



my grandma time

...doing simple things together!

Week 31, Day 1 --- Isaiah 54-58

Week 31, Day 2 --- Isaiah 59-63

Week 31, Day 3 --- Isaiah 64-66

Week 31, Day 4 --- 2 Kings 20-21

Week 31, Day 5 --- 2 Chronicles 32-33

Week 31, Day 6 --- Nahum 1-3

Week 31, Day 7 --- 2 Kings 22-23 - 2 Chronicles 34-35

Week 31, Day 1 --- Isaiah 54-58

Have you noticed the mood swings in Isaiah? One chapter is full of doom and gloom and the next is full of hope. The message is always consistent. God loves His people and desires for them to return to Him. Instead, most of them ignore God and make love to idols. Chapter 58 is a favorite chapter for missionaries. It is one of the clearest calls in the entire Bible to reach out and care for the poor. There seem to be two consistent messages that God is trying to communicate in Isaiah regarding our behavior. The first is to keep the Sabbath. Keeping the Sabbath is an acknowledgement that God is in control and able to provide. The second is to care for the poor. Again, this is an acknowledgement that it is God who has provided and who is able to provide even more.

Week 31, Day 2 --- Isaiah 59-63

A chapter of judgment, a chapter looking forward to heaven, a chapter about Jesus, a chapter of judgment, and a prayer for rescue. Today's reading is a good summary of what Isaiah has been all about. Some prophecies are easy to understand and easy to see if the fulfillment of the prophecy has already occurred. For example, Jesus quotes the following passage and claims that it refers to him in Luke 4:18 and Luke 7:22:

¹ The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners, ^[a]

² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor

There are also prophecies that are difficult to understand. In these chapters God speaks of a time of great prosperity for Jerusalem. Many of these passages are repeated in the book of Revelation. Is God telling us that there will be a time when the physical Jerusalem as we know it will be incredibly prosperous, or is He describing the new Jerusalem that is heaven? I don't know and I don't think we will know until what God has prophesied has come to be. I do know that it is a good practice to pray the prayer that Isaiah records at the end of chapter 63. We must be continually calling for God to be present in our individual lives and the life of our world.

Week 31, Day 3 --- Isaiah 64-66

God has a plan. There are two futures in this plan. For those who call on God there is a new future filled with blessing in a new heaven and new earth. For those who reject God there is only a future without God. There is nothing new in this future, but only more of the old suffering and struggle. Isaiah has lived to see his prophecy fulfilled as the Babylonians have come and the temple has been burned. There is no longer any chance that God will delay His judgment on the nation. Instead, Isaiah looks forward to the new heavens and the new earth. I think he also looks forward to the time of Jesus. He looks forward to the beginning of the church when God gathers His children from all over the earth to make a new beginning in Jerusalem. If you want a picture of what that looked like read Acts 2 in the New Testament.

Week 31, Day 4 --- 2 Kings 20-21

How does a good king produce such an evil son? I don't know. I do know that Manasseh was born during the final 15 years of Hezekiah's life. He wouldn't have been born if Hezekiah's life had not been extended. Manasseh committed just about every sin that one person could possibly commit. Even worse, he led the people to commit those sins with him. Tradition outside the Bible tells us that Isaiah was killed by Manasseh. There is no question that Manasseh's reign of evil was the final step in Judah's march toward destruction and captivity.

Week 31, Day 5 --- 2 Chronicles 32-33

My wife wrote up this summary of the story of Manasseh. I think it provides some helpful background.

Manasseh became a king when he was 12 years old. Manasseh's father, Hezekiah, had been a good king that followed God. Manasseh's grandfather, Ahaz, was a king that did not follow God. What would Manasseh do?

Manasseh chose not to follow God. Instead, he made lots of idols for the people to worship. He even put idols in God's house, the temple. Manasseh worshipped every god he could think of, but not the one true God.

Most of the people were happy to follow Manasseh. Manasseh killed the people who tried to worship the one true God. Sometimes he even killed people thinking he was honoring the idols he made. A lot of very bad things were being done in honor of the idols.

God tried to get Manasseh and the people to stop doing evil things, but they wouldn't listen. So, God sent an army to capture them and make them slaves. Manasseh was put in chains, a hook was put in his nose, and he was taken to Babylon. There he was so miserable that he prayed to God. Manasseh was sorry for the life he had lived. God heard his prayer and made Manasseh king again.

Back in Jerusalem, Manasseh got rid of all the idols and told the people to worship only the one true God. God was pleased with who Manasseh had become, but the people had a hard time giving up the way they worshipped idols. When Manasseh's son, Amon, became king he forgot the one true God and again had the people worshipping idols and doing evil things. The story of Manasseh (2 Kings 21:1-18 & 2 Chronicles 33:1-20) is a bit like the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32).

Week 31, Day 6 --- Nahum 1-3

This is a short little book with an interesting message. To me it sounds like ancient trash talking. God is saying to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, that she will not always be on the top. She too will be defeated. Judah can be encouraged that the power that threatens her will soon fall. It all happened. Assyria fell as Babylon rose.

Week 31, Day 7 --- 2 Kings 22-23 - 2 Chronicles 34-35

There were very few good kings in the history of Israel. Josiah was one of them. He does good during all of his reign and is zealous for the law of God. I wish his story had a happy ending, but it doesn't. While he pursued God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength, at the same time he apparently was not able to lead either his family or the people to do the same thing. As soon as he dies the country goes back to its evil ways and will soon go into captivity. Even a king cannot change the minds of a people determined to do evil.