

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading for June 19:

1 Kings 20:1-21:29:

In chapter 20 we begin to read of the quiet ways in which the LORD works (see yesterday's reading). The LORD enables Ahab to defeat Ben-hadad of Syria twice in battle that he might know that the LORD is the true God and the one who has covenanted with Israel (20:13, 28). Yet, Ahab is disobedient to the LORD in sparing the life of Ben-hadad and thus seals his own fate. The picture we gain from the life of Ahab and of Israel at this point is that God has been repeatedly and graciously providing for him and for Israel, so much so He was giving them every opportunity to repent. And, yet Ahab continued to ignore God and to rebel. The readers of this book should be in no doubt about why the nation eventually went into captivity!

In chapter 21 we discover the depth of the wickedness of Ahab and Jezebel when they condemn an innocent man to death on false charges just so that Ahab can gain his vineyard. As we read in yesterday's Proverbs reading, such is an abomination before the LORD (Proverbs 17:15). Ahab does repent and so God's judgment will not come fully upon his house until the days of his son. Yet, these are dark and low days for the northern ten tribes!

Acts 12:24-13:15:

The theme of today's passage is found in the first verse (12:24): "But the word of God increased and multiplied." We see this in the fact that Paul (still also called Saul at this post-conversion time [13:2], yet from here on out will be Paul as he is engaged in missions to Gentile regions) and Barnabas are commissioned in Antioch to take the gospel out as missionaries and embark on their first missionary journey. They go to Cyprus and then Antioch of Pisidia.

We notice that the typical way they operate is to go to the synagogue first and to teach there. This came from two motivations: the gospel must first go to Jews (Romans 1:16) and second, here would be people who had some understanding of Old Testament prophecy and thus were looking for Messiah. As such, it would be a good place to start in evangelizing an area.

Psalms 137:1-9:

This psalm was most likely penned during the Babylonian captivity of Judah. It expresses grief and lamentation over their plight and prays that the LORD would bring justice. It is a reminder that we are to bring all things before the LORD in open and honest fashion (Philippians 4:6).

Proverbs 17:16:

Here is a simple observation that one who lacks the wisdom of God will not make good use of finances. The motivation, then, should be both to pursue God's wisdom for finances and also to follow what He says.