



THE PROPHETS

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

Hebrews. 1:1-2

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INTRODUCTION

The Bible is divided into different types of books namely, historical, narrative, poetry, wisdom literature and prophecy. Within the prophetic books there are namely; the major prophetic books, such as Isaiah , Ezekiel, Jeremiah and the minor prophetic books as they are shorter books such as Hosea, Amos, Micah etc. Revelations in the New Testament is also a Prophetic book focusing on the return of the Messiah.

The aim of the Prophetic Books is to continue the revelation of God, through a prophet of God, by declaring the Word of God. Prophetic books are not “fortune telling”, but rather God chose a spokesperson also known as a prophet to;

- Reveal the promise of the future Messiah;
- Confront sin;
- Pronounce coming judgement as a result of sin;
- Restore sinful people to God by pleading repentance;

May God capture your heart as He reveals more of Himself to you. May you find grace, peace and mercy as you reflect on His promises.

Soli Deo Gloria

Week 1 - Elijah and Elisha - "What are you doing here?"

Prophet: Elijah and Elisha

Book: 1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 13

Date Written: In 586BC – After the exile of God's people

Author: Not sure, possible a school of writers or Jeremiah the prophet.

Memory Verse

"Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?" "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied. "You have asked a difficult thing," Elijah said, "yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours-- otherwise not."

2 Kings 2:9b-10

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

Elijah and Elisha are two of the most well-known prophets of Israel. They both served in the northern kingdom of Israel. Elijah is first introduced in 1 Kings 17 as the prophet who predicted a three-year drought in the land. After being miraculously fed by ravens, he later stayed with a widow and her son, and that family experienced God's supernatural provision of food.

After Elijah's defeat of the prophets of Baal when he called down fire from heaven, the drought ended. Rain fell, and Elijah fled from the evil Queen Jezebel, who had vowed to kill him (1 Kings 19). Reaching Mount Horeb, Elijah heard the voice of God tell him to anoint two kings as well as Elisha as a prophet. He did this, and Elisha immediately joined him (1 Kings 19:19–21).

Elijah later condemned King Ahab for murder and the theft of a vineyard and predicted Ahab's death and that of his wife, Jezebel (1 Kings 21:17–24).

In 2 Kings 1, Elijah called down fire from heaven to destroy two groups of 50 men sent from King Ahaziah. A third group of men was led by a captain who begged for mercy and was spared judgment. Elijah went to Ahaziah and proclaimed the king would die from his sickness, a prophecy that was soon fulfilled.

In 2 Kings 2, Elijah and Elisha crossed the Jordan River on dry land, and Elisha, knowing that Elijah would not be with him much longer, asked to be blessed with a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Elijah was taken directly into heaven by a chariot of fire. Elisha picked up

Elijah's mantle and used it to cross the Jordan again on dry land. He received the double portion he had asked for and performed many miracles in Israel. Some of Elisha's miracles were the turning of bad water into clean water (2 Kings 2:19–22), causing a widow's oil to fill many jars (2 Kings 4:1–7), and even raising a boy from the dead (2 Kings 4:32–37).

Before he was taken to heaven, Elijah left a letter for King Jehoram of Judah that spoke of judgment against him. It stated, in part, "The LORD will bring a great plague on your people, your children, your wives, and all your possessions, and you yourself will have a severe sickness with a disease of your bowels, until your bowels come out because of the disease, day by day" (2 Chronicles 21:14–15). The prophecy soon came true (verses 18–20).

Elijah and Elisha were both greatly respected by those in the "school of prophets" (2 Kings 2 and 4:38–41) as well as by the kings of their nation. Their impact led to revival among some of the Israelites during a dark stage of Israel's history. During the wicked reigns of Ahab and Ahaziah, God had His men leading the charge for righteousness.

Elijah and Elisha's combined legacy continued to influence Israel for some time. Even the New Testament speaks of the expected return of Elijah, a role fulfilled by John the Baptist, the forerunner or the one to announce the coming of the Messiah (Mark 1).

PERSONAL STUDY

Read the following Scriptures, observe the circumstances, write down thought and observations and apply the truths to your life.:

Day 1: Read 1 Kings 17-19

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 2: Read 1 Kings 20-22

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 3: Read 2 Kings 1-3

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 4: Read 2 Kings 3-5

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 5: Read 2 Kings 6-10 and 13:14-20

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Discussion questions

Read 1 Kings 19:1-9a. What really caused Elijah to run away? What was Elijah disillusioned with? What causes you to run away and to get disillusioned? Discuss in your group.

Read 1 Kings 19:9b-12. Why does God ask Elijah what he is doing in the cave? What is he doing there? What is God's response to Elijah? What does it mean for us?

Read 1 Kings 19:13-14. Elijah is telling himself the same story over and over. Is it true? How does God help Elijah confront the story he is telling himself? Have you ever had a moment where you realized that the story you were telling yourself was not true at all? How did you respond?

Read 1 Kings 19:15-22. What does God tell him is going to happen? Have you ever prayed that God would send you a friend or companion? Talk about the importance of having a close friend to journey with and to pray with.

Core Truth

Accept fear and vulnerability as part of your journey with God. ii. Take care of yourself in the most basic ways possible before you try to "do" stuff. Discern whether the big, loud, attention-grabbing things are detracting from your ability to hear the still small voice of the Lord. Bring your story to God and know that you are not alone. God is with you and He will give you friends.

Close in prayer

Week 2 - Isaiah – Judgement and Hope

Prophet: Isaiah

Book: Isaiah (Isaiah 1-5)

Date Written: 740 BC and 686 BC

Author: Isaiah. Isaiah was a well-educated prophet, who was married, with two children. Tradition holds that Isaiah was martyred by being sawn in two.

Memory Verse

“Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

The name Isaiah means salvation is of the Lord. There is no other book that is more influential on the New Testament than the book of Isaiah. Isaiah prophecies about the coming Messiah came to fulfilment in Jesus. At least 13 times we see specific fulfilment of Isaiah’s prophecies about the coming Messiah in Jesus. Some people call the Book of Isaiah the 5th Gospel. They say that Isaiah was more of an Evangelist than a Prophet, because he described all of the Mysteries of the Church of Christ so vividly that you would assume he was not prophesying about the future, but rather was composing a history of past events.

He prophecies the virgin birth, the child who will be called everlasting God, Prince of peace. Later he described the suffer of the coming Messiah. But we must remember that the book is first and foremost a word to Israel.

Isaiah was one of the 3 major prophets with Ezekiel and Jeremiah who wrote during 8-6th century before Christ. He received a vision of God’s glory and began to speak out against the wickedness of the people of God, while also bringing a message of hope and restoration. The book of 66 chapters, is a collection of Isaiah’s visions, poems, sermons, and prophecies over the course of his life. Isaiah’s role was to speak on behalf of God to God’s people about their failure to keep God’s covenant.

You are going to read just the first five chapters this week but try to read each chapter at least two or three times with attention. The first five chapters of Isaiah serve as an introduction to this book of collected prophecies. The first five chapters include nearly all the

themes found in the book. They pose the central problem: The Israelites are God's people, pledged to serve him. But instead of being true, they are arrogant, sinful, and rebellious. They will be God's light to the nations. But how? We will discover it next week as God begins to reveal his plan in Chapter 6 and further.

PERSONAL STUDY

Read the following Scriptures, observe the circumstances, write down thought and observations and apply the truths to your life.:

Day 1: Read Isaiah 1 (Read it with attention, at least twice)

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 2: Read Isaiah 2 (Read it with attention, at least twice)

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 3: Read Isaiah 3 (Read it with attention, at least twice)

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 4: Read Isaiah 4 (Read it with attention, at least twice)

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 5: Read Isaiah 5 (Read it with attention, at least twice)

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Discussion questions

Read Isaiah 1:2-20. In what way is Judah confused about its identity, according to verses 2-4? What injustices does God accuse his people of in verses 11-15? What does God ask them to do in verses 16-19? What does God's Word teach us in our situation as God's people?

Read Isaiah 2:1-5. What does this prophecy of the future Jerusalem tell us about God's plan for the Gentiles? And about God's plan for the Jews, about spiritual hunger and about peace?

Read Isaiah 5:1-7. What was the winemaker's vision for the vineyard? What did he do to accomplish his vision? What happened when the crop came in? What did the winemaker say he would do with the vineyard? What does this parable mean to us? Discuss.

Read 1 Isaiah 5:8-23. The word "woe" is an expression of deep distress, as an inescapable judgement is about to come. It is also used in Scriptures to express grief, regret, or the condition of deep suffering. Since the Garden of Eden, Satan has been making evil appear good and good appear evil. How do you see this in the world around you right now? Is there an area in your life, where you are tempted to call evil good and good evil?

Core Truth

The opening first 5 chapters of the book of Isaiah talk about God's judgement and punishment of sin and disobedience, but also of God's grace and forgiveness, there is a glorious light at the end of the tunnel. When God has finished with His judgment the glorious kingdom is coming.

Close in prayer

Week 3 – Isaiah - Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD Almighty

Prophet: Isaiah

Book: Isaiah (Isaiah 6-39)

For an overview of Isaiah 1-39 go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0A6Uchb1F8>

Date Written: 740 BC and 686 BC

Author: Isaiah.

Memory Verse

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."

Isaiah 6:1–3 (NIV84)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

King Uzziah was a good king and in the year that he died, Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on his throne, high and lifted up. Though Israel was being rebellious to God, God was still on this throne. The train of his robe filled the temple. This temple was not the one in Jerusalem but the heavenly temple. The train must have been amazing! Angelic creatures surrounded his throne calling out, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." The temple shook and was filled with smoke.

Amid all the chaos, where was God? He was still on his throne, in complete control. When Isaiah compared himself to God, he was afraid because of his sinfulness, but then God atoned for his sin and took away his guilt. What a beautiful picture of amazing grace. God has given us this same amazing grace, through his son Jesus. Does the world around you seem chaotic? Is there something you are worried about today?

Isaiah's work brought him into direct contact with kings and priests, and he encountered strong opposition from both groups. At times, this opposition was so strong that he was forced to give up speaking in public and confine his ministry to a group of disciples with whom he met privately. In the same spirit, Isaiah criticizes the economic policies that were not only sanctioned but encouraged by the rulers of the land. In "The Song of the Vineyard," which was probably chanted by the prophet, we find these words: "Woe to you who add

house to house and join field to field till no place is left and you live alone in the land." This chant protests the way in which the poor people were deprived of their property to satisfy the claims of their creditors, who had taken unfair advantages of these people's unfortunate circumstances to enrich themselves.

Likewise, he did not hesitate to criticize the political leaders and the kings of his time. The prophet's criticism of kings was expressed on many occasions. He protested the foreign alliances that were being negotiated.

Despite the immediate dangers that the nation of Judah faced, Isaiah was confident of the ultimate triumph of the Hebrew people. Isaiah was sure that any temporary disaster would not be the end of the Judean kingdom. Yahweh's purpose in the world was to be realized through the Hebrew people, which meant that the city of Jerusalem and that for which it stood could never be overthrown completely.

Closely related to Isaiah's teaching concerning the "surviving remnant" (Isaiah 37) that would be the hope of Judah were his predictions with reference to the coming of a Messiah, or "anointed one," who will someday occupy the throne in Jerusalem and rule the nation with justice and righteousness. He will be a far better king than any of those who have preceded him. Under his leadership, the poor and the oppressed will find a champion, for He will judge their cases with a discerning mind and will not be unduly influenced by hearsay or mere outward appearances. His kingdom will be the fulfillment and realization of the divine purpose in the world.

PERSONAL STUDY

Read the following Scriptures, observe the circumstances, write down thought and observations and apply the truths to your life.:

Day 1: Read Isaiah 6 (Read it again and pause and take in this majestic view of God).

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 2: Read Isaiah 7-10

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 3: Read Isaiah 11-12 (Read it with attention, at least twice)

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 4: Read Isaiah 25-27 (Read it with attention, at least twice)

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 5: Read Isaiah 37-39

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Discussion questions

Read Isaiah 6:1-4. Why do you think Yahweh revealed himself in this way to Isaiah? In what ways does this vision reveal God's majesty? How does seeing God as He is, on his throne reigning in all his glory and authority, bring you peace?

Read Isaiah 6:5-8. What is Isaiah's reaction to the vision? How does God deal with Isaiah's fear? What is Isaiah's response to God's question? What is your response when you sense God calling you?

Read Isaiah 6:9-10. How do you make sense out of these verses? Is Isaiah called to an impossible mission? What of these things are true in your life? How can we turn back to be God's people who are obedient?

Read Isaiah 6:11-13. Discuss what it means when God says to Isaiah "the holy seed will be the stump in the land?" What does it mean for us?

Core Truth

When God convicts a person, He does so in their entire being. It's a complete work of the spirit, soul, body, mind, intents, emotions, and ones' life's mission. He accomplishes this through his Spirit using a variety of means according to his will. Before God called Isaiah, He gave Him a vision of who this God, who calls Him, is. Isaiah feels unworthy, like me and you sometimes also feel, but God cleansed him. Now God can use him and send him. God's message was firm and judgmental, but it was meant to bring his people to repentance. That message is as important today as it was for God's people in the time of Isaiah.

Close in prayer

Week 4 – The Suffering Servant – Behold the Lamb

Prophet: Isaiah

Book: Isaiah (Isaiah 40-66)

For an overview of Isaiah 40-66 go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TzdEPuqgQg>

Date Written: 686 BC

Author: Isaiah.

Memory Verse

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Isaiah 53:5(NIV84)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

The important themes covered in chapter 40 help to prepare us for the prophecies in chapters 40-54. Isaiah announced that the LORD is sovereign over all the world, and His chosen people. He is in dispute with and warfare against the gods of the nations and their idolatrous images. These issues had been dealt with by other prophets but are summarized powerfully by Isaiah.

This prophecy stretches from Heaven to earth, from creation to the return from the exile in Babylon, through the desert and back to Jerusalem, from the time of ancient Israel to the time of the Messiah and unto our days and the final establishment of the Kingdom of God.

A key figure who is introduced into the prophetic drama is the Suffering Servant of the Lord. The entire prophetic fulfillment of the LORD's end plans, the establishment of God's kingdom purposes in human history, revolves around the coming and work of His Servant. His Servant first appears in chapter 42. This chapter is the first of four "Servant Songs" in chapters 40-55. Their list is as follows:

- Song 1 - Isaiah 42:1-9;
- Song 2 – Isaiah 48:16-49:12
- Song 3 – Isaiah 50:2-51:16
- Song 4 – Isaiah 52:13-53:12

The Servant of the Lord in Isaiah is none other than the Lamb who is the Lion in the book of Revelation.

In chapters 55-66 the writer of the Isaiah book wants to bring God's people hope. It seems that God's promise of restoration after the exile is being fulfilled. However, God is warning his people against infidelity to Him and warns them against the participation in Canaanite or Babylonian child sacrifice, temple prostitution, sorcery and mystery feasts. They are told that the Temple must be a house of prayer and that they as a people must be holy.

The writer wants to remind God's people they should not take God's favour for granted. But God is faithful to His promise. He will preserve a small remnant of faithful believers, those who will continue on into the glorious, renewed world He has prepared for His children in the end times.

PERSONAL STUDY

Read the following Scriptures, observe the circumstances, write down thought and observations and apply the truths to your life.:

Day 1: Read Isaiah 40-42.

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 2: Read Isaiah 43-45

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 3: Read Isaiah 48:12-52:12

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 4: Read Isaiah 52:13-55.

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 5: Read Isaiah 59-62 and 65:17-66.

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Discussion questions

Read Isaiah 52:13-15. Who is the “suffering servant”? List all the reasons for your answer from this passage. When faced with suffering and rejection in our own lives why is it a comfort to know that Jesus knows better than anyone what it’s like to suffer and be rejected?

Read Isaiah 53:1-6. How relevant are the questions in 53:1 today? Is it still being asked? How was Jesus a 'man of sorrow' during His life on earth? Reflect on the Gospels and see how many ways this was true of Jesus Christ. What does it mean to you personally that Jesus was a man of sorrows?

Read Isaiah 53:7-9. What words help us to recognize the language of the suffering of Christ? What emotions do you experience when you read this passage? Share it with the group. Jesus had no permanent site for a burial. It was as if He belonged to no one. How did verse 9 literally come true? (Matthew 27:57-61).

Read Isaiah 53:10-12. Discuss God's plan revealed in verse 10. Share you emotions and feelings about this verse. What does it say in Isaiah 53:12 that the Servant is doing for His people today? (1 John 2:1 and Romans 8:33-34).

Core Truth

Jesus is portrayed as a willing servant who died for others because His Father, our Father wished Him to do so. Quietly and humbly, He went to the cross for the sin of many. His death justified these many wayward people, giving them the right to become the children of God. Isaiah prophecies this nearly 700 years before that. How good is that?

Close in prayer

Week 5 - My people have forgotten me

Prophet: Jeremiah

Book: Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1-25)

For an overview of the book of Jeremiah go to

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSK36cHbrk0>

Date Written: 626-587 BC in Judah, the south kingdom of Israel.

Author: Jeremiah (written by Baruch, his scribe).

Memory Verse

This is what the LORD says: "What fault did your fathers find in me, that they strayed so far from me? They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves.

Jeremiah 2:5 (NIV84)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

Jeremiah was active as a prophet from the thirteenth year of Josiah, king of Judah (626 BC), until after the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of Solomon's Temple in 587 BC. This period spanned the reigns of five kings of Judah: Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Jeremiah was the son of Hilkiah, a priest from the land of Benjamin in the village of Anathoth. The difficulties he encountered, as described in the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations, have prompted people to refer to him as "the weeping prophet".

Jeremiah was called to prophecy by God to proclaim Jerusalem's coming destruction by invaders from the north. This was because Israel had forsaken God by worshiping the idols of Baal and burning their children as offerings to Baal. The nation had deviated so far from God's laws that they had broken the covenant, causing God to withdraw his blessings. Jeremiah was guided by God to proclaim that the nation of Judah would suffer famine, foreign conquest, plunder, and captivity in a land of strangers.

To understand the book of Jeremiah and his message of judgment against Judah, there is no better place to go than Jeremiah's famous temple sermon in chapter 7. This chapter will help you to better grasp what's going on in the rest of the book. This isn't a "feel-good" kind of sermon. Rather, Jeremiah is sent into the temple courts to accuse God's people of their false religion and idolatrous practices.

They worship God in the temple but all the while they allow the immigrant, the orphan, and the widow to suffer in their midst. There's no justice or righteousness in the land. Judah's

corporate and covenant life is morally bankrupt and deserving of God's judgment. To expose their vulnerability, Jeremiah preaches in the very place they think is most safe.

Jeremiah's prophecies prompted plots against him. Unhappy with Jeremiah's message, possibly from concern that it would shut down the Anathoth sanctuary, his priestly relatives and the men of Anathoth conspired to kill him. However, the Lord revealed the conspiracy to Jeremiah, protected his life, and declared disaster for the men of Anathoth.(Jeremiah 11:18–2:6) When Jeremiah complains to the Lord about this persecution, he is told that the attacks on him will become worse.

According to the book of Jeremiah, during the reign of King Zedekiah, the Lord instructed Jeremiah to make a yoke with the message that the nation would be subject to the king of Babylon. The false prophet Hananiah took the yoke off Jeremiah's neck and broke it, prophesying that within two years the Lord would break the yoke of the king of Babylon, but Jeremiah prophesied in return: "You have broken the yoke of wood, but you have made instead a yoke of iron." (Jeremiah 28:13)

PERSONAL STUDY

Read the following Scriptures, observe the circumstances, write down thought and observations and apply the truths to your life.:

Day 1: Read Jeremiah 1-3.

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 2: Read Jeremiah 7-10

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 3: Read Jeremiah 11-12

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 4: Read Jeremiah 18-19

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 5: Read Jeremiah 20

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Discussion questions

Read Jeremiah 2:1-3. What did God remind Judah about what her history with God as, through Jeremiah the prophet in these first three verses? Why do we sometimes become lukewarm in our relationship with God? How can we keep our first love

Read Jeremiah 2:4-5. Share your immediate reaction after you have read these verses with the group.

Read Jeremiah 2:6-9. What acts had God performed on behalf of His people only to be answered by disobedience in verses 6 and 7? How can we show people that all sin is ultimately a result of idolatry?

Read Jeremiah 2:10-13. What two sins did God say His people had committed, according to verse 13? What does the image practically mean in our lives today?

Core Truth

Seeing God's patience with His people in the Old Testament reminds us that God has always been and continues to be merciful. That His chosen people routinely ignored the covenant they made with Him for the better part of a millennia without immediate death and destruction should give us hope in our own struggles with living well for God. He will never fail us. Though we fail Him, He is patient with us, working in us to bring about the best for our lives. Jeremiah also reminds us that an end will certainly come, a truth that should spur us to follow after God wholeheartedly.

Close in prayer

Week 6 - God's Plan for my Life

Prophet: Jeremiah

Book: Jeremiah (Jeremiah 26-52)

Date Written: 626-587 BC in Judah, the south kingdom of Israel.

Author: Jeremiah (written by Baruch, his scribe).

Memory Verse

“This is what the LORD says: ‘When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”

Jeremiah 29:10-11

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

We were made for a purpose and every human being has a desire to live a fulfilling purposeful life. Yet, we can miss the purpose of God for our lives through insignificant, unfulfilling, sinful ways of this world or through a change of circumstances. God used Jeremiah purposefully and gave Him a message to deliver to the exiles, one which overflows with God's blessing and one where they live a life of significance

This message was given to those who were taken captive by the Babylonians (2 Kings 24-25) who raided Jerusalem. God warned Israel not to sin, and if they did there would be punishment.

Jeremiah's message is a call to return to God and prosper. They include clear instructions on how to live in the foreign land while they are there. Jeremiah also warned the nation not to listen to false prophets who tried to convince them to go back to Israel. God told Jeremiah that the captivity will last for 70 years and only after the period is over, will they return. Meanwhile, they were to live purposefully.

There are times of uncertainty when it seems like there is no purpose, however, the opposite is true, let's encounter the God of purpose, the God who purposefully created us, every person unique to live a life glorifying Him. May you experience God guiding you in His purpose for His glory through the study of these chapters in the second part of Jeremiah.

PERSONAL STUDY

Read the following Scriptures, observe the circumstances, write down thought and observations and apply the truths to your life.:

Day 1: Read Jeremiah 26

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 2: Read Jeremiah 29

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 3: Read Jeremiah 31

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 4: Jeremiah 33

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 5: Read Jeremiah 44

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Discussion questions

Read Jeremiah 29:1-9. Discuss the fundamental instructions given by God and the impact on the nation of Israel. How are these instructions applicable to our situation?

Read Jeremiah 29:10-14. What are the promises which God gives and what are the conditions? How can we apply these promises to our situation?

Read Jeremiah 29:11-14, again, Isaiah 55:8-12, 2 Corinthians 1:20 and Proverbs 16:1-3. How should we interpret and apply these verses to us in context of the rest of the passage and the Bible? Discuss who the original audience was, what their circumstances are, and the true meaning based on 2 Corinthians 1:20.

Core Truth

Jeremiah 29 is instructions to Israel and how they should live in Babylon. It also includes a promise of restoration that they will prosper when they seek God with all their heart. The true meaning for us is not prosperity gospel, meaning we will have a life of wealth and health, rather it is the gospel. The promise of God's eternal blessings stands as it is fulfilled in Christ. We are to seek God with all our hearts and commit to living a life committed to Him and His will.

Close in prayer

Week 7 - The Overwhelming Grace of God

Part 1: God does not accept compromise

Prophet: Hosea

Book: Hosea

Date Written: 755-725BCE

Author: Hosea (Name meaning: He saves)

Memory Verse

"I will plant her for myself in the land; I will show my love to the one I called 'Not my loved one.' I will say to those called 'Not my people,' 'You are my people'; and they will say, 'You are my God.'"

Hosea 2:23

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

"The Cross is the lightning rod of grace that short-circuited God's wrath to Christ so that only the light of His love remains for believers." A.W Tozer

Throughout the O.T we have seen how God has used the prophets to warn the nation of Israel and yet they continue to fall into temptation and sin. How does God respond? Yes, with judgement, but also with forgiveness and unconditional love.

The book of Hosea is an incredible one-sided love story written in figurative language depicting God's unconditional love for us. God tells Hosea the prophet to marry an unfaithful wife, she is then punished for her unfaithfulness, and yet restored and redeemed.

Ultimately, God is the Husband who loves and takes care of Israel. We too, "have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God. Rom. 3:23." Yet, God's grace has been poured out on us through Jesus Christ, to be received freely. His punishment of sin dealt with on the cross. (1 John 2:1-2).

PERSONAL STUDY

Read the following Scriptures, observe the circumstances and apply the truths to your life:

Day 1: Read Hosea 1

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 2: Read Hosea 2-3

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 3: Read Hosea 5

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 4: Read Hosea 11

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 5: Read Hosea 14

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Discussion questions

Read Hosea 2:2-13. Compile a list, as a group, of Israel's wrong doings. In what ways are we like Israel?

Read Hosea 2:14-23. What is God's reaction on Israel's wrong doings? How does God treat us when we are doing wrong? Discuss this passage in your group.

Read Hosea 3. How does the figurative meaning of the husband and wife, relationship help to understand God's relationship with us?

Read Hosea 2:20, John 5:20, John 17:3 and Ephesians 1:13-23. What does it mean to "know" God? How can you know God more intimately?

Core Truth

Hosea was called to do the impossible, to love, forgive and redeem a prostituting, unfaithful wife. God used this prophet's relationship to show the kind of relationship which He has with Israel, one where Israel keeps on being "an unfaithful wife" figuratively speaking, and God the husband who keeps on loving despite unfaithfulness. It is grace, upon, grace, upon grace. We receive that same grace and may know Him. The Hebrew word we translate as 'know' "**yada**," means *to know, to learn more of, to experience*. Through Jesus we know God and we learn more about His love, compassion, grace, and live in obedience.

Close in prayer

Week 8 - Daniel – An uncompromising Life

Prophet: Daniel

Book: Daniel (Daniel 1-5)

Date Written: 540-530BCE

Author: Daniel (Meaning of name: God is my Judge)

Memory Verse

His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"

Daniel 4:34b-35

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

Daniel, and his friends, were unfortunately captured by the Babylonians when they raided Israel. Faced with unprecedented challenges unlike few will ever have to face they were forced learn the Babylonian culture and beliefs. Daniel stood out as a man with uncompromising faith during a time where compromise was the norm, just like today.

Alongside Daniel are the gentile kings, the four kings of Babylon, whom he served during his lifetime, namely: King Nebuchadnezzar, his son King Belshazzar, King Darius and King Cyrus. Gentile kings who worshipped idols and themselves. As a result of God's favour and Daniel's uncompromising faith, his ministry lasted for sixty-nine years.

God used Daniel to change not just a kings' heart but also to turn Babylon, a gentile nation, Israel's enemy to worship Him alone.

In this study of the book of Daniel, note their compromise and compare it with Daniel and his friends. Connect the dots with our world and be inspired to live a n uncompromising life. As you meet with God through study this book may your focus be on the only God who is worthy to be praised.

PERSONAL STUDY

Read the following Scriptures, observe the circumstances, write down thought and observations and apply the truths to your life:

Day 1: Read Daniel 1:1-16

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 2: Read 2 Chronicles 36:2-8 and Jeremiah 26

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 3: Read Daniel 1:17-32 and Proverbs 2, 6-10

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 4: Jeremiah 36:1-3, 22-31 and Jeremiah 36:30

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 5: Read Daniel 3

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Discussion questions

Read Daniel 1:1-16, and 2 Chronicles 36:2-8. List the standout features of Daniel's faith compared to the features of Jehoiakim the king of Judah. What was the process the king of Babylon initiated after capturing Daniel and his friends, and why is this significant?

Read 2 Chronicles 36:2-8. In what ways are Christians succumbing to the world's ways and compromising the Word of God?

Read Daniel 6:26-27 and Acts 5:29-32. What are the motivating factors for living a life of uncompromising faith?

Core Truth

It is evident that a life of uncompromising faith is possible, Daniel lived up to His name, as He trusted in God, his judge, knowing that God saves. He was captured by a Babylonian king who tried to brainwash him and his friends', but his faith stood the fiery tests. The Church and this world, is in dire need for young and old to live a life on uncompromising faith, standing out, living wisely against the acceptable norms of society which are unacceptable in the sight of God. God gave Daniel favour, and he influenced his surrounding, may we do the same.

Close in prayer

Week 9 - Daniel – In the Lion’s Den:

Prophet: Daniel

Book: Daniel (Daniel 6-12)

Date Written: 540-530BCE

Author: Daniel (Meaning of name: God is my Judge)

Memory Verse

*... “For he is the living God and he endures forever;
his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end.”*

Daniel 6:26

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

Jesus said that we are to be the light of the world (Matthew 5:14) unfortunately there are times when this dark world does not want the light to shine and tries to extinguish it. It is in these times that we as Christians must shine even brighter because He also said that if we are persecuted or insulted, we are blessed (Matthew 5:11). This week, Daniel will teach us how to trust God during such times.

As God gave favour to Daniel, he rose in rank and responsibility which was met with anger, and jealousy. So, a plot is derived conceived by evil men, who knew Daniel was a just and Godfearing man.

We often try and fight our battles by defending ourselves and looking for worldly ways to fight back. We will do well to learn from Daniel who trusted in God alone. He does not take matters into his own hands, rather he remains steadfast trusting God for the outcome.

PERSONAL STUDY

Read the following Scriptures, observe the circumstances, write down thought and observations and apply the truths to your life.:

Day 1: Read Daniel 6:1-5

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 2: Read Daniel 6:6-11

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 3: Read Daniel 6:12-24

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 4: Daniel 6:25-28

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

Day 5: Read Daniel 5

Prayer (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Discussion questions

Read Daniel 6:1-9, Philippians 2:14-16 and Proverbs 10:9. Why do unbelievers in the world today seek to accuse believers? If someone was asked to closely examine your life, could they find a reason for accusing you?

Read Daniel 6:10-14. What does this passage show us about Daniel's uncompromising faith and character? What can you learn from his faith and character?

Read Daniel 6:15-28 and Psalms 27:4. How does Daniel treat tribulation? Describe practical ways that Christians can do to overcome times of tribulation. Do you experience from time to time tribulation?

Core Truth

Daniel found favour with the king and was promoted, because God gave him favour and blessed him, with wisdom and integrity. But this was met with jealousy, anger and ungodly men who were conniving. Still, Daniel did not take matters into his own hands and allowed God to defend Him. We too must trust God, when confronted with lies against us, through prayer, through focusing on His promises and leaving judgement to Him.

Close in prayer

Resources

http://www.jesuswalk.com/isaiah/01_call.htm

<https://womenlivingwell.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Isaiah-1-23-Discussion-Questions.pdf>

<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/o/old-testament-of-the-bible/summary-and-analysis/isaiah>

<https://bibleproject.com/blog/jeremiahs-famous-temple-sermon/>

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/hebrew/kjv/yada.html>

www.gotquestions.org

