

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
September 2, 2016

Hosea 3:1–5:15. Hosea’s wife has returned but Israel has not.

Acts 2:1–41. The beginning of the Church.

Job 15:10–20. Eliphaz attributes wickedness to Job.

COMMENTS:

Hosea 3:1–5:15. Chapter 3 records the return of Hosea’s wife. Of course, this is a picture of God’s love for the people of Israel who will one-day return to Him. Gomer had left Hosea and was living with a lover, another picture of the way Israel had treated the Lord. Hosea had to buy her back at a cost of fifteen pieces of silver (half the price of a slave, Ex. 21:32) and about ten bushels of barley. This was not an exorbitant price, but she had cheapened herself by her sins. We need to remember that God has purchased us at the tremendous cost of the precious blood of His only Son (1 Peter 1:18–19). As far as Israel, she has not yet returned to her Lord. Though purchased by her Messiah (John 11:47–52; Isa. 53:8), she has not yet returned to the Lord. Israel today is without a king because she rejected her King and therefore has no kingdom. “We will not have this man to reign over us” (Luke 19:14). “We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:15). She has no prince because there is no reigning dynasty in Israel. All the records were destroyed when the Romans captured Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and nobody can prove to which tribe he or she belongs. The Israelites have no sacrifice because they have no temple, altar, or priesthood. They don’t have a pillar (image) or a household god (teraphim), because idolatry was purged from their culture during the Babylonian Captivity. They lack an ephod (Ex. 28:1–14), because they have no high priest. The only High Priest God will acknowledge is the interceding Son of God in heaven. But there is an “afterward”! Israel won’t stay “without,” for she will see her Messiah, repent of her sins, and say, “You are my God!” They will enter into that blessed relationship in which the Lord says, “You are My people!” This will occur in “the latter days” when the messianic King sits on David’s throne and judges righteously (Matt. 19:28; Luke 1:32–33). In **chapter 4** we have threefold indictment as the Lord accuses Israel of having (1) no faithfulness, truth, or integrity, (2) no love, compassion, or kindness, and (3) no knowledge of God. In personal relationships, they were characterized by lying, cruelty, and greed. Their understanding of God was perverse, their relationship with Him nonexistent. As a result, they were violating His mandates and suffering the consequences. The common people and women are identified as guilty, but especially are the priests. Note who those mislead God’s people invite special punishment. **The section of 4:15-5:15** contains three warnings from God (4:15; 5:1; 5:8). Because of Israel’s adulterous idolatry, arrogance, and stubbornness, they were warned that God would blow them away like a whirlwind, eat away at them like a moth or rot, and tear them to pieces like a lion—all consequences of not growing in the Lord *by knowledge and by love*.

Acts 2:1–41. This chapter covers the inception of the church. Up to this point the church was anticipated (Matt. 16:18). The church is constituted a body by means of Spirit baptism (1 Cor. 12:13). The first occurrence of the baptism of the Spirit therefore must indicate the inauguration of the church. An evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was other tongues (ἑτέρας γλώσσαις). These were undoubtedly spoken living languages; the word used in 2:6, 8 is *dialektō* (διαλέκτω), which means “language” and not ecstatic utterance. This gives insight into what is meant by “tongues” in chapters 2; 10; 19; and in 1 Corinthians 12–14. The references to “wind” and “fire” are significant. The word for “Spirit” is related to *pnoe*, the word translated “wind” here. It also means breath. Both nouns—“spirit” and “wind” or “breath”—are from the verb *pneō*, “to blow, to breathe.” The sound like the blowing of a violent wind from heaven points to the power of the Holy Spirit and the fullness of His coming. The tongues of fire portray the presence of God. Several times in the Old Testament God displayed Himself in the form of flames (Gen. 15:17; Ex. 3:2–6; 13:21–22; 19:18; 40:38; cf. Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16). No believer there was exempt from this experience, for the flames separated and came to rest on each of them. Their speaking took place as the Spirit gave them utterance—not as a self-initiated exercise. The filling of the Spirit here indicates a special enablement which on this specific occasion as well as others resulted in spiritually enhanced and empowered speech. On the issue of “baptism,” it is important to understand that when we read about “baptism” in the New Testament, we must exercise discernment to determine whether the word is to be interpreted literally or symbolically. For example, in Romans 6:3–4 and Galatians 3:27–28, the reference is symbolic since water baptism cannot put a sinner into Jesus Christ. Only the Holy Spirit can do that (Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:13; see Acts 10:44–48). Water baptism is a public witness of the person’s identification with Jesus Christ, while Spirit baptism is the personal and private experience that identifies the person with Christ. As we have studied, the meaning of reality (baptism) is in *extra-mental* reality, not in the word—contrary to modern semiotics (and idealism), which many of us have been adversely influenced by under exegetes who operated in the realm of idealism as they make the object of reality the word and its “meaning” instead of the natures of things penetrated by the intellect—as we have studied at FBC in philosophy of language.

Job 15:10–20. According to Eliphaz, Job’s attitude was wrong because he refused God’s help (11–16). Eliphaz saw himself and his friends as God’s messengers, sent to bring Job the consolation he needed. Their words were “spoken gently” (11), but Job’s words were spoken in anger. The three friends were serving God, but Job was resisting God. Eliphaz repeats the message he had given in his first speech (14–16). Job had refused to accept it the first time, but perhaps he would accept it now that he had suffered more. If heaven is not pure before God, nor the angels that inhabit heaven, how can a mere man claim to be innocent? Man is born with a sinful nature and has a thirst for sin, and Job was no exception. All of this prepared the way for Eliphaz’s second warning. God judges the “wicked” (20). In his first speech, Eliphaz had described the blessings of the godly man; but now he describes the sufferings of the ungodly man. Eliphaz was careful to remind Job that these were not his ideas alone, but that the ancients all agreed with him. If Job rejected what Eliphaz said, he was turning his back on the wisdom of their fathers. While we should have an attitude of docility when it comes to wisdom of our fathers, unless and until we grasp the reality/wisdom directly *for ourselves*, it is strictly speaking “improper knowledge” or “blind faith” in the realm of infra-scientific knowledge, as we will study tomorrow at FBC in our science and faith series.

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

Pastor Don