

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
September 27, 2016**

Zechariah 10:1–11:17. Israel’s rejection of the Messiah and acceptance of Anti-Christ.

Acts 25:1–27. Paul’s defenses and attitude toward death.

Job 30:16–31. In his miseries, Job sees God’s power as a curse.

COMMENTS.

Zechariah 10:1–11:17. This reading can be divided into two parts: The Messiah will regather Israel and strengthen Israel (**10:2-12**) and her rejection of the Messiah, the Good Shepherd, and its consequences for Israel (**11:1-17**).

By proper knowledge and by proper love. Chapter 11 explains Israel’s rejection of the true Messiah and how they will accept a false messiah, the Antichrist, who will appear at the end of the age and deceive the whole world. It is a self-evident and undeniable fact that every human being seeks what he perceives is good. We do it every conscious moment. Even if what we choose is not enjoyable, we do it because it is a greater good than any perceived alternative. Even when we sin, we do so only because of some temporal good (e.g., pleasure). What we love also effects what we see. Consider the political commentators of last night’s debate between Trump and Clinton; note how love for Trump or Hilary effects their evaluation of the debate and the one they love (prefer). Consider Adam and Eve: even in their perfect state, Adam and Eve sinned because they perceived the fruit of the tree as pleasing and a greater good than God. All of this to say that when someone rejects God and the things of God, the consequences are always seeing evil (rejection of God) as a good and good (God) as evil. This results in calling evil good and good evil. Understanding these principles not only provides great insight into our acts of sin, but the ills of our country—again, everyone is seeking and protesting for what they see as their good—even those who protest and loot the cities of Ferguson and Charlotte; note how they seek justice as their good (even though their view of justice is evil). As far as our text, this explains why Israel will actually except the Anti-Christ. Anytime someone rejects the goodness of God and His plan, he ends up loving the darkness. However, evil is never loved as perceived evil, the evil must be viewed as a good to be pursued, which leads to exchanging the truth for a lie (John 3:19; Rom. 1:25). No one loves evil as evil. This is impossible for any human being or any created being. There are no exceptions. Israel will not accept the Antichrist as evil but as a good. This shows the importance of life with God *by proper knowledge and proper love*, which are the only safeguards not only for our minds, but for our appetites—as our appetites really are about what we love on an intellectual level (God and the Word of God) and sense level (be it the pleasing fruit of the tree (Gen 3) or the temptation to turn stones into bread in the desert (Matt. 4)). Saints live and thrive in God *by knowledge and by love*—and by doing so enjoy transformation of their minds and appetites (sanctification). What a wonderful method of sanctification: loving God as the Supreme Good, which He is without question. Since we are designed to seek the Good, let us seek Him who truly is Good instead of the evil that Satan peddles as good.

Acts 25:1–27. The first part of this section (**25:1–12**) records Paul’s defense before Festus. The second part covers Paul’s defense before Agrippa II (**25:13ff**).

By proper knowledge and by proper love. “Kill Paul!” had been the cry of the unbelieving Jews ever since Paul had arrived in Jerusalem. The situation increasingly grew more serious, for now it was the council itself, and not a group of outsiders, that was plotting Paul’s death. You would think that their anger would have subsided after two years, but it had not. Satan the murderer was hard at work (John 8:44). Satan wanted Paul dead! What was Paul’s attitude with regard to the real threat of impending death? First, he had been warned of this danger, but he had also been assured that the Lord would protect him, use his witness and then take him safely to Rome (Acts 23:11; 26:17). Second, he was not afraid of death as we see in verse 11 of this reading, “*I do not object to dying.*” Only by walking with the Lord *by knowledge and by love* can the believer live in the reality of his destiny with the Lord and not be in fear death. Proper knowledge enables the believer to know His destiny in the Lord. Proper love motivates the believer to want to be with the Lord. Note the connection between present life of walking with the Lord *by knowledge and love* and desire to leave this life to be with Him in Philip 1:21-23, *For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.* Those who live the Christ-centered life have once and for all been delivered from Satan’s authority and from the terrible fear of death: Hebrews 2:14 *Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.* There simply is to no way to be free from a fear of death apart from a cultivated daily transcendent relationship with the Lord, cultivated *by knowledge and by love.*

Job 30:16–31. In addition to his social rejection (**1-15**), Job continues to pile up his physical miseries one by one: his life was vanishing, nighttime was miserable, like a sword piercing to his “bones.” causing unending “pains.” With reference to God’s power, he felt God had grabbed him by his clothes and had thrown him “into the mud.” To be like “dust and ashes” signifies that he looked haggard and emaciated, ashen in color. Moreover, he felt that he was neglected by God (**20–23**). His cry to God was ignored. In fact, God even turned against him (Job felt), attacking him and tossing him about as in a violent windstorm. His three peers had done to Job what no one else would think of doing: they opposed him when he was “broken and in distress.” Yet Job had sympathized and grieved with people in their trouble. Hoping to get some help (good and light) from his friends Job got the opposite. Certainly their antagonism was undeserved! He elaborates further on his physical and emotional pain: inner “churning” (days of suffering), “blackened” skin (**30**), crying for relief, wailing like “jackals” with their doleful howls, and like screeching “owls” and peeling “skin” and intense “fever.” Consequently, his joy (harps and flutes often played joyful tunes) became grief; he was “mourning” and “wailing” like someone in a funeral dirge. His emotional pain is expressed throughout these verses (24–31) relate to his physical pain.

By proper knowledge and by proper love. Once he no longer saw God as good by *proper knowledge and proper love*, he viewed God as the destroyer of all of the good things of life. Such a view only intensifies and makes great suffering insufferable. Job would recover in the last chapter, but only by *proper knowledge and proper love*. There really is no solution to any human problem that does not include the combination of *proper knowledge and proper love* of God.

Life in the Lord by proper knowledge and by proper love.

Pastor Don