

## ***THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading For October 1:***

### *Isaiah 62:6-65:25:*

In these last chapters of Isaiah (55-66), the prophet is setting forth the glorious future of God's people, along with the judgment upon those who reject the LORD. This is all designed to motivate Israel to please the LORD by faith in His future grace now.

Commentator Ray Ortlund says of Isaiah 61:1-62:12 that it reveals "the Messiah will preach into existence his new, liberated people, who will pray into existence his new, redeemed world." An important theme throughout Isaiah 40-66 has been that the LORD is preparing for and working toward the coming of the Messiah, through whom not only the remnant will be fully restored, but the nations shall come to worship the true God. Isaiah 62, therefore, is a prime example of the LORD, through Isaiah, setting forth a glorious future for His people. This chapter pictures the LORD working among His people to make them like a beautiful and loved bride in whom He, the bridegroom, delights. They will glorify Him through their righteousness and the LORD will preserve and protect them.

The future will not only be about the blessing of God's people, it will also be about judgment upon the wicked in the day of the LORD (63:1-6). Picturing the future time of Messiah from Isaiah's day it appears to be like mountain ranges which, from a distance, look quite bunched together, but are many miles apart. The events of the coming Messiah look as if they will happen all in a tight cluster of time in these revelations, yet, like with the mountain ranges, when they unfold, we find out that they are quite spread out. Isaiah 61:1-63:6 covers the entire time of the Messiah, from His first to His second coming.

Isaiah 63:7-64:12 appears to be an aside wherein Isaiah reveals the struggle present-day believers have, including himself. Currently they face a fairly dire situation, even though for a time the LORD has held back Assyria. In the future they have been told the nation will go into exile. Isaiah sings the praises of the LORD's past work, yet wonders aloud, "Where is he...?" (63:11). So, he prays for the LORD to work in their midst (63:15-64:12). We might be tempted to think that Isaiah's aside seems strange when he has been given so much revelation about a glorious future. Yet, the reality is that Isaiah is merely displaying the struggle that believers of all times sense. "Yes, we have promises, but how do we deal with the present calamity?" This section, then, forms a sharp contrast with all the glorious promises and thus reminds us of the choice we face. We can live in light of the present calamity, think that is all there is, and wonder aloud, "Where is God?" Or we can trust Him to be for us all He has promised to be for us in Jesus Christ! It pleases and honors the Lord when we trust His might, His goodness, His faithfulness, His love, and His holiness to carry out His promises.

In Isaiah 65:1-16 we learn that not only will the LORD save and preserve His remnant, but He will save people from the nations (Gentiles) as part of that remnant. What is more, He will judge those who reject Him, even those who are part of Israel.

Isaiah 65:17-25 takes the vision of the future blessing to its climax to depict transformation of God's people and of creation that is beyond anything mentioned thus far. Most likely, these verses speak of the transformation of those who are part of the kingdom now (in our day) and also moves into the age-to-come, the new heaven and new earth. Like with chapters 61-63, so here, these future events are all viewed as a closely clustered mountain range of events which, according to further revelation, we know to be distinct and distant from one another. Yet, like with the mountain range, so with these events, there is also continuity, namely, these events are all part of the work of the LORD to save His people and bring them to glory.

*Philippians 2:19-3:3:*

In 2:19-30 Paul explains to the Philippian believers he would like to send Timothy, a faithful servant of the Lord, to them soon to see how they are doing and to exhort them. Paul also hopes to come to them soon as well. He also expresses his desire they welcome back with joy and honor Epaphroditus from his trip to minister to Paul. In this brief part of the letter Paul displays his love for both the church in Philippi, as well as for those gospel ministers and leaders who are serving them. As such, the apostle provides a model for how we should relate to those with whom we serve or whom we serve, be it our family, a Sunday School class, a Bible Fellowship group, or a whole congregation.

In 3:1-3 Paul introduces his next topic after telling the saints to rejoice, the topic of how to deal with the false teachers among them (a topic which runs through 4:1). Paul exhorts them that they should "look out for those who mutilate the flesh" (i.e. those who were trying to make the Philippian Gentile believers think they had to be circumcised and thus return to the Law covenant). Paul's treatment of false teachers is a reminder to us that we must be diligent in studying God's Word and being able to resist those who distort it and who seek to lead us astray.

*Psalms 73:1-28:*

The first psalm of Book 3 is a wisdom psalm which takes up the topic of why the wicked seem to prosper (3-9). Though the psalmist is greatly troubled by this (10-16), he finds help once he turns to the LORD and is reminded that the ultimate end of the wicked is not good (17-22). So, rather than being tempted to follow the wicked, he realizes that God is his true prize, His true desire, the one whose way he wants to follow (23-28). In addition to the specific lessons of this psalm, the overall movement of it is instructive. When we struggle with questions in life we should take the approach so often found in the Psalms. Cry out to the LORD honestly and openly, admit our struggles, but look for solution in communion with Him and through His Word which leads us to make sense of the ways things are and shows us why we can trust in Him.

*Proverbs 24:13-14:*

Saying #26 of the collection of thirty reminds us that wisdom is as sweet and as much to be prized as honey. Therefore, we should seek it. This is none other than a call to pursue skill for godliness from the Word of God as applied to us through the illumination of the Spirit of God in response to prayer (Psalm 119:33-40; Proverbs 2:1-6; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16).