

SEPTEMBER 17

This is a good day to be reading your one-year Bible. There are a lot of great individual verses, and it is great to read them in the settings in which the Spirit set them. Also, there are some major high points of history, doctrine and theology in what we'll walk through. Grab a cuppa (however you interpret that) and enjoy.

Isaiah 25-28:13

There are a million things to observe and note today, so enjoy the stroll through these verses, knowing that next year and the year after, you'll see more and more. Basically, today Isaiah 25-27 is talking about the future blessings to Israel. Chapter 28 begins chapters full of woes, but even there we'll find a verse that will launch us right back into 1 Corinthians 14.

There are two things to keep your eye on in Isaiah. First, God is focused on Jerusalem. Since His promise to David and Solomon to dwell in Zion in the temple, He has set the city apart for Himself. Even though He has destroyed the city because of the faithlessness of the people, God shows over and over again, that He will restore. Second, in Isaiah we see how God uses the near events to talk about the final events. The near judgment of the nations reflects the future judgment of nations. The near deliverance of Israel and Zion will reflect the future deliverance when the Messiah comes. Humanly speaking, it is no wonder the people were confused in Jesus' time, thinking the Messiah would stay. But woven into Isaiah is also the sin of man and the suffering of the Christ.

Isaiah 25

Vs. 1-5 This is Isaiah's praise to God as he sees the arrival of the millennial blessing. One purpose of prophecy is to give hope in hard times. In essence, Isaiah sees how the plans made from the time of the fall and in the promise to Abraham (v. 1) bring to an end the kingdoms of man (v. 2), and lead all men to worship God (v. 3), which fulfills the promise to Abraham.

Vs. 4-5 Even in the oppression of the Tribulation, God will extend grace and *shade* to those who follow Him.

Vs. 6-9 Verse 6 sounds like the beginning of the Millennium and the blessing all nations will find under the rule of Christ. Verses 7-8 could signify the beginning of the Millennium and also the ending when everything is made new. If you look in Revelation you'll notice that verse 8 is quoted twice, once near the beginning of the Millennium (Rev. 7:17) and once at the end (Rev. 21:4). Look at Revelation 7:17 and you'll see some similar imagery, particularly having to do with heat.

Vs. 10-12 The pride of Moab is used here as an example of how God will bring down the proud who oppose the Lord, Israel and Jerusalem.

Isaiah 26

Vs. 1-6 This is a song of praise to God in the future Millennium and beyond.

Vs. 1-2 This is the praise of Zion.

Vs. 3-4 Verse 3 is a famous verse and I've heard it quoted often, but I could never have told you this verse was in Isaiah, much less *here* in Isaiah. This is the testimony of trusting in the Lord. This would be important in the days when the Assyrians tried to take Jerusalem, and it will be important during the years of the Tribulation.

Vs. 5-6 Apparently the Lord will bring humility and use *the feet of the poor and needy* to trample pride under foot.

Vs. 7-10 It is God's judgment that will level everything, showing His righteousness in this judgment. This sounds like John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Lord, making the high low, the crooked straight and the rough ways smooth.

Vs. 11-19 Notice the repetition of *O Lord*. The salvation of Israel will come from the Lord.

V. 15 sounds like the prayer of Jabez.

Vs. 17-18 Although Israel was ready for deliverance, by their own efforts they only birthed air.

V. 19 sounds like the resurrection.

Vs. 20-21 God tells the people to find shelter in the Tribulation as He punishes the earth. One of the things mentioned in Revelation is that the nations will put to death those who follow Christ. God will use the blood of His people to prove the guilt and sin of the world, and the righteousness of His judgment of the people on earth. *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink. It is what they deserve!* (Rev. 16:6)

Isaiah 27

Notice the marker, *in that day*.

V. 1 Some say this is God's judgment on a mythical creature representing all that was chaotic and against God. Others say it looks like that old serpent, the devil. I think it's Satan. This dragon is in Revelation too.

Vs. 2-5 This is the Lord making an invitation to come into His vineyard.

Vs. 6-11 This seems to be God cleansing His people through hardships and exile.

Vs. 12-13 Now He is calling them out of exile to Jerusalem. This gathering of Israel to Zion will be true after the Babylonian exile and at the end of the Tribulation.

Isaiah 28

Vs. 1-8 The word the ESV says is *Ah* is actually, "Woe." In Hebrew it is "OY!" Isaiah is beginning here with the northern kingdom, represented by Ephraim. The northern kingdom had experienced prosperity; but as a result of that prosperity, they didn't come to the Lord. They are called *drunkards* identifying their excess, but they were also drunk with idolatry. We have seen all of this during the ministries of Elijah and Elisha, grace upon grace, miracle upon miracle, and still they wouldn't follow God.

Vs. 9-13 After Isaiah pronounced judgment on the northern kingdom, apparently the leaders of the northern kingdom got wind of his prophecy against them. Verses 9-10 were their words back to Isaiah. Basically they are making fun of Isaiah for treating them like children. The words of v. 10 are actually mocking to Isaiah, because in the Hebrew it is the equivalent of sounds like, "blah, blah, blah, whatever, whatever, whatever, yakity, yakity, yak."

Vs. 11 Paul quotes this in 1 Corinthians 14:21. God is saying that since the people would not listen to Him and His prophets, He would speak to them through the babbling mouths of Gentiles to get His point across. In Isaiah's day, it would be the Assyrians leading the people into captivity. In Paul's day, the strange tongues were telling the Jews that the word and ministry of redemption was going beyond them to the Gentiles. It is interesting that Paul, via the Spirit, saw this verse as showing the meaning of the gift of tongues. Jesus said this to the Pharisees in Matthew 21:43, *Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits*. According to Romans 11:30, this people is currently the church; and according to Romans 11:31, it will change back to the Jews. The gift of tongues was to show the Jews that the gospel was being given to the Gentiles.

V. 12 God offered them rest and they would not hear it.

V. 13 So now, because they hardened their hearts, the Word of God (and the gospel of Christ in the future) will sound to them like "blah, blah, blah, whatever, whatever, whatever, yakity, yakity, yak." And in their pride they will not accept it until the arrival of that future generation of Jews that enters the Tribulation. Then Romans 11:31 will kick in.

Galatians 3:10-22

Vs. 10-14 Did you get that? Good! Notice that Paul mentions the Holy Spirit here. Following Christ in this body is extremely difficult as it is, but without the Holy Spirit to strengthen and guide us, it would be pretty ugly. What a wonderful gift from God.

Vs. 15-18 Did you get that? Good! God is saying that the promise to Abraham pointed to one individual, to Jesus. Even in the Davidic covenant, it pointed to one son, the Son of David - Jesus. Since Jesus was the fulfillment of all of these things, faith had to be the only stipulation.

Vs. 19-20 The reasons for the law were several. Here Paul gives the obvious reason: because of the sin of man. The law was like the markings on a highway to steer us in the right direction, waiting until Christ came, when we could understand God and follow Christ by the Spirit as new creations.

V. 20 This is a contrast between the law through Moses and the promise to Abraham. Apparently, Moses received the law from God but also through angels. This meant more than one intermediary. Abraham received the promise directly from God. The law was a covenant, based on the agreement of both parties, God and Israel. If you look at the promise to Abraham, although the covenant ceremony was set up with pieces of animals on both sides with a path through the middle, God was the only one who walked that path, making God solely responsible for keeping this covenant. Abraham's only "responsibility" was to believe. The Mosaic covenant required two parties to make the agreement. The Abrahamic covenant is really a promise made by grace to Abraham, and so only one person is required. And, God is one. And like Abraham's righteousness, the fulfillment of this greater promise would only require faith.

Vs. 21-22 The law isn't contrary to the promise, anymore than a temporary splint put in place until you get to a doctor is contrary to being healed by a doctor. It was necessary for a time, but only for a specific purpose. It couldn't fix the problem.

This is coming close to what Paul says in Romans 5:20, *Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.* In Romans 11:32 he says, *For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.*

I know this is all pretty tight theology, but remember the issue Paul was dealing with in the harvest. What must a person do to be saved and become a follower of Christ? The cry of the reformers was "only faith in Jesus." A person is saved and sustained in their walk with Christ by grace through faith. Grace and faith are both things we grow in our understanding of, as we follow Christ in the harvest reaching the lost and making disciples, who make disciples.

Psalm 61

The more I experience living in uncertainty, the more I appreciate how the Lord drove David to his knees to burn these words on his heart. All I can say is "amen."

Vs. 1-3 We have seen David crying out so many times, but this is classic. He asks God to lead him to the Rock that is only able to be reached by God Himself placing him there. God was all those things to David that we have heard of, a refuge and a strong tower.

Vs. 4-7 David's only wish was to dwell with the Lord. I was reading today where Jesus promised His disciples in John 14:23, *Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."* Dwelling with Christ is still an offer that is extended to those who will strive for it.

V. 6 David had been anointed when he was 12 or 13; and since then, although David had been persecuted and pursued, David was still surviving because of God's promise. That is why David could say this.

V. 8 This is typical David, promising to praise the Lord to all of mankind. Oddly enough, this is immortalized in Scripture and is exactly that, praise to God from David that is meant to inspire our faith.

Proverbs 23:17-18

Boy, do I need to hear this every day. Between this and the psalm, I guess the Lord is telling us to keep holding on.