

Read the Whole Bible with Pastor

Monday (March 11) – Isaiah 29

Isaiah 29 continues the woes pronounced upon Israel and Judah from the previous chapter. The woes of this chapter are addressed to “Ariel”, which translates to “lion of God” and is a poetic reference to Jerusalem. The Lord will encamp against His people (v. 3) because they have rejected Him. The Lord uses vivid language to describe this rejection: intentionally blinding oneself, and staggering as a drunk, though not being drunk with wine (v. 9). The picture being painted here is of people who have willingly “rejected the truth of God for a lie” (Romans 1:25), which sadly is something we are all too familiar with today. Lest we become like these fools, we must be on our guard not to be those who simply go through the motions of religion while our hearts remain far from the Lord (v. 13, cf. also Matthew 15:7–9). For our Lord Jesus Christ does marvelous works and wonders among us through Word and Sacrament which are perceived not by man’s wisdom but by faith (v. 14).

Tuesday (March 12) – Isaiah 30, 31

Chapters 30 and 31 declare woe upon those who look to Egypt for help (see 2 Kings 18–19 for the historical context). In the second half of chapter 30, we also see that the Lord offers grace before judgment (vv. 18–33). This is precisely how our Lord works among us—He has sent His Son Jesus to be our atoning sacrifice, so that all who would receive His gift of grace might be spared from the judgement which is coming when He returns in glory. And so it is that we must be careful to not place our trust in the “Egypt” of our day (i.e. the visible powers of this world that promise to save us). We must look to the Holy One of Israel as our hope for the future (31:1), not politicians, governments, investments, and the like.

Wednesday (March 13) – Isaiah 32, 33, 34

Isaiah chapters 32 through 34 are the “opposite side of the coin” from the previous chapters of woe, for these chapters foretell the day when “a king will reign in righteousness” (32:1), the Spirit will be “poured upon us from on high” (32:15), and the Lord’s “people will dwell in a peaceful habitation” (32:18). This describes the restoration which our Lord Jesus Christ brings about for us, for He is the King of Righteousness who has given us His Spirit and promised a peaceful dwelling to His people for all eternity. Though we be tempted to place our trust in earthly things (chapters 30–31), the Lord Himself saves and grants us forgiveness (33:22, 24). The promise that “your eyes will see the King in His beauty” (33:17) is one that has not yet been fulfilled among us, for now we see only with the eyes of faith, and that sight is dim (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:12). We don’t understand the Lord’s ways and how His judgment coming upon unbelievers (34:5) can be a good thing. So, we humbly submit to the Lord’s wisdom, allowing the fear of the Lord to be our treasure (33:6), and trusting that the promise of beholding our King face to face (Job 19:26) is enough.

Thursday (March 14) – Isaiah 35, 36

Isaiah 35 concludes the section of joyful anticipation of restoration with a powerful image of the desert being restored (cf. Ezekiel 47:1–12). In the same way, the prophet describes the restoration of mankind—the blind are given sight, the deaf hear, the lame walk (35:5–6)—which is inaugurated by the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. For our Lord did not come to earth merely to free us from sin, but also to deliver us from sin’s effects. And so, the miracles of our Lord healing the sick should be an encouragement to those who struggle with bodily ailments. You shall be healed to leap like a deer and to sing the praises of the Lord (35:6).

Chapter 36 begins to retell the historical context of these prophecies (cf. 2 Kings 18–19). It’s one thing to put your trust in the Lord and to place your hope in the promise of everlasting life in times of ease. The real test is when your faith is mocked and earthly trouble draws near. May God grant us the strength to endure such trials, should they come upon us!

Friday (March 15) – Isaiah 37

In chapter 37 we see how King Hezekiah perfectly embodies the warnings of the prophet Isaiah, which we read earlier this week. In the face of threats to his kingdom, he immediately turns to the Lord (v. 1), and the Lord rewards the king’s faith by delivering him from the hand of Assyria (v. 7). While we cannot use this account to conclude that God will always grant the petitions we bring before Him, we do see an important principle in the Lord’s words against Sennacherib: The enemies of God’s people are the enemies of God (v. 23). While the Lord might not always deal with our enemies in the way that we think He should, we can trust that He will bring justice upon them in the end, as He did with Sennacherib (vv. 36–38).

Saturday (March 16) – Isaiah 38, 39

Chapter 38 parallels 2 Kings 20:1–11. The major difference in this chapter is the inclusion of Hezekiah’s writing in verses 10–20. It is a beautiful poem, focusing on the reality of death and the forgiveness and salvation of the Lord. This chapter reminds us that death is coming for all of us, barring the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. We would do well to ponder our own death, making the words of verse 20 our own prayer of hope for eternal life.

Chapter 39 is a brief chapter detailing a mistake of King Hezekiah (see 2 Kings 20:12–19). While Hezekiah did not live to see the captivity of his people under the Babylonians (see 2 Kings 24–25), his actions directly impacted them. We ought to be cognizant of how our own actions may affect future generations.

Sunday (March 17) – Isaiah 40, 41

Isaiah chapters 40 and 41 signal a significant shift in the book of the prophet Isaiah. There are two significant themes developed in these chapters: 1) The Lord comforts His people, and 2) The Lord is greater than the idols of the nations. The Lord’s comfort, brought about by our Lord Jesus Christ, shows how the Christian God is greater than any other—He gives freely to His people, whereas all the other gods and religions require something in return.