

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading For January 2:

Genesis 3:1-4:26:

In yesterday's reading we saw that God created all things good and without sin. Today we find out that sin entered into the world by means of Satan tempting Adam and Eve and their giving into the temptation (3:1-6). The essence of the sin was not believing that God is good, that He knows what is best, and that He is sufficient. Sin broke and twisted each person (3:7), alienated man from God (3:8-10) and person from person (3:11-12 [thus relationships tend to be hard and people tend to hurt each other]), brought devastating effects on life and man's experience (3:11-19), and led to the brokenness of the creation itself (3:16, 17-19; Romans 8:19-20). All-in-all, sin caused mankind to fall into the realm of death, marked by continual sin and misery, as well as the inability to see our need for God or to trust in Him left to ourselves (Genesis 2:17; 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-12; Ephesians 2:1-3).

The devastation of sin is seen in the murder of Abel by Cain in chapter 4. This chapter also introduces the reality God begins to create a godly line of men who will know and serve Him. We will learn in Genesis that without such sovereign grace and initiative, man would never serve Him.

It should be clear by now that without the insight Genesis 1-4 gives to us, we cannot properly understand this world. We must know that this world was created by the infinite, personal, good God. Yet, it is broken because of mankind's sin. This explains our heartache, the difficulty of relationships, the pain, and the evil in the world. Yet, from the beginning, God planned a way of salvation for mankind, He had determined before He created and before mankind fell that once man did fall He would save mankind through a redeemer (3:15)! The rest of Genesis and the rest of the Bible is the unveiling of that glorious plan!

Matthew 2:13-3:6:

In today's reading we see several more indications that Jesus fulfills that to which the Old Testament pointed and that He fulfills specifically what the Old Testament had said about the coming Messiah. In 2:13-17 we learn that in Herod's attempt to kill Jesus which resulted in his murder of baby boys fulfilled that to which the Old Testament had pointed. For example, in Hosea 11:1 God, through the prophet Hosea, speaks of God's special salvation of Israel whom He has treated as a son. The fact that God saved Israel and that He treated them as a son was not only to deal with them in ways that carried out purposes for that day and time. Matthew makes it clear that salvation and that relationship served as a pattern or a type which helps the world understand how God the Father would relate to another son, namely the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Matthew 2:15 teaches us that Jesus Christ fulfilled, i.e. He carried out all that Israel was supposed to be. As such, He is the only one who perfectly obeyed the Father and thus fulfilled the requirements for God's blessings set forth in His covenant promises. As such, Jesus becomes the key for mankind experiencing God's blessings. It is only united to Him we receive as a free gift God's eternal life and blessing.

After showing in 2:19-23 that Jesus ended up living in a part of Israel which was despised (Nazareth), which fits with how the Old Testament speaks of the coming servant who would suffer in behalf of people's sin to save them (see Isaiah 52:14; 53:3), Matthew also introduces John the Baptist in chapter 3 who served as a forerunner of Jesus. The Old Testament had prophesied such an Elijah-like figure would be a forerunner of the Messiah (or Christ), so this is one more indication that Jesus truly is the coming king.

Psalm 2:1-12:

Psalm 2 tells of the king of Israel, the LORD's anointed, and how other kings and peoples have come against him and the nation. To oppose the LORD's anointed, the LORD's people, and the LORD is ludicrous, for the LORD is the ultimate king, the sovereign, and He will eventually deal with all who oppose Him. Therefore, He calls upon the kings to change their view of the anointed. In this psalm we learn a lesson which will be repeated throughout the Psalter: as the king of Israel goes, so goes the nation. In other words, for him to be blessed is for the people to be blessed. Additionally, this psalm also looks forward to the ultimate anointed of the LORD, the Messiah (see Acts 4:25-27). Along with the first psalm, this second also serves as somewhat of an introductory psalm—striking a note of future triumph by the LORD in behalf of His people. The reader of the entire collection is called forward to hope in the LORD, which should become the default view as the Psalms are read.

Proverbs 1:7-9:

In these verses we learn three very important truths which should shape our life and our reading of Proverbs. First, to have true knowledge and wisdom (skill and insight for godliness), we must first fear God. Fearing God is worshipping, trusting in, loving, not taking lightly, and seeing that God is to be more important to us than all people and things. Second, the disciple (the "son" in Proverbs could be an actual biological child or a student or disciple) must listen to the wisdom from the mouth of God (cf. 2:6) which usually is given through those who are our teachers, such as parents. What is in view here is learning the laws of God, the Scriptures, from those who are older and teach us. Third, when a person follows the wisdom of God, it usually brings great reward and results. In other words, this is the best way to go about things!