

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
September 28, 2016

Zechariah 12:1–14:21. Holiness unto the Lord.

Acts 26:1–32. God’s Light and Word to Paul.

Job 31:1–8. Sexual temptation.

COMMENTS.

Zechariah 12:1–14:21. Outline: Israel’s physical deliverance (**12:1-9**), Israel’s spiritual deliverance (**12:10-13:9**), the Advent of the Messiah and His Kingdom (**14:1-21**).

By proper knowledge and by proper love. In the last two verses of this section, we see that every believer will one day be totally dedicated to the Lord: Zechariah 14:20 *In that day "HOLINESS TO THE LORD " shall be engraved on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. 21 Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.* We might expect “holiness” to be written on the bells of the high priest’s robe (Ex. 28:36–38), but certainly not on the bells worn by the horses! And why would the common utensils in the home be treated like vessels used in the Temple? These two images are God’s way of saying, ‘In the Kingdom Age every aspect of life will be holy to the Lord.’ For the believer today, this is the Old Testament version of 1 Corinthians 10:31, “*Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God*”). There is no “secular” or “sacred” in the Christian life, because everything comes from God and should be used for His glory. This dedication will be natural because it will be motivated *by knowledge and by love*—it will not be a forced life of worship. The millennial temple will be a holy temple, *not defiled by those who neither know the Lord nor love Him*, and in it a holy priesthood will serve the Lord. Zechariah’s book begins with a call to repentance, but it ends with a vision of a holy nation and a glorious kingdom. The end for all of God’s people is *to know and love God*. It is our *telos*, the very reason we were created and the very goal of our lives.

Acts 26:1–32. Outline: Paul’s address before Agrippa (26:1-23), Paul’s appeal to Agrippa (26:24-29), and Paul’s innocence declared by governor and king (26:30-32).

By proper knowledge and by proper love. The light that Paul saw was supernatural; it was nothing less than the glory of God revealed from heaven. It actually had blinded Paul for three days (Acts 9:8–9), but his spiritual eyes had been opened to behold the living Christ (2 Cor. 4:3–6). But seeing a light was not enough; he also had to hear the Word of God. “I heard a voice” (**26:14–18**). Paul’s companions had seen the light, but not the Lord; and they had heard a sound, but they could not understand the words. They all fell to the earth, but only Paul remained there (Acts 9:7). Jesus Christ spoke to Paul in the familiar Aramaic tongue of the Jews, called him by name, and told him it was futile for him to continue fighting the Lord. In that moment, Paul had made two surprising

discoveries: Jesus of Nazareth was alive, and He was so united to His people that their suffering was His suffering! Paul was persecuting not only the church, but also his own Messiah! How encouraging it is to know that God in His grace speaks to those who are His enemies. God had been dealing with Paul, but Paul had been resisting Him, kicking against the “goads.” What were these “goads”? Certainly the testimony and death of Stephen (Acts 22:20), his own conscience, plus the faithful witness of the other saints who had suffered because of Paul. Also Paul had struggled with the emptiness and weakness of Judaism and his own inability to meet the demands of the Law. God desires all to be saved, and only those who stop kicking against the goads will accept His grace. What a wonderful thing to know that God’s love seeks a personal relationship with every single person, a relationship that can only exist *by proper knowledge and by proper love* as illustrated in Paul. Moreover, God’s grace is always the initiator.

Job 31:1–8. Job maintains his innocence. He declares of being guilty of lusting after a woman (1) for he knew that the “heritage” of sinners ends in disaster (2-3). He knew that God watched his every step (4). He also denies that he had dealt dishonestly with others (5-8),

By proper knowledge and by proper love. In this chapter, Job mentions three specific sins that could trip up any man: lust (1–4), deceit (5–8), and adultery (9–12). Lust is the first step toward sin, and sin is the first step toward death (James 1:13–16). It is one thing to see and admire an attractive person, but it is quite something else to look for the purpose of lusting in the heart. Jesus said, “*Everyone who is looking at a woman in order to indulge his sexual passion for her, already committed adultery with her in his heart.*” Sexual sins are a major problem in modern society due to saturation and exposure that was unheard of in previous generations (cf., TV, internet). The biggest problem is in habituation of illicit sex (from masturbation to actual illicit sexual activities with another person). Once a person gets involved in illicit sexual activity, he becomes a slave to his lusts and this ends up destroying his capacity for the non-sensual realm (virtue, metaphysics, God). The first prudent thing to do with respect to sexual temptations is to stay away from situations which can lead to illicit sexual activity. Sexual temptation is often a very seductive power. The believer is warned to stay away from it throughout the Word of God. Besides staying away from, it is incumbent upon every believer to grow his intellectual appetites, which then can dominate the sensual temptations and desires. It is not just a matter of suppressing sense appetites, one must grow the intellectual appetites, which will then enable one to continue growing in the Lord by proper knowledge and by proper love: 2 Timothy 2:22 *Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.* The stakes could not be higher: a love relationship with the Lord and a safeguarding of one’s purity unto the Lord.

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

Pastor Don