

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

### *Isaiah 66:1-24:*

Isaiah 66 forms the climactic conclusion to a book which has called the people of God in the late eighth and early seventh centuries B.C. to turn from their sin and trust God, not self or others (1-39). It then told of the LORD's deliverance of His people who would be exiled for their breach of His covenant, a deliverance which would ultimately be fulfilled through a suffering servant (40-55). This deliverance through the servant (of whom the book gives evidence is also Messiah) becomes a world-wide deliverance of the chosen remnant from among Israel and the nations, as well as judgment of those who reject—a promised and certain future hope which should move the people of God in Isaiah's day to walk in faith before the LORD (56-65).

The book ends here in Isaiah 66 by making it clear that even though currently in Isaiah's day the nation of God is unfaithful and does not worship Him in righteousness, nevertheless, there will come a time when sin is punished perfectly and fully and the people of God will honor the LORD all the time and in righteousness. Thus, this chapter gives a stark and contrasting picture of future glory and judgment, designed to call the people of Isaiah's day and us to the LORD.

### *Philippians 3:4-21:*

In today's New Testament reading Paul exhorts the Philippian believers to resist the legalistic false teachers in their midst, those seeking to put the church under the Law Covenant. These false teachers had boasted of their credentials, so Paul clarifies that he has even more reason to boast than they, since he was circumcised the eighth day, he was trained as a Pharisee, he had great zeal (even persecuting the Church), and walked very circumspectly and fully under the Law (this is what is meant by "blameless"). It should be noted that his reference to persecution of the Church not only demonstrates his zeal for the old Law Covenant, but also gives evidence of just how wrong he was. This is meant to show how wrong the false teachers are also. Yet, Paul does not boast in or put confidence in these credentials. In fact, he views it all as a loss and as rubbish compared to gaining Christ and knowing Him. Paul clarifies that his righteous standing before God does not arise from within himself, it is an alien righteousness, i.e. it comes from outside himself, from Christ and only through faith in Christ. Paul would rather know Christ and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming like Him in death and being raised, rather than trust in the old Law Covenant! Paul is showing how much greater Christ and the New Covenant are to the Old Covenant. Paul also goes on to say that he looks forward to the promises of Christ and thus forgets those things which are behind them (the Old Law Covenant).

Paul exhorts the readers to follow the example of those who, like Paul, walk according to the gospel and the New Covenant of Christ. The false teachers are enemies of the cross and serve their own appetites. Yet, those who are in Christ and follow the gospel, their (our) citizenship is in heaven and we await the coming of our Savior who will transform our bodies to be like His glorious resurrected body. In other words, we have a far greater hope than what false teachers who devalue Christ promise.

Today's reading should remind us that one of the main indicators of whether or not we should listen to teachers, preachers, or authors is what they do with Christ. Do they ignore Him? Reject Him? Merely assume Him and then suggest that the main thing is something beyond Him? Any of these approaches places them outside true New Testament Christianity, regardless of their claims and regardless of what name is on their church. All we have, all we ever will have, all we are, all we ever will be is because of Jesus Christ. He is our salvation, our justification, our sanctification, our wisdom, our present strength, our future hope, our inheritance and blessing from God!

*Psalm 74:1-23:*

This psalm is lamenting the destruction of the temple—most likely during the Babylonian captivity. (We must keep in mind that the psalms cover a wide range of time) In these 23 verses we get a good picture of how to cry out to God in times of anguish. The psalm ends with a concern for the glory, the cause of God (22-23). Such should be our passion in the midst of times when it seems God's people are not fairing well.

*Proverbs 24:15-16:*

Saying #27 of the collection of thirty tells us not to oppose the righteous or seek gain at his expense. That is always a losing proposition since with this comes the discipline and judgment of God. Two implications lie behind this proverb: We reap what we sow and God ultimately takes care of His people.