

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading For August 1:

2 Chronicles 30:1-31:21:

Yesterday we began looking at the godly reign of Hezekiah who restored right temple worship of the LORD. In chapter 30 Hezekiah reestablishes the Passover, the annual celebration of the LORD's redemption of His people out of Egypt which was to keep the eyes of the Israelites focused upon the LORD for His salvation and grace (Exodus 12-13). Though the Passover was not celebrated here in the first month of the Hebrew calendar as it was supposed to be (verses 2-3), Hezekiah was following law which did allow for its celebration at other times in extreme circumstances (Numbers 9:9-13). Two other interesting notes are found in the chapter. First, many of the remnant (true believers) from the northern ten tribes of Israel celebrated the Passover (7). Thus, the Chronicler shows that in right worship the entire nation is truly united as they should be, as well as the fact that the true people of God are now located in Judah. Second, many of those from the northern ten tribes were unclean when they ate the Passover, yet Hezekiah allowed them since its observance was so important (18-19). Under the circumstances it appears the LORD looked upon this with favor (20). This chapter moves our eyes forward in history to remind us that only through the shed blood of the ultimate lamb, Jesus Christ, can man be brought to the LORD to worship Him rightly and truly!

The final step of Hezekiah's restoration of right temple worship was his reorganization of the priests, as well as offerings to maintain the temple and worship (chapter 31). We read that all Hezekiah did to reestablish right worship was good, it was done with all his heart, and because of it he prospered. We are not only moved to praise God for our King who brings us before Him, we are reminded how important it is we come before God with a right heart that is not divided—to serve and love God with our whole heart! This, of course, can be done only by the work of Jesus Christ in us (Philippians 2:13).

Romans 15:1-22:

In Romans 15 Paul finishes out his appeal to the Roman Christians to be unified by calling their attention to Jesus Christ (1-7). He especially tells those who are strong, those who understand they have liberties in these matters, to be patient with those who are weak and not merely look out for their own interests (1-2). Christ's example was a fulfillment of Old Testament Scripture which Paul asserts was not just written for the people of that day, but also looked forward to the day of Christ and the people of Christ—being written also for our benefit that we might have hope (3-4). We should not miss in those two verses important application, namely that the Old Testament Scriptures are fulfilled in Christ and our hope comes through the Scriptures. Oh, how important it is we regularly feed upon God's spiritual food! Paul also makes it clear it is by God's grace we live in harmony with one another, we must pray for such, and also such harmony brings glory to Him (5-7).

In verses 8-13 Paul clarifies that Jesus Christ became a servant to the Jews not just for them, but also that Gentiles may come to glorify God. Paul's point seems to be that as Christ does His work in us of giving joy, peace, and faith, we come to see we have a certain future, that God will continue to work in us and even if we must give up rights or

freedoms that we might love another different than us, that is fine—God will provide for us. So we have the freedom and boldness to love each other to His glory. Herein we get at the climax of Paul’s application of the gospel to the Jew/Gentile division in Rome. In essence, he is saying that Christ’s work in you should bring about such hope that you are courageous and free to love one another no matter what!

In verses 14-22 Paul clarifies to his readers he believes they will work things out and then begins to turn his attention to his future missionary plans. These verses give the sense that Paul has completed both his gospel explanation and the application of that gospel to the current situation.

One of the main applications we should bring away from Romans is that the gospel is not just for unbelievers that they might have salvation. It is to be preached by believers to themselves daily that it might be applied in them. It is the essence, the core of Christ’s work in our behalf and His work in us. It is the basis for the new life to which we are called. May it be so in each of us!

Psalm 25:1-15:

Psalm 25 is an acrostic poem. Each verse begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It would be similar today to our writing a twenty-six verse poem, each beginning with a different letter of the English alphabet: A, B, C, etc. It is a reminder that God moves upon the different biblical authors in such a way that their own background, experience, talents, education, and personality are all utilized. The result is, for example, this well-crafted psalm is truly the work of David, but it also is breathed out by God’s Spirit.

Here are some highlights of the first fifteen verses: We are reminded to seek God’s help against our enemies, which is a great reminder for the spiritual forces (cf. Eph. 6:10) we face (1-3); we learn we should be praying about our understanding and application of God’s Word (4-5); and finally, in verses 6-15, David recounts several reasons why he should be able to ask for God to work in a very difficult time (the listing of which grounds David’s faith in God’s true character and builds his faith): a. He appeals to God’s covenant loyal lovingkindness (ESV: “steadfast love”), which is the eternal love God has had for His elect and exercised in the covenant with them (e.g. Jer. 31:3). b. He appeals to the LORD’s goodness and faithfulness. c. Finally, he remembers that God will help those who have been His friend, who have kept his covenant, and who fear Him. All of these are things God has promised to do.

What a great pattern for our prayer. As you come to God, remember the great promises He has made and also His attributes. These are fuel for the fires of prayer!

Proverbs 20:13-15:

Verse 13 gives yet another warning against laziness (by now we should get the message this is a real danger). Verse 14 is one of those proverbs that simply teach the young person the way things are: In market-place bargaining a buyer will often talk about how bad a deal is, then go away and boast about the deal he got. The point seems to be, just

beware this is how things work. Verse 15 shows that possession of knowledge and speaking according to that knowledge are far more precious than gold or costly stones. Obtain true wisdom-directed knowledge and speak out of that treasury. If you do, you will truly be a rich person!