



MONDAY 15 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 49

Plug In...

The first part of this chapters shows that the Servant who will redeem Israel will go further. God will make the Servant's work to save the world. The earth needs to shout for joy and rejoice (v. 13).

The second part is like a courtroom drama. Israel complains that God has forgotten them (v.14). The evidence shows that God abandoning Israel would be totally justified. But the next exhibit presented is the outstanding grace of God. Despite what Israel deserve, God has them close to His heart, He's engraved them on the palms of His hands. His love for them is such, how could He forget them?

Chew It Over...

We need to stop now and again absorb the magnitude of *underserved grace* we have been given through Jesus.

Look at how this shapes the Apostle Peter's identity and colours a simple greeting between Christians – see: [2 Peter 1:1-2](#).

Prayer Suggestion

Let this experience craft the words you speak to God today.



TUESDAY 16 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 50

Plug In...

The enigma of the 'Servant' continued to unfold in Isaiah 49:3-5. The Servant is to be Israel, and also to rebuild and gather Israel.

A picture of a Servant who is an individual emerges in from chapter 50:4. This one is abused, hurt, humiliated, yet responds with faith (50:9).

The theme of the Servant thickens with tensions: called Israel, will save Israel; a people rebellious, a single individual completely faithful.

Chew It Over...

When we watch the moves in Jesus' life we see He follows the path of Israel's early life (He came out of Egypt; was tempted in the wilderness – see [Matthew 2:13-14](#) and [4:1-11](#)). What might this mean in light of Isaiah 50?

1 Peter 3:18 – “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.”

Prayer Suggestion

Thank Jesus for complete faithfulness on our behalf. Ask that we respond with faith today, even should we see our sin.



WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 51 & Matthew 6:21-34

Plug In...

There is a call for wake up! (v.9). Recognise God and who He is (vv.10, 13). Listen and remember the words God promised to Abraham (vv.2-3).

Chew It Over...

In this passage, what things are we to observe in order to learn that some things last and other things don't?

Jesus draws on the same observations as He urges us to focus our eyes, heart, and life right. ([Matthew 6:21-34](#)).

Prayer Suggestion

Such focus does not come automatically – actually not at all from our own strength. There is a prayer that Jesus gives to ask for grace to focus our lives aright. Pray it today. [Matthew 6:5-13](#).



THURSDAY 18 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 52:1-12

Plug In...

As God announces to Zion a new future, He reflects that His people have not been in their land. They've been in Assyria. The LORD reflects that this brings dishonour to His name (v.5b). Israel's role is to be a light to the nations, to exist for their benefit ([Genesis 12:1-3](#)). How can that be if they are in exile, oppressed by another people. Just like the exodus from Egypt, where God brings His people out in order to fulfil the promise to Abraham ([Exodus 3](#)), God will do the same and bring His people up from Assyria. This time the place of dwelling with God will irreversibly be clean and holy (v.1).

Chew It Over...

Paul spoke to the Jews of his day pointing out that despite being a Jew, if their actions went against God's law then they are in the same condition that led previous Israelites into exile. He says, sin in the heart actually blasphemes God's name publicly (Romans 2:17-24). For aren't God's people to be different? A witness to the nations?

Paul understands that to turn this heart around it takes a work of the Spirit inwardly – circumcision of the heart ([Romans 2:25-29](#)). If the heart is not dealt with, the future of exile lies around the corner.

Isaiah promised a new event where God will bring His people back from exile and do something that keeps them in the holy city permanently. For someone recognising their plight, this is good news. Isaiah says go shout it on the mountains (52:7-10).

Isaiah keeps telling us this work God does for Israel is something for the benefit of the whole world. So, Paul tells us, God says anyone can be saved through Jesus, so go tell it, announce it, preach it. "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" ([Romans 10:5-15](#)).

Prayer Suggestion

Ask the Lord that you will know more deeply you have the only saving message. Ask Him to move your feet. To cause us to know who we are in proximity to today, tomorrow. Cause us to go tell it on the mountain.



FRIDAY 19 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

Plug In...

We've seen the Servant is called 'Israel' but is someone with the mission to restore Israel. In this passage we see the Servant is an individual whose role is to suffer, die, and be exalted. The individual is described as a 'guilt offering' (53:10).

Chew It Over...

Who else gets exalted in this passage?

Jesus fits the portrait of an individual, faithful to God, yet lays down His life as a "ransom for many" ([Mark 10:45](#)).

Have you ever thought about how the disciples understood their suffering for following Jesus as a 'privilege' of which they were *unworthy* of?

At first glance this is an odd way to view our suffering, yet understanding suffering this way reveals a deeper appreciation of what Jesus as the Suffering Servant has actually done for us.

Reflect further on the following passages:

[Philippians 1:27-30](#) – Notice the phrase, "It has been *granted* to you to suffer".

[2 Timothy 1:6-12](#) – What do you make of the active nature of *joining* in the suffering Christ? How does such suffering connect as a 'grace' from God?

[Acts 5:41](#) – Notice the apostles' surprise that they, as unworthy folk, are being counted worthy to suffer.

Prayer Suggestion

Pray that we might live through our suffering from this centre of joy in God's grace given to us in the gospel of Jesus Christ.



WEEKEND 20-21 JANUARY 2018

SERIES: ISAIAH – THE MESSAGE OF THE MESSIAH

Read: Isaiah 54 & Galatians 4

Plug In...

Listening closely to the tune of Isaiah's announcements of the future, the note of 'new' keeps getting sounded. Sometimes the adjective "new" gets mentioned explicitly (e.g. [Isaiah 42:10](#); [43:19](#)). Other times, without the word 'new', the very explanation and description of the future clearly sounds something *new*. Something new for the future that is different to the past of old. Here, for example, God announces "a covenant of peace that cannot be shaken" (v.10). This is new. For it is a covenant that places Israel/Jerusalem on secure footing *permanently*. They are set up as a sparkling temple, and God is the protector of the city (vv.11-17). This is 'new' to, and different from, the covenant Moses gave. For, the success of Moses' covenant lay in the ability of the people, not the LORD. And given that dynamic, Moses knows it is doomed to failure from the get-go ([Deuteronomy 4](#)).

Chew It Over...

To explain that what Jesus has given us is this 'new' and therefore solid and permanent covenant, Paul uses the imagery plucked from Isaiah ([Galatians 4](#)). A barren woman who *bears* children. In the ancient cultures, a woman who couldn't have children was considered an outcast, useless, even dirty. By analogy, it is such a person that finds themselves transformed by the gospel – the barren woman having more children than the one who did have a husband and family.

The gospel truth: we can't produce anything, but God provides it all and in abundance.

Prayer Suggestion

Look again at Isaiah 54 at all the things we are to do given we have been given all the free grace of the love of God. Pray that you will experience this joy and live with the response listed here.