

# Through The Bible In One Year

## The Adventure of Many Lifetimes

Unpublished Work, December 2005, David W. Shockey.

### Daily Scripture Selection

#### Week 37

**Day 253.** Isaiah 6.1-7.25; 2 Corinthians 11.16-33;  
Psalm 54.1-7; and Proverbs 23.1-3.

**Day 254.** Isaiah 8.1-9.21; 2 Corinthians 12.1-10;  
Psalm 55.1-21; and Proverbs 23.4-5.

**Day 255.** Isaiah 10.1-11.16; 2 Corinthians 12.11-21;  
Psalm 56.1-13; and Proverbs 23.6-8.

**Day 256.** Isaiah 12.1-14.32; 2 Corinthians 13.1-14;  
Psalm 57.1-11; and Proverbs 23.9-11.

**Day 257.** Isaiah 15.1-18.7; Galatians 1.1-24;  
Psalm 58.1-11; and Proverbs 23.12.

**Day 258.** Isaiah 19.1-21.17; Galatians 2.1-16;  
Psalm 59.1-17; and Proverbs 23.13-14.

**Day 259.** Isaiah 22.1-24.23; Galatians 2.17-3.9;  
Psalm 60.1-12; and Proverbs 23.15-16.

## Through The Bible In One Year: Week 37 Sunday Worship Lessons

First Lesson (Old Testament): Isaiah 6.1-8  
Psalm: 57.1-11

Second (New Testament) Lesson: 2 Corinthians 12.2-10

Theme: Our Limitations Provide God's Opportunity

### **Sunday Scripture Selection and Theme Explanation, Week 37:**

What do we do with our weaknesses? Most often we hide them and assume masks, seeking to appear stronger than we are, which actually makes us weaker still, as insecurity and shame gnaw away at our souls. Instead of embracing our weakness, we wish we could live without weakness, on a continual high. The Bible passages chosen talk about two people who were given amazing spiritual experiences: Isaiah, the Old Testament prophet, was given a vision of heaven, while Paul was caught up into heaven, either through a vision or in the body, he could not say which afterward. A danger in such experience is that we might come to desire these delicious gift experiences for themselves, and lose sight of the most important gift of all: God himself. But a mark of the genuineness of these spiritual experiences is they ground us all the more firmly in the reality of true self knowledge: we are always dependent on God. Isaiah immediately declares not 'how great I am' for receiving such an experience but 'how great thou art' God. 'Woe is me' he says, "for am a man of unclean lips and dwell among a people of unclean lips.' His sense of his sinfulness grounds him solidly in God's forgiving grace and the greatness of God's love. An angel is sent from the altar with a fiery coal that forgives his sin when it touches his lips. Paul is grounded in humility because of a 'thorn in the flesh' which he cannot remove and prays persistently for God to remove for him. Instead, God responds simply 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' The power of God is known most fully as we receive gratefully his forgiving, life-sustaining love. Paul responds 'Therefore I will boast all the more about my weaknesses so that Christ's power may rest on me' Isaiah, cleansed and forgiven responds to God's invitation "Whom shall I send?" by responding, despite his natural weakness, 'Here am I, send me!' trusting in God's power and not his own. Like Paul, he knew "When I am weak, then I am strong" in God's strength, which like his love cannot fail. His weakness, like Paul's thorn in the flesh, became an opportunity to serve others for God with a soul-touching vulnerability that made them more effective instruments for God. God's Son dying in weakness like a criminal on the cross and rising to conquer sin and death is the ultimate sign and proof that God's strength is made perfect in weakness. For those who love and follow Jesus Christ, even our limitations and weaknesses are transformed to be 'strengths'—ways we can touch others more deeply with Christ's love, even as we have been touched with it despite our weaknesses.