

## ***THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading For November 2:***

### *Ezekiel 3:16-6:14:*

After the LORD's communication to Ezekiel that he made him a watchman for the house of Israel (3:16-27 [a theme also repeated in Ezekiel 33]), we read of God's instructions that the prophet engage in an acted-out parable or, as one commentator, refers to it "street theater" (4:1-5:4). This was to symbolize to his fellow exiles in Babylon that their beloved city, Jerusalem would be under siege. This action took place sometime between Ezekiel's call (593 B.C.) and when the siege began (587 B.C.). In the rest of chapter 5 the LORD explains the parable, namely that even though Jerusalem has been given a special place among the nations around her (5:5 [this may denote she was to be a light to them]), she will be destroyed because even more than the nations around her she has exchanged the "judgments" and "statutes" of the LORD for wickedness (5:6). The remainder of the chapter is very clear that God's wrath will be poured out upon Jerusalem.

Chapters 4-5 not only comprise a sub-section within the book (God pronounces judgment upon Jerusalem), they also begin a long section of the book wherein the repeated pronouncement of judgment upon Jerusalem and Judah is the focus (chapters 4-24).

In chapters 6-7 the pronouncement of judgment broadens out from Jerusalem to all of Judah, yet in a very unique fashion. Each of these chapters addresses a physical element of the country, mountains in 6 and the land in 7. The real recipients are people, yet, in each chapter elements of the geography are addressed since there was connection with Judah's sin. The mountains are addressed in chapter 6 since so much of Judah's idolatry has taken place there. In chapter 6 we find two different times the common refrain of the book, "that you [they] may know that I am the LORD" (7, 14).

The LORD's desire for these exiles, as well as for us, is that we would know Him (Jeremiah 9:23-24), that we would focus upon Him in faith and worship (Deuteronomy 10:12-13). He does not want us to lose sight of Him because we have a host of other things which we reverence and in which we trust. By this point in our yearly reading, we should be struck by the extent to which the LORD went to get this across to Judah. Are there ways He has sought to get your attention that you might intensify your focus upon Him?

### *Hebrews 4:1-16:*

Continuing with the theme of rest which was introduced in chapter 3, the original readers of Hebrews (along with all who read it through the centuries) are encouraged to look to Christ, superior to Moses, who is able to bring us into the ultimate rest in the age to come. We are encouraged to persevere based upon the ongoing priestly work of Christ in our behalf and therefore not to fall short of our reward. Herein we find a key theme in Hebrews: a call to believers to persevere to the end or we will lose out on salvation. These warnings are real, yet, it is also true that the very way they work is that those whom God has chosen and who have been regenerated and justified will heed the warnings and they will continue in faith. The warnings are, in part, what the Lord uses to

this end. The warnings are used by God to drive us to ongoing trust in Christ all along the way.

*Psalm 104:24-35:*

A great guide for prayer which arises from these verses is verse 31: “May the glory of the LORD endure forever...”

*Proverbs 26:27:*

Here we learn a lesson which was introduced early in Proverbs 1:8-19, namely, that the foolish and wicked who set out to destroy others also destroy themselves. The life of sin and apart from God brings judgment from God, but it also brings consequences upon us which come from the way God has created the world and the way He continues to govern it.