CbC to Oct 3

September 27 Su Reading B270 — Isaiah 60 — Your Everlasting Light **Audio:** Isaiah 60 (ESV)

The Attraction of Light — This chapter looks far ahead to the final restoration of God's people to their land. It would be partially fulfilled under Ezra and Nehemiah in Judah's return from Babylon and later fulfilled through the coming of Jesus. Its final fulfillment will be at the New Jerusalem of Rev. 21:22ff. Light is a feature of today's passage in Isaiah 60, beginning with the challenging hope, "*Arise, shine, for your light has come … the glory of the LORD*" (v. 1). As moths are attracted to light, so for Israel, "*nations shall come to your light*" (v. 3). This is good for us to remember, too. What attracts people to God today? It is the glory of the Lord that shines through us. It is not our holiness—the world sees us as hypocrites—it is God's holiness that is within us, which can be attractive to people around us. They will likely be confused regarding what it is, so we need to tell them about the wonder of who God is. He is the light that they sense. The last part of this chapter jumps to the end of God's dealing with people on earth. Those who are redeemed will be transported to a place where, "*The sun shall be no more your light … but the LORD will be your everlasting light*" (v. 19).
****

September 28 M Reading B271 — Isaiah 61 — Anointed by God **Audio:** Isaiah 61 (ESV)

ACCOUNTABILITY TIME!

God is Yahweh — Who is the speaker in this chapter? At first, it seems to be the prophet Isaiah, whose purpose it is "*to bring good news to the poor*…" (v. 1). In a sense, that is the responsibility of every Christian, too. We are messengers of the gospel. The speaker can also be seen as the Messiah, however, since Jesus made it clear when He chose these first two verses to read publicly in His hometown synagogue of Nazareth. After He finished reading, He said, "*Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing*" (Luke 4:21). The same "*Spirit of the Lord GOD*" was upon both Jesus and Isaiah, and it is also on us Christians. Something interesting in this chapter is that it begins and ends by calling God, "*the Lord GOD*" (vv. 1, 11). Notice the capitalization in this expression. This is unusual because about 98% of the time, a similar OT expression is written as, "*the LORD God*." What is the difference? In most translations, when the whole word is in capital letters, it indicates the name of God: Yahweh (YHWH in Hebrew consonants). In most cases, then, it means "Yahweh, who is God," perhaps emphasizing His character. In this chapter, however, it starts and finishes with the very unusual sense, "the Lord, who is Yahweh," likely stressing His sovereignty.

ACCOUNTABILITY TIME! If you are up to date in your reading as of today, please let me know at accbibleread@gmail.com.

****

September 29 Tu Reading B272 — Isaiah 62 — My Delight **Audio:** Isaiah 62 (ESV)

ACCOUNTABILITY REMINDER

A New Name — This chapter continues to look ahead to a time in the future of God's people. Verse 3 promises that "*you shall be called by a new name*." Like the names spoken of in the book of Hosea, here God changes names for His people from negative to positive—from "*Forsaken*" and "*Desolate*" to "*My Delight is in Her*" and "*Married*" (v. 4). Their new names also include, "*The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD … Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken*" (v. 12). The only other

place in the Bible where someone will be given a "*new name*" is in a message to the Church in Pergamum: "*To the one who conquers … I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it*" (Rev. 2:17). I have a small, white granite stone on my dresser that I picked up in now-spelled Pergamon, Turkey, to remind me of the name that awaits me at the Lord's Coming, the new name that I will receive in heaven. It will be unique, fitting, and treasured—not the name my mother and father gave me, but a perfect one from my heavenly Father.

ACCOUNTABILITY REMINDER **If you are up to date in your reading as of today, but did not report yesterday, please let me know at accbibleread@gmail.com.**

****

September 30 W Reading B273 — Isaiah 63 — Mighty to Save **Audio:** Isaiah 63 (ESV)

ACCOUNTABILITY FINAL DAY

The Tender Warrior — Like a watchman from the wall of Jerusalem, Isaiah saw this divine warrior coming, after being victorious over Edom, the representative of God's enemies. This warrior is the Messiah, the one "*mighty to save*" (v. 1), so mighty that without any outside aid, He accomplished salvation by His "*own arm*" (v. 5). Rather unexpectedly, this Mighty Warrior showed tenderness as well. Although He had to punish His people for their rebellion, "*In all their affliction he was afflicted*" (v. 9). As a loving Father, God does not delight in our discipline; He suffers with us. He disciplines us for our own good, to get us back on track, but it gives Him pain. Even before the discipline, God showed another kind of tenderness: "…*they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit*" (v. 10). His suffering begins with our sin. He is mighty but tender. Paul commanded us Christians: "*do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God*" (Eph. 4:30). We grieve Him by our sin, and we also grieve Him when He corrects us.

ACCOUNTABILITY FINAL DAY! **If you have not yet reported for this month, please let me know your reading status today at accbibleread@gmail.com.**

****

October 1 Th Reading B274 — Isaiah 64 — Come Down! **Audio:** Isaiah 64 (ESV)

Reasons to Rescue — This was a desperate cry to God for help, saying, "*come down*" (v. 1) and "*please look*" (v. 9). There was a longing for "*your presence*," repeated three times in verses 1-3. Isaiah freely admitted the guilt of God's people, who had been sinning "*a long time*" (v. 5). They were unclean like a leper, soiled like a menstrual cloth, faded like a leaf, and blown away like the wind (v. 6). It was no wonder they thought that "*you have hidden your face from us*" (v. 7). Isaiah presented three reasons why God should forgive and restore His people. First, was His uniqueness: "*no eye has seen a God besides you*" (v. 4). He wanted "*the nations* [to] *tremble at your presence*" (v. 2) because their gods could never do what they would see God do. There is only one God, so Isaiah called upon Him for help. We should look to Him in the same way, instead of depending on our own wisdom, cleverness, and ability to bail us out. The second reason given for being restored was that "*you are our Father*" (v. 8a). That speaks of love and responsibility. Helping is what a good father does. It assumes the motivation of the Father's love as well as His ability to perform. The third reason is in the same verse: "*you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand*" (v. 8b). He is our Creator. He made us for the purpose of living in obedience to Him, but He also gave us the choice to disobey. Why should we ever want to be disobedient to the One who created us? When we do fail Him, however, we need to confess our sin and humble ourselves before our unique and loving Creator, asking for His merciful forgiveness.

****

October 2 F Reading B275 — Isaiah 65 — Grazing Wolf and Lamb **Audio: Isaiah 65 (ESV)**

Blessings and Curses — How God will deal with people in the end is summarized in this chapter. In part, it looks ahead to the time we live in, when God would call out to Gentiles ("*those who did not ask for me … a nation that was not called by my name*"—v. 1). The descendants of Jacob had been "*a rebellious people who walk in a way that is not good*" (v. 2). To them, God said, "*I will indeed repay … your iniquities*" (v. 6-7). God turns away from those who rebel, but He turns toward those who seek Him. Even for His own chosen people, however, God would "*not destroy them all*" (v. 8), but He would preserve a faithful remnant who would possess and thrive in the Promised Land from the western pastures of Sharon to the eastern pastures of the Valley of Achor (v. 10). The last half of the chapter pictures a somewhat puzzling future time when God would "*create new heavens and a new earth*" (v. 17). It is a place that includes a newly created Jerusalem (v. 18) with no more weeping (v. 19). That sounds like heaven, until we read that a "*young man shall die a hundred years old*" (v. 20), and sinners will be present. Where the "*wolf and the lamb shall graze together*" (v. 25), certainly seems like heaven. The picture is confusing, but the message is not: believers will be rewarded in ways hard to describe.
****

October 3 Sa Reading B276 — Isaiah 66 — Glory of the Nations **Audio: Isaiah 66 (ESV)**

Trembling Respect — This final chapter of Isaiah describes those whom God saves and those whom He will punish. Among those who will be forever sentenced to a "*fire that shall not be quenched*" (v. 24) are idolaters ("*one who blesses an idol*"—v. 3), those who hate the righteous (v. 5), and God's enemies (v. 6). The description of the one whom the Lord will look toward for salvation is very simple: "*he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word*" (v. 2). Those people recognize and admit that they are sinners and are willing to turn away from their sin. That is the starting point: admitting that we cannot save ourselves, which eliminates people who hope to get to heaven by doing good things, which is an ineffective, human-based attempt to be saved. The second characteristic God looks for is one who "*trembles at my word*." That idea is repeated in verse 5: "*Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at his word.*" The Hebrew word for "*tremble*" here is not the common word for being afraid. It is used in only four other places in the OT. In 1 Samuel 4:13, the priest Eli's "*heart trembled for the ark of God,*" when it was taken as a good-luck charm into a war zone. Twice, Ezra spoke of believers who "*trembled at the words of the God of Israel*" (Ezra 9:4), and "*tremble at the commandment of our God*" (10:3). This emphasizes the holiness and power of the Word of God. We are not to treat it lightly or obey only what is comfortable for us. It must be taken very seriously and accepted wholeheartedly.