



MONDAY 1 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 28 & 2 Peter 3:9

Plug In...

Welcome to all who join us today for *The Daily Bible Reading Email* in 2018. We've been reading the Book of Isaiah across December-January. We return to Matthew's Gospel in February to coincide with the teaching series at *The Lakes*.

All the nations around Judah and Jerusalem have been told of their judgement (Isaiah 23-27). The entire world has been put on notice. Now Isaiah returns to the imminent judgement upon Judah's northern neighbour, Ephraim. Ephraim believe they've cut a deal with death and are safe. God says their refuge will be smashed by the rock He lays in Zion (v.16). This is where safety is found, for God's building is the only one that will last.

Chew It Over...

Isaiah 28:21 – God takes sin seriously and will judge, but it is His *strange* work. What is His 'normal' work? What does this announcement of judgement before the event reveal is God's common work?

Prayer Suggestion

Praise God for His mercy, and more mercy, followed by more mercy – all before the day He finally comes in judgement.



TUESDAY 2 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 29-30

Plug In...

The city Jerusalem, here given the name Ariel, will face God. The context is that God allows the enemies of Judah to come all the way up to the neck of Jerusalem ([8:8](#)). God is not arbitrary, this occurs because Jerusalem have been hypocritical in their life before God (29:13).

For those who don't recognise God, this is their punishment. For those that will recognise God and repent, this is their wake-up call (29:22-24). See how Jesus' disciples have been opened to listening and responding to Jesus ([Matthew 15:1-20](#)).

Chew It Over...

Of course we don't like pain, suffering, discomfort, tragedy! Thinking back over the last year, was there anything in those troubles that God used to get your attention? Can you be thankful for this?

Prayer Suggestion

Thank you Lord Jesus that you love us so much you will give us what we need – even if that is a harsh reality check. Thank you for not leaving us in blindness, but you've set us on the path to eternity. Thank you that God has planted us in heaven and that we hear the teaching of Jesus and respond in repentance and faith.



WEDNESDAY 3 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 31-32

Plug In...

So Assyria will come up to the neck of Jerusalem. Scary message for King Ahaz to reckon with. Can he trust God will keep him safe? Even when Assyria come so dangerously close? God says don't be fooled into going down to Egypt for support (31:1). Your only hope is to trust that God will come from heaven, hover like a mother bird over Jerusalem (31:5).

Chew It Over...

The picture of the kingdom in chapter 32 is wonderful (e.g. 32:15-20). Jesus announced He is the ruler that delivers that kingdom (e.g. [John 18:33-36](#)). Do you believe it? Chapter 32:6-8 provides tests: *Do you neglect to feed someone hungry in your midst? Do you make up stories about others, even a little exaggeration?*

Why would someone do these things? Not always because they have a personal vendetta against such people, mainly because they have a winner-takes-all approach to life. When and why does a person end up with such a life philosophy?

Prayer Suggestion

Pray to trust that all will be added unto us through Jesus. Ask for real ability to live with loss if it means standing up for the poor and those deprived of justice.



THURSDAY 4 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 33-35

Plug In...

A picture of the Lord rising up. There is a moment when He pronounces, “enough is enough”. Who can dwell when God comes? His holiness is a consuming fire (33:14). All nations – every person will be called to stand before God (chap. 34).

Yet, there will be people who see the king in His beauty and survive (33:17). Possible for sin to be forgiven (33:24).

Chew It Over...

Your fate? You are either forgiven, or the evidence of your lies, bribes, corruption, unrighteous anger, murderous plots, greed, swindling, selfishness – all that is catalogued in 33:15-16 – testifies against you.

Paul concludes all such actions are idolatry ([Colossians 3:5](#)). Think it through: How is it that sustained selfishness is idolatry? How do these chapters from Isaiah forge the connection?

Say you want to deal with lying. Why does trusting in God remove the need to lie?

What do you struggle with? How does that show you there is something about God you do not yet fully trust?

Prayer Suggestion

Thank God for redeeming us in Jesus. Thank Jesus for ransoming His life. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal ways you walk at odds with your faith and ask Him to strengthen your faith in that area.



FRIDAY 5 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 36-37

Plug In...

We shift to Hezekiah as king now experiencing Assyria actually come against Judah. The king of Assyria threatens Hezekiah. Hezekiah takes the words of the letter to God to deal with (37:14-20). God responds.

Chew It Over...

We learn that God will respond to the person who calls out to Him for help. While we still breathe, it is never too late to take our weakness, our problems, the threat against us to the Lord.

Prayer Suggestion

Here's the first verse of a great hymn. Let it guide you in prayer today:

What a Friend we have in Jesus,

All our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry

Everything to God in prayer!

O what peace we often forfeit,

O what needless pain we bear,

All because we do not carry

Everything to God in prayer!



WEEKEND 6-7 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 38-39

Plug In...

Hezekiah lives by faith and receives the Lord's protection. Then, suddenly Hezekiah abandons that faith – despite what God had already done and had given him. We see some envoys come from Babylon and Hezekiah gets over-awed by them and feels the need to show off his power and stupidly shows them all his wealth.

Isaiah comes with a message from the Lord. Because of this lack of faith, Babylon will come and take Judah. Hezekiah had been a freshening change to the kings of Israel and Judah, but turns selfish as the king (39:8).

Chew It Over...

Showing off gets us into trouble. Showing-off, bragging, boasting, reveal where we put our trust. For great people, for normal people – pride comes before a fall.

We live in a world full of comparison. We get sucked into its orbit. When measuring ourselves humanly we come undone before God. Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord Jesus alone ([2 Corinthians 10:17-18](#)).

Prayer Suggestion

Ask for humility. Ask that we find our identity in the Lord Jesus despite what others brag about.