

## ***THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading For October 9:***

### *Jeremiah 12:1-14:10:*

Today's Old Testament reading shows us just how much Jeremiah the prophet struggled with the situation Judah was in and the opposition of the people to his ministry (remember the plot against his life in 11:18-23). Jeremiah struggles with the appearance that the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper (1-4). The prophet believes he has been faithful to the LORD and yet he is suffering, while those who have rebelled against God appear to be fine. Notice, though, how Jeremiah overstates the situation: "Why do all who are treacherous thrive?" (1) This is a reminder that most of the time we do not see the world accurately because of our own sin and pain, so we must be careful.

The LORD answers Jeremiah in 12:5-13 in a twofold manner. On the one hand, the LORD tells Jeremiah it is going to get worse, since He is judging sin in Judah. Implied is that he must remember why he is suffering. He is God's spokesman bringing God's message of judgment to a sinful people. On the other hand, because it is going to get worse, sinners will face even greater judgment, so understand that the sin of sinners is not being ignored. We should note as the LORD pronounces judgment on His people, He focuses upon the shepherds, the leaders of the people, who have led them astray (10-13). This is a recurring theme in Jeremiah (cf. 10:21; 23:1-40). Additionally, as is common in the prophets, the LORD also makes it clear to Jeremiah and to Judah He is not done with them. He will deliver and restore His people in the future, thus fulfilling His promises to them (12:14-17).

In 13:1-11 we see something else common among the prophets, an acted-out parable. Jeremiah is instructed to go and bury a loincloth by the Euphrates river which ruins it. The point is that in the same way this loincloth was made to cling to a man in an intimate way, yet has become ruined, so Judah was called to God to cling to Him in an intimate way and has become a ruined people, a people who cannot carry out their intended purpose. This is a great reminder that all those who belong to God are to remain close to Him (see Psalm 104:5; James 4:7-8) and thereby carry out our purpose as God-glorifiers (Psalm 8:5-6; 1 Corinthians 10:31).

In the remainder of the reading the LORD makes it clear through Jeremiah that He will bring upon Judah deserved judgment and, as such, great shame (e.g. 13:26-27).

### *1 Thessalonians 1:1-2:8:*

Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica, a church he planted (Acts 17:1-9), in A.D. 50 or 51. This means it is the second letter Paul wrote (the first being Galatians).

According to this letter, the church in Thessalonica was doing very well. Paul did not write this epistle as much to correct as he did to encourage an assembly which was doing well (chapters 1-3) that they might continue to grow and do better (4:1ff.). If there was any seed of a problem present it was a misunderstanding over the second coming of Jesus Christ, which he addresses in 4:13-5:11.

In these first two chapters we see Paul encourage the Thessalonians since he has heard of how the Lord has changed them and thus their faith and testimony have gone out into the world (1:1-10). In 2:1-12 Paul reminds them of how he loves them and has ministered to them with the heart of both a mother and a father. This is preparing for him to speak with them out of great affection that they continue to walk in a manner worthy of God (12).

The two main points of application found in today's reading are: (1) We should be reminded that Christ changes us so that we should be people of faith, hope, and love who impact others. (2) We should have great love, affection, and patience toward those to whom we minister.

*Psalm 79:1-13:*

This psalm laments the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. (1-3) and the fact that Israel has become a laughing stock to her neighbors (see Obadiah 10-14). The psalm asks the LORD to bring judgment upon those who destroyed them, to forgive their sins and to restore them for the glory of God (5-12). It ends by affirming that though Israel currently faces great anguish and shame nevertheless they will thank and praise God always. We are reminded from this psalm that God will someday right all wrongs and vindicate His people, we should bring our prayer requests before Him ultimately for His glory, and finally we should give thanks to God and praise Him in the midst even of hard times because of who He is, what He has done, and what He will do.

*Proverbs 24:30-34:*

Here is one more of many warnings in Proverbs against laziness. The person who has been justified and saved by the LORD, the one who thus walks in wisdom, is one who seeks to honor Him in all and to serve Him and others diligently. This will lead to a strong, industrious work ethic.