

Through The Bible In One Year

The Adventure of Many Lifetimes

Unpublished Work, December 2005, David W. Shockey.

Daily Scripture Selection

Week 44

Day 302. Lamentations 1.1-2.19; Philemon 1.1-25;
Psalm 101.1-8; and Proverbs 26.20.

Day 303. Lamentations 2.20-3.66; Hebrews 1.1-14;
Psalm 102.28; and Proverbs 26.21-22.

Day 304. Lamentations 4.1-5.22; Hebrews 2.1-18;
Psalm 103.1-22; and Proverbs 26.23.

Day 305. Ezekiel 1.1-3.15; Hebrews 3.1-19;
Psalm 104.1-23; and Proverbs 26.24-25.

Day 306. Ezekiel 3.16-6.14; Hebrews 4.1-16;
Psalm 104.24-35; and Proverbs 26.27.

Day 307. Ezekiel 7.1-9-11; Hebrews 5.1-14;
Psalm 105.1-15; and Proverbs 26.28.

Day 308. Ezekiel 10.1-11.25; Hebrews 6.1-20;
Psalm 105.16-36; and Proverbs 27.1-2.

Through The Bible In One Year: Week 44 Sunday Worship Lessons

First Lesson (Old Testament): Lamentations 3.19-33

Psalm: 102.1-11

Second (New Testament) Lesson: Hebrews 2.14-18

Theme: The Chore God Really Hates To Do (The Alien Work of God)

Sunday Scripture Selection and Theme Explanation, Week 44:

Why do bad things happen to people? The one ultimately responsible is God, and we should not let him off the hook. Is God arbitrary? Or worse, does God actually like afflicting people? Since God is all powerful, God at least allows bad things to happen. God's Old Testament people, Israel, went their own way and suffered the harsh consequences through the destruction of their land and their deportation to live practically as slaves in the land of the conquerors. Yet despite all the contradictory evidence, in the midst of all the destruction and desperation, Jeremiah proclaims the counterintuitive truth that God does not willingly afflict anyone. The writer of Hebrews proclaims the reason believers can affirm God's goodness with complete certainty. God sent his own Son, Jesus Christ, to become like us and to suffer everything we suffer, in order to free us from suffering and slavery to the fear of death. Not only does God not willingly afflict anyone or delight in peoples' suffering, God has taken the ultimate step to free people from suffering: he has taken it upon himself, in order to take it away.

Alternate Readings & Themes:

1. **“You’ve Got To Free Your Slaves”** With our self-centered and manipulative ways, people today still seek to bend people to our will and make them serve us. Jeremiah describes the way that the Old Testament people of God, Israel, had essentially become slaves themselves, because they sinned and enslaved others. Centuries later Paul writes to Philemon about his slave, Onesimus. Paul asks and urges him not only to free him, but to receive him as a brother in Christ. The radical event of Christ's cross and the very nature of Christ breaks the power of our self centeredness. The love and faith of Jesus breaks down all barriers between people, freeing us to set others free by renouncing our claims over ourselves and our need to bend them to our will and well being. **Lamentations 1.1-5; Psalm 103.1-12; Philemon 1.4-16.**
2. **“The Word of God”** After a stunning vision of the awesome angels of heaven, Ezekiel sees the Son of Man. When he speaks, Ezekiel falls at his feet as one dead, overcome by the glory and power. The Son of Man calls him and gives him a mission to take his word to a rebellious people. Whether or not they receive it, they will know that a prophet of God has spoken among them, for God's word carries the power of the One who speaks it. Centuries later, the writer of Hebrews calls that same Word a sharp, two-edged sword that pierces between the soul and the spirit—that penetrates right to the center of our being. This word is Jesus Christ, who expresses the very heart and mind of God for people: that they might have life together with God through him. **Ezekiel 1.24-2.5; Psalm 105.1-11; Hebrews 4.12-16.**