. Again Job knows little or nothing about these matters. Job is now confronted with questions about the constellations. The first two constellations are identified as Pleiades and Orion (**31**). The stars of verse **32** are not easily identified. Reference is made to the laws which govern the movement of the celestial bodies. The last half of **verse 33** is rendered to designate either God’s dominion over the earth.

By proper knowledge and by proper love. As God queries Job, Job was likely wishing for a reprieve; but the Lord kept right on. He centered Job’s attention on the heavens—the Pleiades, Orion the hunter, the various constellations, and the Bear. Did Job understand the laws that governed their movements, and could he control these stars and planets and make them appear in their proper seasons? Man may study the heavens, but he can’t give them existence or create the laws that govern them. We would all be far better off by shutting our mouths, like Job, about temporal details of life and just stop and look at the wonders of creation and the gift of life. To do so opens up a wonder and an amazement of it all that leads to appreciation and love for the Maker who continues to provide for everything that exists. We have all been given the wonderful gift of life. What an amazing thing! And what an amazing thing to look at all of the other gifts He provides. These truths are never far from those who really seek it. *Quo Vadis?*

Life in God by proper knowledge and by proper love.

Pastor Don