

Opening Prayer

Lord, you come to us in stillness
and out of silence, speak your word.
Still our racing hearts and minds,
hold our restless and distracted thoughts.
Help us now to centre on you.
God of light,
you are sovereign Lord of all,
and nothing falls outside the compass of your love.
As we gather here, grant to us your defence in the face of
every danger,
your protection and your peace;
through Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.
Amen.

Read Isaiah 40. 1-11

After 70 years in exile, trying to keep the faith, the Jews are told that they will soon be going home.

Questions for discussion: -

1. What pictures from nature does the poet use here?
2. How do you think the message for Jerusalem would be received by those who remained in the city?
3. What events in modern times may be compared with the position of the Jews?

Read Isaiah Isaiah 65. 17-25

God promises a new start for the returning Jews.

Questions for discussion: -

1. Which are the most important changes in the quality of life in the new Jerusalem?
2. What must the people do to enter Jerusalem?

Questions for personal reflection: -

Our readings tell of a quality of life promised by God.

1. Now much of this new life do you see in the world today?
2. What fundamental changes would you like to see in our society today?
3. How can the church help to bring these changes about?

A personal prayer

We dare to imagine a world,
Where hunger has no chance to show its face.
We dare to dream of a world,
Where war and terror are afraid to leave their mark.
We long to believe in a world,
Of hope unchained and lives unfettered.
We dare to share in the creation of a world,
Where your people break free.
Dare we open our own minds to difference?
Dare we open our own lives to change?
Your kingdom come, O Lord.
Your will be done.

Amen.



Mid-week Session 4



Isaiah – A New World

The fourth theme in our study of the book of Isaiah is “A New World”. The Jews are told to prepare to go home to Jerusalem after spending 70 years in exile. There is hope for a much brighter future.