



tdf 1999

*A Granville Chapel Study Guide
Fall 1999*

In Old Testament times, God's people remembered his faithfulness by celebrating. Yearly Feasts, full of meaning, reminded them of the goodness of the Lord.

This Study Guide focuses on these Feasts, calling us to

Celebrate His Faithfulness Past.

The Lord spoke strong and powerful promises to his people in those days. We, too, have been caught up in those promises, some fulfilled and some yet to be. We are to

Claim His Faithfulness Promised.

Anticipating a new millennium, it's a crucial time to remember

His Faithfulness Continues
Through All Generations

Please Note ...

Granville's Fall Preaching Series begins with the Feasts of remembrance and celebration laid out in Leviticus 23. We start our studies in the middle of the chapter in order to coincide with the Festivals celebrated in the Fall. We'll then return to the Feasts mentioned at the beginning of the chapter (those celebrated in the Spring). The dates of the actual Fall Festivals are included in the schedule printed on the next page.

A very helpful book has been written on these Feasts by a member of our own church family. The book is **Celebrate the Feasts** - the author is Martha Zimmerman. Each Home Group has been given a copy of the book to use in conjunction with the first 5 studies - whoever leads these studies is strongly encouraged to read the corresponding chapter of Martha's book for further background.

Many thanks to ...

Stan Cummings, Mary Gordon, Anne Gomez, Tim MacIntosh, Cory Smith, Claire Westlake, Steve Williams and Martha Zimmerman who put much time and thought into preparing these studies.

Study Schedule

The studies in this Curriculum should be done in the Home Groups before the Sunday sermon on the same topic. The schedule is as follows:

Week of

Sept. 6	<i>No Study</i>	<i>Celebrate His Faithfulness Past</i> New Years Message - Our Calling <i>(Feast of Trumpets - "Rosh Hashanah" - Sept. 11)</i>
Sept. 13	Study #1	Day of Atonement <i>("Yom Kippur" - Sept. 20)</i>
Sept. 20	Study #2	Feast of Tabernacles <i>(Sept. 25 - Oct. 1)</i>
Sept. 27	Study #3	Feast of Passover
October 4	Study #4	Firstfruits
October 11	Study #5	Feast of Pentecost
October 18	Study #6	<i>Claim His Faithfulness Promised</i> Invitation to the Thirsty
October 25	Study #7	The New Covenant
Nov. 1	Study #8	The Valley of Dry Bones
Nov. 8	Study #9	The River from the Temple
Nov. 15	Study #10	The Mountain of the Lord
Nov. 22	Study #11	The Highway of the Redeemed
Nov. 29	Study #12	The Branch of Jesse

day of A T O N E - M E N T

Study #1

HOME GROUP STARTER KIT

Getting Started ...

The Fall season has started and this is your first night together as a Group (though some Groups are continuing from last year).

It's important to get started well. Have some fun together. Start getting to know one another. Share together your hopes and aspirations for this year as a Group. Get into the Word. Pray together.

This session will be slightly different from future meetings. There are some preliminary issues you need to talk about together. But the ground work you lay during this session will stand you in good stead for the rest of the year.

"Getting to Know You ..."

If you are a new Group:

Break into pairs and have each member introduce themselves, telling something about who they are and what they do, **plus** 1 "unique" (...or *quasi*-"unique"... or *slightly*-"unique") fact about themselves. Introduce your partner to the group.

or:

Play "*Two Truths and a Lie*" - each member makes 3 statements about themselves, one of which is false - the other members have to guess which one is the lie.

or:

Break into groups of 2-4 and come up with 3 unusual facts that are true of each member of that group - then, introduce yourselves to the larger group and see which small group has come up with the most **unique** unusual facts.

If you are a Group continuing from last year:

Go around the Group and have each member share a **high** point and a **low** point from the past summer (plus anything else you want to share to catch up with one another).

or:

Play "Two Truths and a Lie" about your summer - each member makes 3 statements about their summer activities, one of which is false - the other members have to guess which one is the lie.

All Groups:

Share together what you personally want to get out of the Group this year.

Group Contract for the Year

It's important to take some time to agree together on what you hope to accomplish over the year ... and how you plan to accomplish it.

Using any or all of the following questions (taken from Roberta Hestenes), develop a "contract" with each other for your Group.

- (1) What are the reasons we want to have a small group?
- (2) What goals do we want to adopt as a small group?
- (3) What do we want to happen in and through us as a result of our involvement in this Group?
- (4) What group guidelines do we want to have (i.e. confidentiality, respect for different opinions, etc.)?
- (5) What ingredients do we want included in our Group?
- (6) What **don't** we want to do in this Group?
- (7) What will make this Group "successful" or worth the time involved?
- (8) What do we want to do in our Group meeting times?
- (9) When do we want to start and finish?

Key aspects of Group life to consider:

Relationships: How will the Group build relationships among the members?

Scripture: How will the Group use the Bible in its life together?

Prayer: What part will prayer occupy in the Group?

Intensity: What level of commitment and work do we want in the Group?
How hard do we want to work?

Leadership: What pattern of leadership do we want? Who is willing to take responsibility to help the Group achieve its goals?

You might want to use a chalk board or piece of poster paper to jot down key points from your discussion.

You might also want to record your finalized agreement on paper so you can each have a copy.

Group Study

Leviticus 23:26-32

Day of Atonement

Introduction

The Day of Atonement (“*Yom Kippur*”) comes on the tenth day of the Hebrew month Tishri*. It is the climax of ten days of repentance which began on Rosh Hashanah. This day has been set apart by God as special. It celebrates our “at-oneness” with Him.

O.T. “Prepare to meet your God, O Israel” (Amos 4:12)

N.T. “Those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life” shall come in (Rev. 21:27)

⇒ **The aim of this study is to better understand Atonement, our need to be forgiven and God’s plan of Salvation.**

- (1) This is the single day in the year that reminds us that one day we will each stand before Almighty God to be judged. The point of this day forces me to recognize there is no way I can ever be perfect on my own. Read the following passages:

“And the person who keeps every law of God, but makes one little slip, is just as

guilty as the person who has broken every law there is". (James 2:10, The Living Bible)

"If we say we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves, and refusing to acknowledge the truth.... If we claim we have not sinned, we are lying and calling God a liar, for he says we have sinned. (1John 1:8,10, TLB).

God told Moses that this was how Israel was to approach Him once a year. Read Leviticus 16:29-34. Why do you suppose they had to do it year after year?

- (2) This ritual was meant to be symbolic, pointing to something greater that was to be fulfilled in the future.

"He is, therefore, exactly the kind of High Priest we need, for he is holy and blameless, unstained by sin, undefiled by sinners, and to him has been given the place of honor in heaven. He never needs the daily blood of animal sacrifices, as other priests did, to cover over first their own sins and then the sins of the people; for he finished all sacrifices once and for all, when he sacrificed himself on the cross. Under the old system, even the high priests were weak and sinful men who could not keep from doing wrong, but later God appointed by his oath his Son who is perfect forever. (Hebrews 7:26-28, The Living Bible)

For more of the explanation, read on in Hebrews 10:1-22. There WILL be a day of final judgement, and "if there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off" (Lev. 23:29). Does that verse frighten you? Is so, why? If not, why not?

- (3) According to Hebrew tradition, God is keeping good records. He offers to forgive us. His book is symbolically sealed on The Day of Atonement, reminding us that one day it will be sealed forever. It is customary that during this season right relationships be re-established and disputes settled with the people around you. Share stories - ideas - ways that this might be accomplished.

We don't need to wait for this day every year to put things right with one another. However, this day focuses attention and provides the extra incentive. Don't wait any longer.

Prayer

Notes

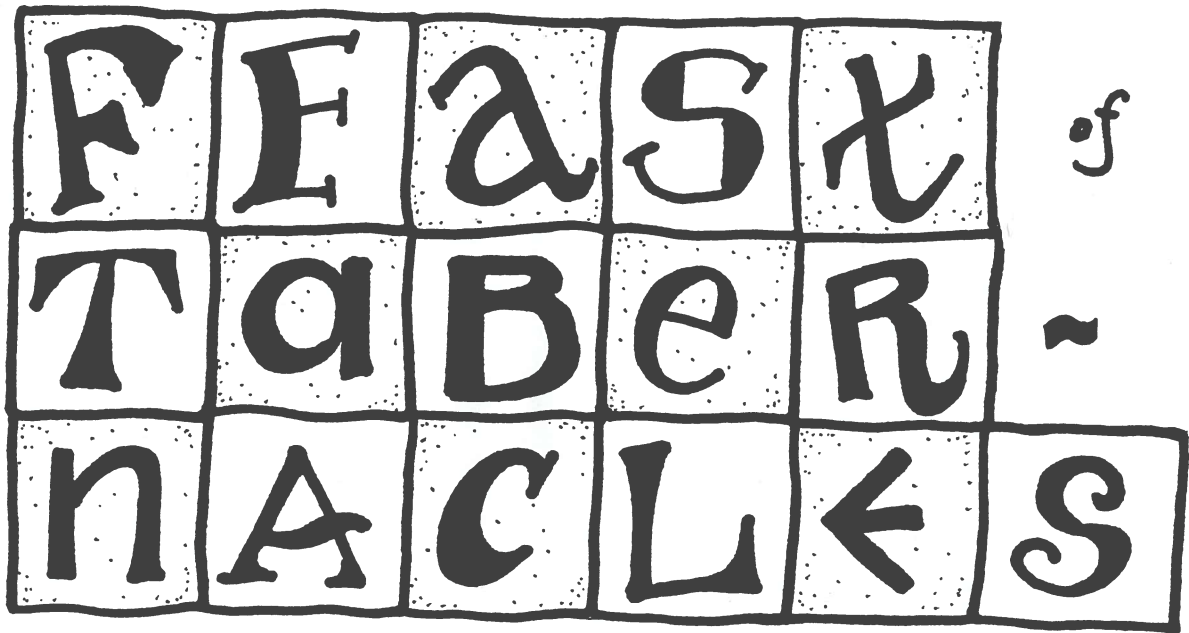
- (1) * The Hebrew calendar is very old. It is believed that the counting of years originated in the Spring. Hebrew festivals are calculated on a lunar calendar. Each month opens with the appearance of a new moon. There are 13 months in each year. In keeping with tradition the seventh month is holy, just as the seventh days has always been honoured. Because the 7th month is holy, the Spiritual New Year begins with this 7th month, called Tishri.

Optional Group - Family - Individual Activities

- 1) The next twenty-four hours have been designated for fasting and prayer. Fasting was an important part of life for many individuals in the Bible. Jesus set an example as He fasted and prayed before He began His public ministry. Apparently He expected this would be a part of our life as believers, as well. He said in Matthew 6: “When you fast...” “When you pray...” “When you give...”

Consider entering into this discipline. Fast and prayer for your year together as a group or focus on your personal concern. Enjoy a “break-the-fast” meal 24 hours later.

- 2) In Jewish history meat symbolizes the stern judgement of God while dough symbolizes the mercy which accompanies God’s justice. A traditional food served at the Day of Atonement is called “Kreplach”. It is pockets of dough filled with meat. It is still true that “Mercy triumphs over judgement” (James 2:13). Buy or make your favorite ethnic food that fits this description and remember....
- 3) The celebration of Tashlich (p.132-134, 140-143 in Celebrate the Feasts).



Study #2

Leviticus 23: 33-43

Introduction

“Another celebration, the Festival of Shelters, must be observed for seven days at the end of the harvest season, after the grain is threshed and the grapes have been pressed. This will be a happy time of rejoicing together with your family” (Deut. 16:13, 14, The Living Bible).

Sukkoth (a Hebrew name which means “huts” or “booths”) was the first “stopping off” place for the Israelites on their journey out of Egypt at the time of the Exodus. The name is explained in Genesis 33:17.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to understand the layers of meaning in this prescribed celebration and how “what it means” affects our lives as Christians.**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) One year Jesus risked His life to celebrate this festival. (You can read all about it in John 7). He was a “wanted man” in Judea. In the midst of the feast, “Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach”. The theme of His teaching related directly to the festival.

“Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out saying, “If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the scripture said, ‘From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water’” (John 7:37-38). A special feature of this worship service was the sending of a priest to the Pool of Siloam with a golden pitcher to draw water which was poured into a bowl at the altar. This was a time for serious praying, asking God to open the gates of heaven and send the necessary rain for the season’s crops. As the priest poured out the water, he visually demonstrated God’s faithful love in sending rain. On a deeper spiritual level it was a sign of Israel’s hope for the coming of Messiah and with it the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which God had promised. “For I will pour out water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring, and My blessing on your descendants” (Isaiah 44:3).

Have an empty pitcher and bowl ready in the room where you are gathered. Appoint someone to be your “priest” to go and fill the pitcher with water. Pour out the water into the bowl.

Talk about the deep significance of this ceremony:

- a) the need for water for crops to grow
- b) the need for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on us.
- c) When you are physically thirsty, you go to a water source to be satisfied. There is nothing like a glass of cold water to quench your thirst! What happens when you are spiritually thirsty? Do you go as quickly to Jesus to have that thirst satisfied?

- (2) Tabernacles is a special time set apart for living in a fanciful little house in your yard. The celebration centers in the “sukkah” or booth. The significance of the festival is all wrapped up in the shaky little structure.

The sukkah symbolizes several major principles in scripture: (a) it is a reminder that the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness, after the Lord led them out of Egypt, pitching tents or building temporary huts. The sukkah represents the

faith they had in the Lord that He would take them safely to the promised land.

(b) Today when we sit in a sukkah, we declare our faith in God believing that just as He guided His children in that earthly desert, delivering them to the land “flowing with milk and honey”, He will keep His promise and guide us to our permanent home in the promised land of heaven.

Do you have that kind of confidence? What comfort do these words give to your heart? How difficult or easy is it to maintain this perspective?

- (3) The booth is a reminder of the temporary endurance of material buildings as opposed to the permanent heavenly shelter God promises. Read 1 Chronicles 29:15. “For we are sojourners before Thee, and tenants, as all our fathers were; our days on the earth are like a shadow...” It is NOT a strong, well-built structure. It IS flimsy and shaky in order to symbolize this principle: Read Hebrews 11:8-10. What do these verses mean to you and do they apply to your life?
- (4) Read 2 Corinthians 5:1. Do you know and believe what is spoken of in this verse? What difference could a deeper grasp of this truth make in your life?
- (5) The roof of a sukkah should only be lightly covered for stars, moon, sun and rain to filter through – a reminder of the words in Romans 8:38-39. Do you know and believe these verses? What difference does it make when you forget?
- (6) Another name for the celebration is the Festival of Ingathering. Read: Leviticus 23:39. Thanksgiving is based on this Biblical celebration. This is the last harvest festival and it symbolizes God’s final harvest of His children to Heaven. Jesus said to those who believe in Him:

“There are many homes up there where my Father lives, and I am going to prepare them for your coming. When everything is ready, then I will come and get you, so that you can always be with me where I am. If this weren’t so, I would tell you plainly. (John 14:2,3 The Living Bible)

How do you picture the time when you will sit with Him and feast with Him in heaven?
How does this future hope impact you now?

Prayer

Optional Group - Family - Individual Activity

Make a little shelter and enjoy a meal or refreshments together. (Directions, p. 169, Celebrate the Feasts). Various opportunities for sharing are described on p. 165.



Study #3

Leviticus 23:4-8

Introduction

To understand Passover and later the Cross, we need to look at a few events along the way; all “clues” that lead to the revelation of God’s eternal purpose. From the beginning God said, There is no way to approach me accept by coming with a lamb. Sacrifice was instituted and ordained by God.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to teach us (a) “God will provide for Himself the Lamb...” Gen. 22:8 and (b) “...they are each one to take a lamb for themselves...” Ex. 12:3**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) When did you first take (invite) the Lamb (the Lord Jesus) into your life?

Abraham told his son, Isaac, "God will provide..." How has this been true in your life?

Clue # 1 - Read Genesis 3:21

- (2) Adam and Eve had never seen death. When they disobeyed God, who sacrificed the animal (I would suggest it was a lamb) to cover them?

WHAT DID GOD PROVIDE?

Clue # 2 - Read Genesis 22:1-14

- (3) What do you suppose Abraham was thinking when God said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love...and offer him there as a burnt offering..." (Gen.22:2)?

Find the parallels between this story and the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Notice how God was establishing a pattern.

WHAT DID GOD PROVIDE?

Clue # 3 Read Exodus 12:1-14

- (4) The Lord said to His servant Moses in the land of Egypt, "On the tenth of this month are each one to take a lamb for themselves...an unblemished male...you shall bring it into your home to dwell with you for four days. Then...kill it...take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which you eat it...and when I see the blood I will PASS OVER you."

WHAT DID GOD PROVIDE for those who followed his instructions? What picture is here for us?

Clue # 4 Read Isaiah 53

- (5) Little by little the prophets understood that one day God was going to send a Lamb in place of all the lambs. "All of us like sheep have gone astray...but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him...Like a lamb that is led to slaughter...He Himself bore the sin of many."

WHAT DID GOD PROMISE HE WOULD PROVIDE? Having seen the OT context of sacrifice, what further insight to you receive on this prophecy?

Clue # 5 Read Matthew 1:21

- (6) A little baby, a Lamb, was born in a shepherd's cave. He was the first born - an unblemished male.

WHAT DID GOD PROVIDE?

Clue #6

- (7) Jesus was introduced into His earthly ministry with the words: "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

WHAT DID GOD PROVIDE? What would John the Baptist have meant by this description?

Clue #7 Read Mark 15:33-39

- (8) It was the season of the Passover. Jesus, with His followers, entered Jerusalem, the Home of Israel. Four days later the Lamb was sacrificed on the altar of the cross. The wooden beams became the doorpost for the world's home.

GOD PROMISES to PASS-OVER us with His judgement of death as we are

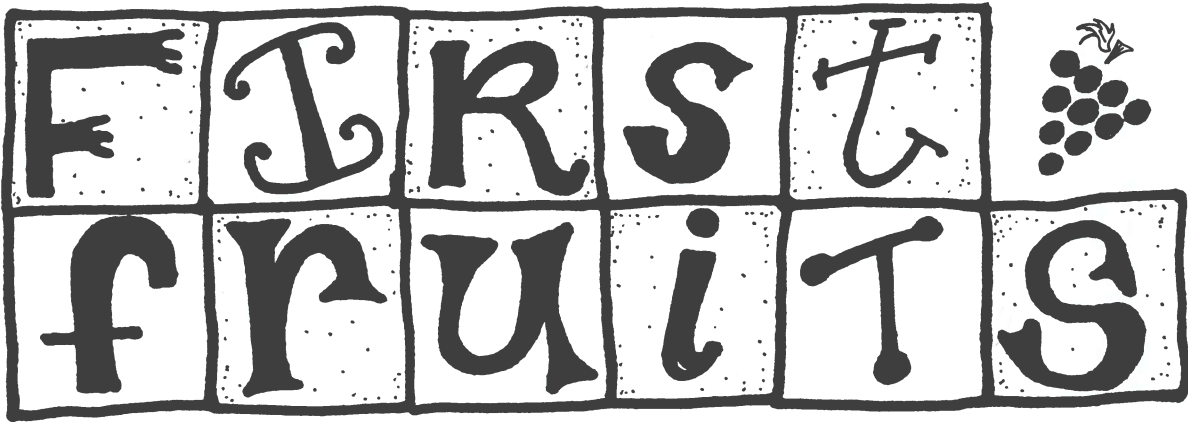
willing to stand under its protection. This is what we remember and celebrate at the Feast of Passover.

How does the history and context of Passover enrich your understanding of what God has done for you in Christ?

Prayer

Optional Group Activity

- 1) A "Search for the Leaven" is revealing and fun! (see p. 58-60 in Celebrate the Feasts)
- 2) Consider celebrating the Passover next Spring during Holy Week, as a Home Group.



Study #4

Leviticus 23:9-16

Introduction

On the first day of the week following Passover, the cereal harvest began. The first grain to ripen of those sown in winter was the barley. The best sheaf was reverently cut and the barley reverently cut and the barley removed, filling a bowl. Then it was taken to the Temple, in this symbolic way, and presented to the Lord of the harvest as an expression of thankfulness. Something called “Counting the Omer”^{*} began on this day. Wheat is the last cereal to ripen, and the first fruits from this harvest are offered seven weeks or 50 days later.

On the first day of the week following Passover, as the first fruits of the barley harvest were being offered in the Temple, Christ was “raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep” (1 Cor. 15:20).

⇒ **The aim of this study is to teach the value of redeeming “time”; preparing while you wait.**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) We don't wait very well. Instant gratification is more to our liking. The Bible is full of periods of waiting. Recall some of those waiting periods. How did the person or people use the time? How did they respond to their situation?

All of us have experienced "waiting" periods in our lives. How did you use the time? How did you respond to the situation?

Waiting to Get Out of Egypt

- (2) During the dreadful night when "the Lord struck down all the first born in Egypt...there was loud wailing in Egypt, for there was not a house without someone dead". (Exodus 12:29,30 - Last Week's study)

Read Exodus 12:31-33. "Now the length of time the Israelite people lived in Egypt was 430 years. At the end of 430 years, to the very day, all the Lord's divisions left Egypt" (Ex. 12:40-41). The words of Joseph recalled: Read Exodus 13:19. One translation reads "God shall surely take care of you". This was a major statement of faith. Joseph trusted God that He would rescue His people from their bondage. The waiting must have seemed endless.

In your periods of waiting were you able to trust God?

Waiting to get to the land that was "Promised"

- (3) "The land was flowing with milk and honey" (Ex. 3:8). What was ahead for these people? It wasn't "easy street". Read Ex. 13:17, 18, 20-22. When you don't know where you are going it's a pretty good idea to let the Lord lead the way. That's what they did. Is that what you do?

Why do you suppose God didn't take them directly from point A to point B? After all, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line... Right?

What had to happen to them before they arrived? Does the same logic apply to our lives?

Waiting for the Comforter

When the children of Israel left Egypt after the first Passover and began their journey into the wilderness, God led them to Mt. Sinai. Seven weeks later (50 days) He gave them a set of laws to live by that would govern their relationships with Him and with each other. Christ died at Passover to deliver us from the condemnation of those laws. It was obvious we could never work hard enough to earn our own righteousness. The Law was given to lead us to the Lamb.

Just before His ascension Jesus said, "And behold I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you" (Luke 24:49).

Those who were closest to Him must have waited with eager anticipation for the fulfillment of God's promise, "I will pour out my Spirit on all mankind" (Joel 2:28). Seven weeks later while the followers of Jesus were gathered together celebrating the Festival of Pentecost (prescribed in Lev. 23 - next week's study) God gave them the gift of His Holy Spirit.

The "in between" waiting time, "Counting the Omer" allows us to prepare for the dual celebration:

- the event at Sinai when God gave the Ten Commandments
 - the event at Pentecost when God gave the Holy Spirit
- (4) What must it have been like to wait during these "in between" times? How would you have dealt with the waiting?

Use these "in between" days to prepare your heart for the celebration of God's gift. Share ideas and ways to prepare...while you wait...

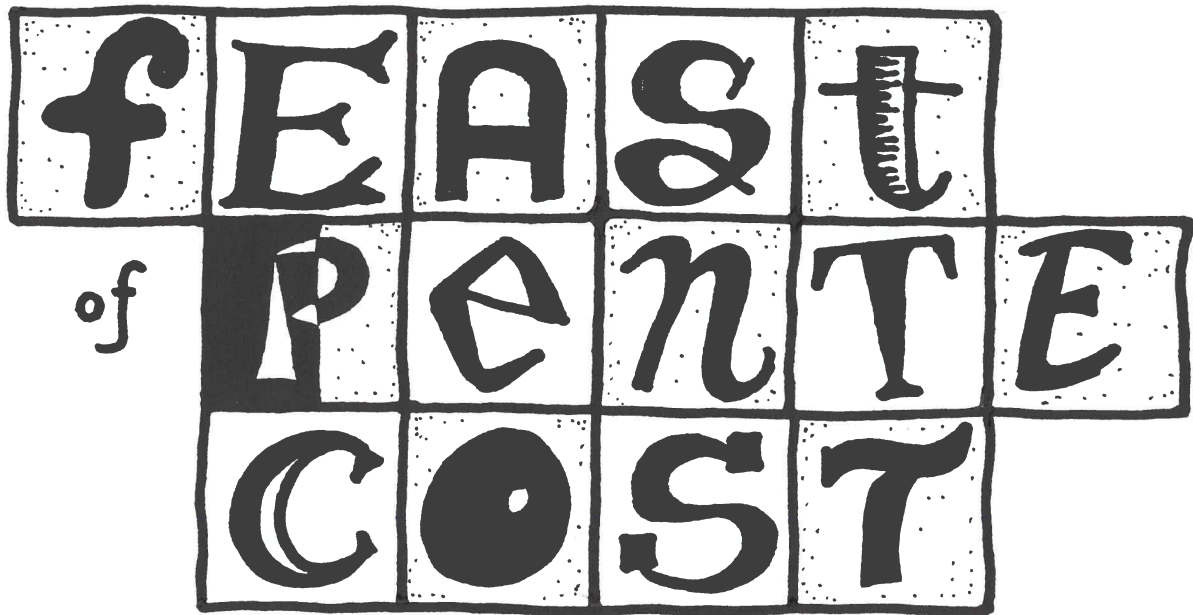
Prayer

Notes

- 1) "Counting the Omer" comes from the instruction of Lev. 23:16 to "Count 50 days".
- 2) An "omer" is a half gallon of barley.

Optional Group - Family - Individual Activity

In keeping with the celebration of Barley Harvest prepare your favorite barley recipes. On the very day I am writing this lesson the food section of our newspaper has featured "barley". I quote: "Grains" are good stuff. They have a clean reputation and no high-fat charges. The grain is a flavour chameleon. It picks up all the tastes around it...and you won't mind that it is good for you. " The most commonly found barley is "pearled". This means that double hull has been removed and the kernel inside is "polished".
-- The Bellingham Herald, Tuesday July 20, 1999, C1.



Study #5

Leviticus 23:15-22

Introduction

God's timetable is remarkable.

- First He established His pattern for redemption in the death of the Sacrificial Lamb. As death visited the first born of all the homes in Egypt not covered by the blood, Israel was set free from her physical bondage.
- Many years later, at Passover, Christ concluded that sacrifice setting us free from sin and death.
- His resurrection on the morning of the offering of the First Fruits of the barley harvest identifies Him as "Christ, the first fruits..." (1Cor. 15:23). This is when the counting of weeks began each year.
- Seven weeks after the second day of Passover (or 50 days later) is the festival called Shavuoth*, Pentecost* or Feast of Weeks. Because of instructions in scripture this festival is also known as the "Feast of the Harvest", the "Day of the First Fruits", and "The Season of the giving to us of our Holy Torah".

- ⇒ **The aim of this study is to discover important strands from the Old and New Testaments that have been irrevocably woven together leading us to know and love more of Him.**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) Consider what Jesus said about “fruit”. Read John 15:1-7.

Without speaking, make a “communal doodle”. Lay out a big piece of paper and provide some crayons or marking pens. Work as a group to create a meaningful drawing of your impressions after hearing Jesus’ words. Talk about your drawing and what it means.

Pentecost celebrates many things! See how they are all related.

Strand # 1 It celebrates the first fruits of the wheat harvest which was the last grain to ripen.

Strand # 2 This is the day that begins the fruit harvest which ends on Sukkoth in the fall. On this harvest day of celebration tow very special elements come together. Wheat is used to make bread. Fruit is crushed to make wine.

Strand #3 There is another significance associated with this time in the late Spring. It came to be recognized as a memorial to God’s gift of the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai, on the 50th day after the Israelites were led out of Egypt. Pentecost remembers God’s gift of the law.

- (2) N.T. Read Matthew 28:19-20. How important is obedience? Do we pay attention to God’s commands or do we say, “Oh, I’m not under the law”? Rabbis have said there is not liberty without divine law and self-discipline. A train needs rails. A river must have banks. It is true Christ “set us free” from the law in granting us salvation. Freedom has two side. We are free “from” in order that we may be free “to” choose to obey.

- (3) O.T. Read Exodus 19:8 Is this our response? Can you identify an area in your life right now where this is not your response?

Strand #4 Our own efforts to keep the law could never be good enough. God knew that and in His great love and mercy,, “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place,” celebrating this First Fruits Festival “and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4) becoming the “first fruits” of God’s new harvest.*

Strand # 5 God’s power came to dwell in us. Jeremiah 31:33, anticipating this event, moves the original law from stone to human hearts. O.T. - “I will put my law within them, and on their heart I will write it”. N.T. - Paul writing to the Corinthians said, “You are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with Spirit of the Living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts” (2 Cor. 3:3).

Read Acts 2:1-3

- (4) Describe the passage by each of the five senses. Supply a word under each category:

- a) Sight (pick a color)
- b) Touch (a texture)
- c) Smell (an odor)
- d) Sound (a noise)
- e) Taste (a food)

- (5) I feel as though the passage is a description of something that happened 2,000 years ago and (Choose one -)

- a) Can never happen again
- b) Should not happen again
- c) Should happen again and again
- d) Is happening again.

Discuss.

- (6) The closest I have come to experiencing what is described in the passage is (finish the sentence).

- (7) “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life” (Prov. 11:30). What do you think it means? Hide it in your heart.

Prayer

Repeat together:

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has given us commandments to obey, It is our desire to be obedient to Your laws, knowing that they will enable us to live in a right relationship with You and with each other.

Thank you for picking us up when we stumble over stones and for sending Your Holy Spirit to comfort us! (Add individual prayers). In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Notes

*Shavuoth is the Hebrew word for weeks

*Pentecost is a Greek word which literally means “fiftieth day”.

* Pentecost celebrates the Birthday of the Church.

Optional Group - Family Individual Activities

- 1) Shavuoth celebrates the Torah. Many verses tell us the Bible is as nutritious as milk and sweet as honey. For this reason cheese, milk and honey recipes are appropriate. Fresh fruit remembers the “First Fruits” theme and loaves of bread remind us of the Wheat Harvest

During the celebration it is traditional to read the book of Ruth. The story takes place in Bethlehem at harvest time and is therefore an appropriate Bible passage for the harvest celebration and a good story to read to your children. We can trace the ancestry of Jesus and His birth in Bethlehem to this O.T. story (Ruth 4;11-17).



Study #6

Isaiah 55

Introduction

Isaiah 55 provides the reader with a vivid picture of human need, on a physical and spiritual level. On the physical level, the middle eastern landscape provided little water. Such an arid picture serves as a powerful metaphor for the longings of the human spirit for peace and fulfillment, or freedom from the guilt of unresolved sin. Ancient Israel saw its Babylonian exile as punishment for its sin against God's covenant. Isaiah in speaking to the exiles offers them a larger picture than simply one of guilt. He uses images of wine, milk and water to speak of God's unfailing kindnesses. God's mercy and forgiveness are far more satisfying than money or anything money could buy. In fact, the gifts of God are free for anyone who will take them. God's word that proclaims his unfailing love and mercy has the power to create life where it does not exist. In the presence of God's living word one finds joy, peace, and celebration. Furthermore, nature takes on the human attribute of joy in clapping hands and song, in the presence of her Creator.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to cause us to joyfully carry with us everywhere the grace-filled invitation to salvation from our Lord**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) Have you ever had the experience of being thirsty and hungry? Have you ever experienced financial pressure? When you found relief from either of these experiences how did you feel? (joy? peace?)

- (2) Verse 1 has a contradictory statement in it: *“you who have no money, come, buy and eat!”* What truth does this paradoxical statement point to? Why do people find this hard to accept?

- (3) In verse 3 David, as a symbol of Israel, is the object of God’s unfailing kindnesses. Having received God’s kindness, what is Israel’s responsibility?

- (4) An ancient Israeli would have found it impossible to believe that God would have anything to do with the heathen Gentiles. How does God express his attitude toward the surrounding nations, including Israel? (verses 4-9)

Do you have people in your own life that you find it impossible to believe God would have anything to do with, or they with God? How do these verses challenge your thinking?

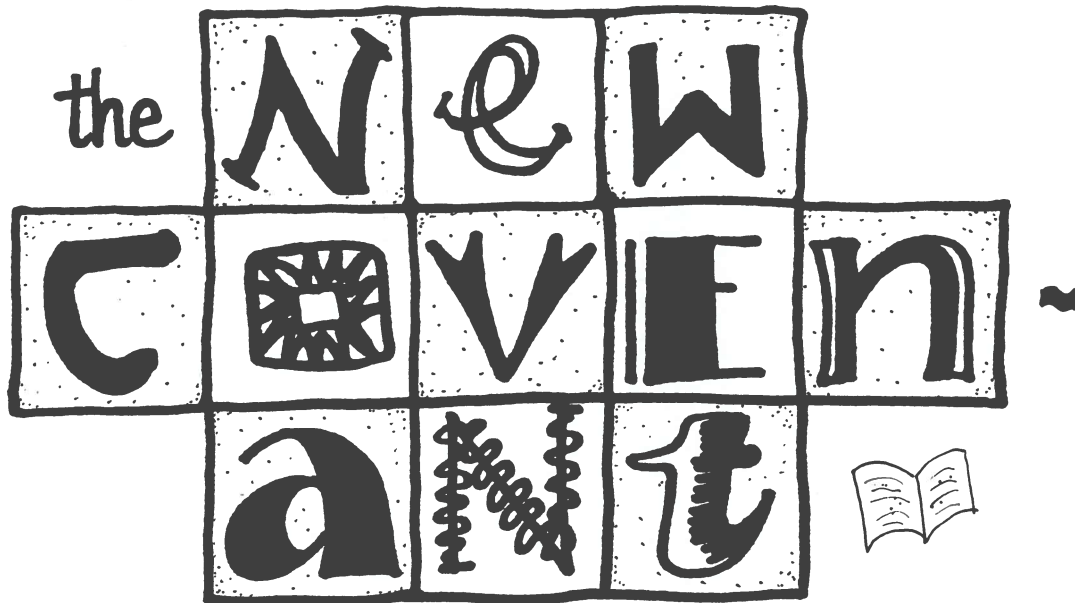
- (5) Read verses 10-11. What encouragement to faith-filled prayer do you find here when praying (under the Lord’s direction!) for those who continually seem oblivious to the words of verse 1?

- (6) What changes are described in nature to show the transforming power of God's word? (verses 12-13) Have you seen any of this in your own experience?
- (7) For what purpose does this celebration happen? (verse 13) Notice that the Lord wants to work through our lives for the same purpose (verse 5). How do we cooperate with his work, allowing our lives to celebrate his splendour in a way that is attractive to others?

Prayer

Take some time to thank God for his provision and deliverance. Think about how important it is that he has helped you or others in your group. Pray that the Lrd will help your group to act with truth and generosity toward those around you.

This next Sunday (October 24) is a Guest Service at Granville. Pray for all aspects of the service that it might warmly declare the invitation: "*Come, all you who are thirsty ...*" Pray for those inviting guests. Pray especially for the guests themselves that they would experience the refreshing touch of the Lord on their lives and that they would hear the message clearly. Pray for at least one person to come to faith.



Study #7

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:24-30; Joel 2:28-32

Introduction

In the ancient Near East, agreements between people or nations were often in the form of covenants, which were binding on both parties. They could be between equals, in which case the terms were worked out between them, or between a higher power and a lower one, in which case the terms were set out by the higher power, who stated what he would do for the other, and what he expected in return. Obviously, in a covenant with God, He is the higher power. In the covenant He made with the Jews in the time of Moses, He promised to be their God, and expected them to abide by His law (e.g. Exodus 20) and to love him (Deuteronomy 6:5). They were unable to keep these requirements. In the times of the prophets God promised a new covenant.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to learn of all the blessings that are ours in the New Covenant and to benefit from them.**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) Have you ever had someone break a solemn promise to you? How did you feel? How do you think they felt?

Jeremiah 31:31-34 (Hebrews 8:8-13)

Jeremiah speaks to those left in the land after most of their countrymen have been taken into captivity. The country is “going down the tubes”. In the midst of his prophecies of doom and gloom, Jeremiah gives us a ray of hope, Chapters 30-33, which have been called “The Book of Consolation”. Here Jeremiah outlines the new covenant which God will make with Israel, replacing the old one which they have broken.

- (1) How did the new covenant differ from the old?

	Old	new
History behind the covenant	v.32	Ezekiel 36:24
Where were the requirements of the covenant written?	Exodus 31:18 Deut. 6:6-9	v.33
How were they to learn of God?	v.34a	v.34b, 1 John 2:27
How long is the covenant in force?	v.32	ch. 32:40

- (2) In verse 31 he speaks of Israel and Judah, and in verse 33 only of Israel. What light might Ezekiel 37:16-17 throw on this? (Read to verse 23 if you have time). See Galatians 3:7-9, 6:16 and Ephesians 2:14-15 for an extension of this idea to our times. What does this tell us about how we should regard other believers?

Ezekiel 36:24-30

Ezekiel prophecies to those already in captivity (see note). After preaching doom and gloom to Judah and prophesying against the nations, Ezekiel speaks of the restoration of Israel in Chapters 33-48.

- (3) Find all the verbs in the portion. Which are things God does? In how many areas of life does He act? Which are things man does? How is he able to do them? See vs. 26,27.
- (4) Which verses enlarge on the meaning of Jeremiah 31:33, 34a? Of Jeremiah 31:34b? What is the equivalent in our lives?

Joel 2:28-32 (Acts 2:17-21)

It doesn't really matter when Joel wrote (see note). His message is timeless. After describing the plague of locusts, a picture or warning of judgement to come (1:1-2:17), Joel predicts material recovery from the ravages (2:17-28), then a completely new level of blessing (2:28-32, our portion), the judgement for the nations and blessing for the people of God (chapter 3). Our portion is a finely crafted poem of 3 verses, 3 line each (see note below).

- (5) Verses 28,29. Formerly the Spirit filled specific people for specific tasks: e.g. Saul ; David; the prophets. Now the Spirit is to be "poured out" – note the abundance – on "all people". This does not indicate every living person without exception, but every believing person without distinction. What possible distinctions will not affect this blessing? What will be the effect? (Refer back to Jeremiah 32:34 and see John 16:12-15).

- (6) Verses 30,31 This colorful language describes wonders to be seen in the “Day of the Lord”, primarily referring to the end times, but Peter claims that at least in part these verses, and indeed our whole passage, were fulfilled at Pentecost. Which signs might include natural occurrences (such as eclipses), which “acts of God” in a more supernatural sense, and which crimes of men, such as wars and “ethnic cleansing”? (The Hebrew word translated “billows” suggests something the shape of a palm tree or mushroom).
- (7) Verse 32. Who will escape this horror? How will this come about? See last phrase of the verse and consider the hymn:
- I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew
 He moved my soul to seek Him, seeking me
 It was not I who sought, O Saviour true,
 No, I was sought of Thee.
- (8) What does it mean for you to be part of this “new covenant” from the Lord?

Prayer

Notes

- 1) Re: Jeremiah. Jeremiah knew that the conquest by Babylon was God’s judgement on Judah for their sins and rebellion. He advised that it would be better for them to surrender, for this was God’s will, his punishment for their disobedience. He also advised those already captive in Babylon to settled down, build houses, and seek the peace of the place to which they had been taken, but he prophesied that after 70 years they would return to Judah. He was considered a traitor and treated accordingly. The people preferred Egypt to Babylon, and when they fled there, took him with them.
- 2) Jeremiah’s 70 years. Some consider the number symbolic. Of those who take the actual number seriously, some take it from Daniel’s captivity (606) to the edict of Cyrus to rebuild the temple (538) and others from the burning of temple in 586 to its rebuilding, finished in 516.
- 3) Re Ezekiel. Ezekiel prophesied to the exiles at Tel Abib (or Aviv), one of the towns along the Chebar River to which they had been taken captive. This was actually a

navigable irrigation canal which left the Euphrates River above Babylon and rejoined it lower down. Although they bemoaned being captives, life was not too bad. In contrast to the Assyrians who scattered their captives to many areas, the Babylonians settled them in groups and allowed a certain amount of self government. Some of Ezekiel's prophecies appear to be based in other areas. Whether he was transported there or these were visionary is a matter of much discussion.

- 4) Dating of Joel. Locus plagues were not uncommon, but we have no other record of one of this magnitude. Other possible references to events may be understood in various ways. Some suggest he wrote during the minority of Joash (835-796) because no reigning King is mentioned. Others suggest he was a contemporary of Hosea and Amos because of this place in the canon. 3:2 may suggest he wrote after the exile, about 520, with Haggai and Zechariah, or even after the wall was built by Nehemiah in 440 (2:9).

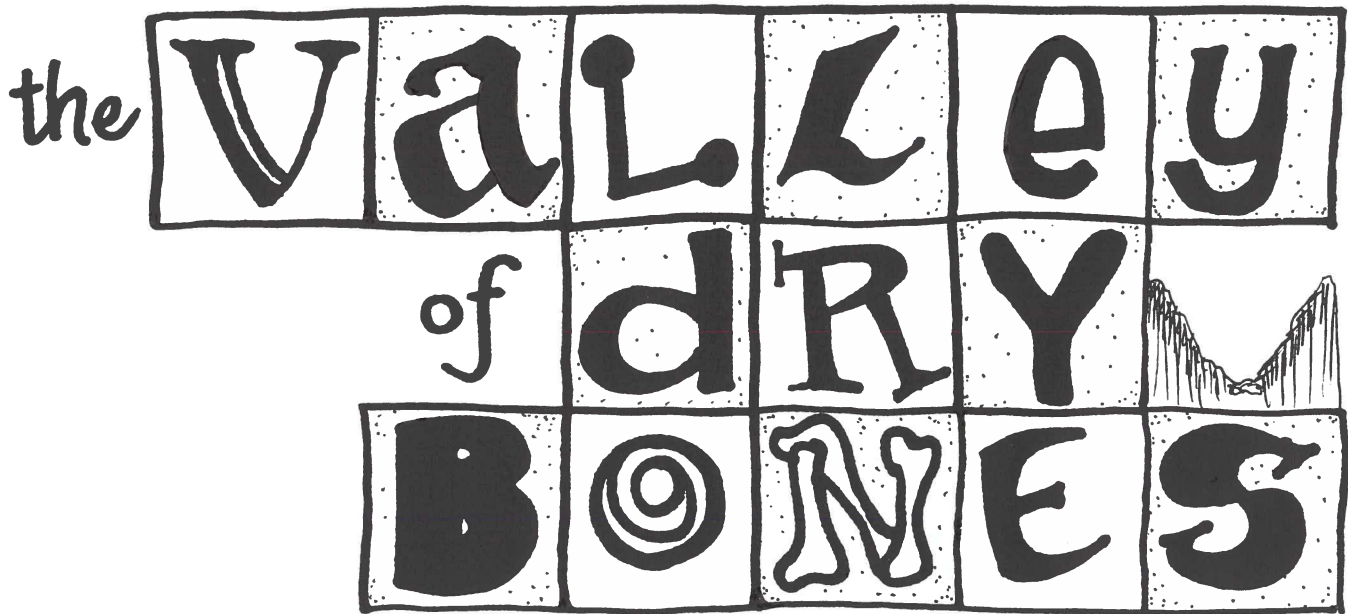
- 5) The poem:

*Afterward,
I will pour out my Spirit upon everybody: your sons and daughters
will prophesy,
While your old men will have dreams and your young men will see visions.
Even upon your slaves and slave women in those days shall I pour out my Spirit.*

*I shall set portents in sky and earth, blood, fire and columns of smoke.
The sun will be turned into darkness, the moon into blood,
before the Day of Yahweh comes, that momentous, terrible Day.*

*But everyone who calls on Yahweh's name will be safe,
Because on Mount Zion people will find security, as Yahweh has promised,
and in Jerusalem will be survivors whom Yahweh has called.*

The first verse is a "sandwich", beginning and ending with the Spirit poured forth, enclosing the effects of this enabling. The last verse is also a "sandwich" beginning with men calling on Yahweh, and ending with Him calling them, enclosing the source of men's security. Between them, they make a "sandwich" of the second verse, which speaks of the End Times, from which those who have called on Yahweh and received the Spirit will be saved.



Study # 8

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Introduction

Ezekiel was born into a family of priests attached to the temple in Jerusalem. He was exiled to Babylon in 597 BC with King Jehoiachin. In the 5th year of exile he was called to his prophetic role and exercised it for 20 years. His message was for his fellow exiles in whom he saw the hope of Israel. The exiles continued to place their hope for an early return home in the established order remaining in the temple in Jerusalem. For the first 6 years of his prophecies, Ezekiel prophesied against this false hope and his messages were ones of disaster and the destruction of Jerusalem. When the temple was taken and destroyed by Babylon, Ezekiel's message shifted to speak of the restoration that could now come by God's hand.

The vision we are studying here is part of those that speak of God's restoration of Israel. In our times we are very removed from the experience of exile that the Israelites experienced. Perhaps the closest we can come to this experience is our witness of the massive refugee exodus' to refugee camps in various parts of the world.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to give us confidence in the life-giving power of God's breath (Spirit) to transform even what is most dead and dry**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) Share with each other any experiences of feeling like you didn't belong; were displaced; or in a place that was not your home and didn't know when you would return. Have you ever been or known a refugee and heard their stories?

Read Ezekiel 37: 1- 14

Try to place yourselves in a refugee camp or similar situation of utter hopelessness and despair as a listener of this vision.

- (2) What strikes you as you hear these words? (about the valley of bones; about what the Lord promises in v. 4-6; about how this comes to pass)
- (3) In verse 4 the speaker is told to tell the bones to hear the word of the Lord and in verse 9 he is told to prophesy to the breath. What does this say about God's work and the speaker's role?

- (4) Walter Brueggemann writes in The Prophetic Imagination the following:

One of the prophet's "purposes in bringing hope to public expression,...is to return the community to it's single referent, the sovereign faithfulness of God. . . It places Israel in a new situation...which reshapes exile, not as an eternal fate but as the place where hope can most amazingly appear. ...It is likely that the only measure of faithfulness is that hope always

comes after grief and that the speaker of the public expression must know and be a part of the anguish that permits hope. Hope expressed without knowledge of and participation in grief is likely to be false hope that does not reach despair. ... it is those who know the death most painfully who can speak the hope most vigorously.”

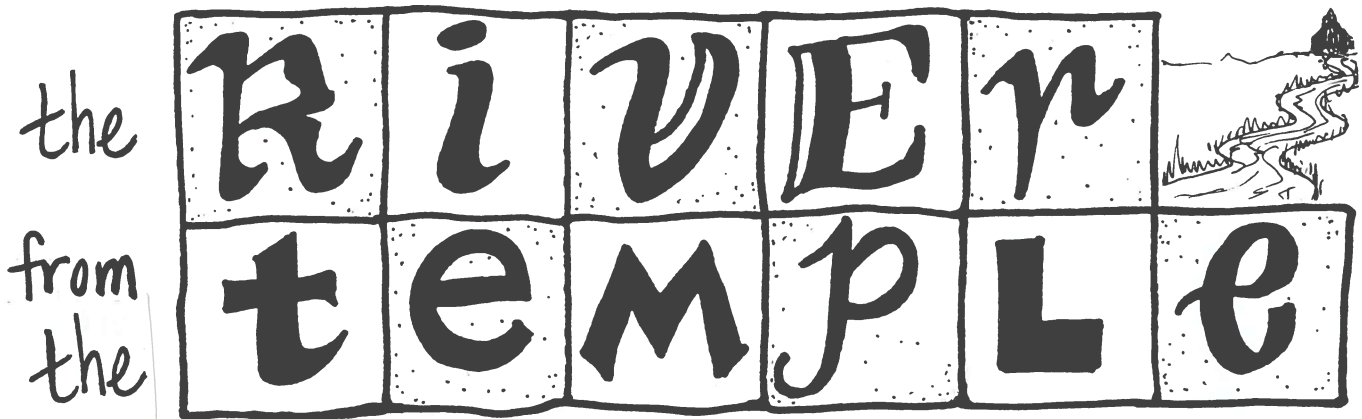
Keeping this idea in mind, how might verses 11 - 14 sound as a promise of hope to the listeners? What is expressed here as the Lord's ultimate purpose for His people?

- (5) The Hebrew word used for breath in this passage is the word *ruah*. This same word is used for wind and spirit (Spirit). It is believed that Jesus alludes to this passage in his talk with Nicodemus in John 3: 3-8. How is this vision an apt description of what happens when someone comes to faith in Christ? What aspects of your own story illustrate this?

- (6) For us living in Vancouver, BC and as part of Granville Chapel, we may feel very removed from knowing the experience of exile the Israelites were experiencing here. Yet there may be areas of our lives, both individually and as a community, that may be as dry and hopeless as these bones. How do these words speak hope to those places in our lives that feel empty, barren, hopeless, and alienated from those around us?

Prayer

For prayer you may want to pray for these areas in each other's lives.



Study #9

Ezekiel 47:1-12

Introduction

Ezekiel has this vision in exile. Because of their rebellion against the Lord God, the people of Israel have come under his judgment. They have been exiled in Babylon, far removed from their homeland which was to flow with milk and honey as a sign of God's blessing. The city of Jerusalem and the Temple itself have been destroyed.

In this circumstance, Ezekiel has a vision of a renewed Temple (Ezekiel 40-43) and of a river of blessing flowing out from it (Ezekiel 47:1-12). The river grows deeper and deeper as it flows. It becomes a powerful torrent, impassable. Life is renewed and refreshed in the waters of this flood. Trees grow along its banks brimming with fruit for sustenance and leaves for healing. The powerful blessing of the Lord is here.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to be gripped by the hope-filled image of God's river, to rejoice in its presence in our lives and to long for more**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) Start with some water stories:

Is anyone into gardening? What tragedies have you seen from lack of H₂O? What transformations have you seen from a fresh flow of water?

Has anyone experienced real parched-mouth thirst? What was it like? How did relief come? How did it make you feel?

Has anyone waded in a powerful stream? What was it like? What feelings did you experience?

- (2) Read Ezekiel 47:1-12. Look at verses 1-6a. Describe what Ezekiel experiences in this part of his vision. What does he see, hear, feel, smell as he wades in the water?

As he stands again on the bank of the river (vv. 6b-12) what does he see? What does he hear of the river's impact downstream?

What overall impression does the vision give? What feelings does it raise in you?

- (3) In Ezekiel's time the Israelites were in exile, the city of Jerusalem and the Temple had been burned, and hopes were crushed. How would Ezekiel's vision have been understood in its own day? What does it communicate about the Lord, his work and his purposes? (Look to Psalm 65:9-13 and 46:4 for further insights.)

What significance is there in the fact that the stream flows from only one source?

- (4) Read similar prophecies in Joel 3:18, Zechariah 14:8-11 and Isaiah 33:20-24. What do these add to the picture? What is the future hope of God's people?

- (5) Jesus is thinking of these Scriptures (*"as the Scripture has said"*) when he stands in the Temple during the Feast of Tabernacles and speaks about living water. Read John 7:37-39. How have we experienced the fulfillment of these Old Testament prophecies about the river? What impact does this have on our lives?

"In a Christian sense Ezekiel's river ... serves as an apt symbol of that life in the Spirit which the gospel holds forth as God's free gift to all believers." (F.F. Bruce, The New Layman's Bible Commentary, p. 899)

- (6) Revelation 22:1-5 tells us that there is yet to be a further fulfillment of this prophecy from Ezekiel 47. What hope does this ultimate fulfillment give you?

- (7) In the meantime, revival times down through history (when many, many people from a culture have turned to the Lord) bear many of the aspects of this vision. How? Is there a godly longing that this vision can evoke for our own day and age? How do we respond?

THE RIVER IS HERE

Andy Park

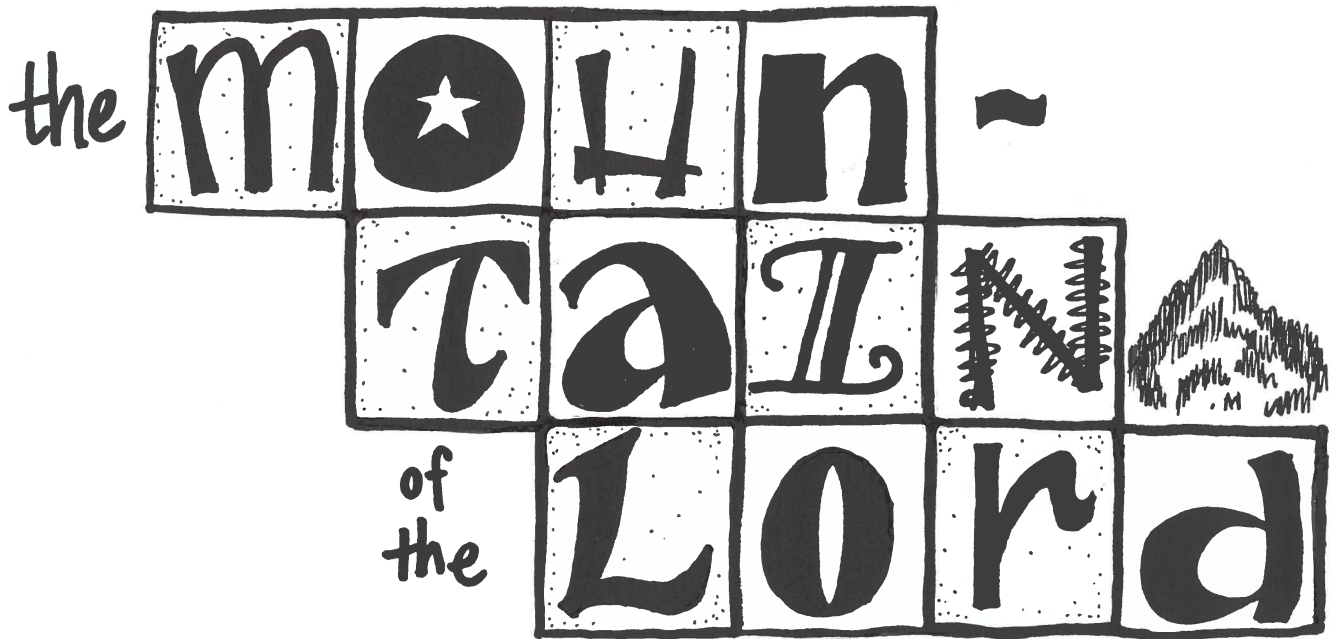
Down the mountain the river flows
And it brings refreshing wherever it goes.
Through the valleys and over the fields
The river is rushing and the river is here.

The river of God sets our feet a-dancing
The river of God fills our heart with cheer
The river of God fills our mouths with laughter
And we rejoice for the river is here.

The river of God is teeming with life
And all who touch it can be revived
And those who linger on this river's shore
Will come back thirsting for more of the Lord.
(repeat Chorus)

Up to the mountain we love to go
To find the presence of the Lord
Along the banks of the river we run
We dance with laughter giving praise to the Son.
(repeat Chorus)

Prayer



Study #10

Micah 4:1-5

Introduction

In 1960, John F. Kennedy shared a vision to send a man to the moon and bring him back safely. This image shaped the finances, imagination and conversation for the American people for a decade.

Micah is perhaps not as well known to us but he also has a vision that can shape lives. He had a vision not of human achievement but of God's power to work in His people. Although most of the book of Micah confronts Israel's shortfall in the eyes of God, it finishes with a promise that God will transform His people. The vision of the poem in 4:1-5 is the hope of the re-establishment of God's rule and peace.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to grip us with passion to see God's rule extended through all the earth**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) If you were an alien from another planet and visited earth...what symbols of culture would tell you what was important to us as people?

Have each person share one or two goals/hopes that they have for the next three years.

- (2) Most of the book of Micah challenges the integrity of a people who thought they were right with God but weren't. Micah, like all prophets, is willing to tell the hard, honest, confrontational truth about the spiritual state of Israel. What were some of Micah's indictments? (see 1:7;2:1-2; 3:1-3, 11)

What areas in our culture/church/home might Micah call to task?

- (3) Sin always has consequence. What are the immediate consequences for Israel's sin? (see 3:12)

What are the current consequences of sin in our culture/church/home?

Read Micah 4:1-5

- (4) What are the possible meanings of "in the last days"?
- (5) The temple was the gathering place for Israel's worship. If it was destroyed what would this mean to them? If it was raised up and made the centre of worship for all people what would it mean to them?

Is this promise just for Israel? Why/why not?

- (6) In this vision, God judges or rules over all people. What are the consequences of God's rule?

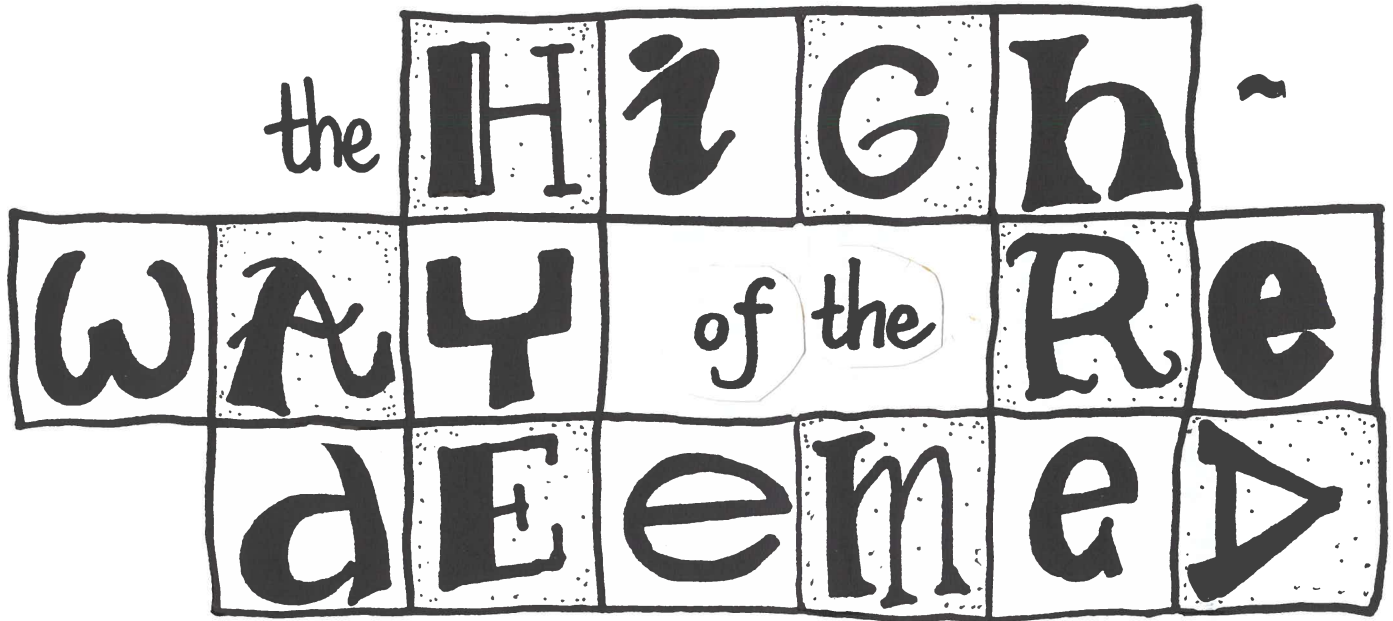
Who (or what) rules over our culture/church/home now? What consequences does this have?

- (7) Old Testament prophecy is often fulfilled in stages. What would this prophecy have meant to Micah's original audience? Did they see a partial fulfillment?

How is this prophecy fulfilled in the first coming of Christ? (see Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:5)in the final coming of Christ?...in the interim?

- (8) Ask one person to read Micah 4:1-4 while the others simply listen and imagine the vision that Micah presents. What are some practical ways that we can place this vision and other God-filled imagery into our imaginations, conversations, and prayers.

Prayer



Study #11

Isaiah 35

Introduction

This is one of the most beautiful poems ever written. The content can be summed up this way: Pilgrims travel through a desert land. Times are difficult, even bleak, but as they travel the desert blooms around them. Though the journey is long and hard, they are encouraged with the promise of salvation – the promise of One who is completely trustworthy. As they journey it is not only the desert which is transformed but the pilgrims themselves – who received salvation and are set to walk in a Way which is safe and clear. At the end of the journey they arrive with joy in Zion – the Lord's hill.

This summary reminds us of many things: the story of the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt, the work of Christ for our salvation, and our own personal journey. That is the beauty of prophecy: that it reminds people of the place from which they came, gives hope to the people for whom it was written, and encourages the hearts of those who have seen the prophecy fulfilled. Use your Spirit-baptized imagination as you go through this passage and do the study. These are beautiful words infused with many layers of meaning.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to be encouraged by prophecy fulfilled and to have the hope in our ultimate future renewed.**

Historical Background

****Don't skip this part! You need to know what was happening in the lives of Isaiah and the people to whom he was speaking to fully understand this passage!*

Isaiah wrote during the stormy period marking the expansion of the Assyrian Empire and the decline of Israel. Israel was divided into two kingdoms - Israel and Judah. Isaiah is addressing the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Assyria conquered the Northern Kingdom, and Judah came under threat from Assyria as well.

Isaiah predicts these "future" historical events: the captivity of Judah at the hands of the Babylonians (including the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.); the restoration of the people from captivity; the rise of Cyrus the Persian who would conquer Babylon - it is Cyrus' decree which would allow the Jews to return home in 538 B.C.

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) Has anyone in your group ever visited a desert? Share your experience of what a desert is like. If no one in the group has ever been in a desert, share one "desert image" you remember from a book, movie, TV show, etc.

Read Isaiah 35

- (2) There are three ways of hearing this prophecy: (1) Remembering God's faithfulness past; (2) Acknowledging God's faithfulness present; (3) Trusting in God's faithfulness future. Try reading these words as if you were Isaiah and his contemporaries. What would these words make them remember, acknowledge and trust?

Now read the passage again from your position of being able to look back over the whole story of God's faithfulness from Isaiah to the present day. What images in particular help you to remember the past, acknowledge the present, and trust in the future?

- (3) Verses 1 & 2. What is Isaiah trying to tell the people when he says the desert will blossom? Of what specific event would that remind them?

Think about some "desert times" in your life either now or in the past. How did the Lord make the "desert bloom" for you while you walking through that place? It may be that you didn't see the blossoming at the time. Share as freely as you wish.

- (4) Verses 3 & 4. What is suggested to you by the words "hands", "knees", and "heart" ? Why do those particular parts of the body need strengthening under these circumstances?

The circumstances in which the people of Judah found themselves – a great power threatening their lives and country - would make anyone's knees, hands and heart lose strength! What is the source of their encouragement? What events from their past would help strengthen them and do away their fear?

How does reflecting on God's general and specific (to you) faithfulness help you when times are especially difficult? Share with each other how knees, hands and hearts can be strengthened.

- (5) Verses 6 & 7. Read Exodus 17:1-5, John 4:13-14, and John 7:37-38. Water is a powerful image. Think about water and its properties, then consider the spiritual implications of all these verses - the Exodus story, Isaiah's images, and Jesus' words – both in general terms and in your own life.

- (6) Verses 8 & 9. What does the highway represent? Use your imagination! What is it like to be lost in a desert with nothing to show you the direction? Are there roads in a desert? To use a local image, think of being lost on Mount Seymour with the lights of the city shining below you but with no way to get to them. Can you find your way yourself?

Note the words “unclean” and “fools”. We cannot find the Way ourselves. Think about these words as you consider how God’s salvation found you and set you on the right road. Share any insight with the group.

- (7) Verse 10. Read Revelation 21:1-4, 22-27, and 22: 1-6 and compare it with our passage. What similarities do you find? How does this help you in remembering God’s faithfulness to *all generations*?

You have seen how all of Isaiah’s words are pointing to the new covenant in Jesus Christ, speaking of the benefits to the people of this plan of salvation. This passage prepares for the one to come later in Isaiah, the passage which explains how all this wonder and glory is to come about. Briefly look at Isaiah 53, and give thanks for the price which was paid to set us on the Highway of the Redeemed towards the future glory of heaven.

Prayer



Study #12

Isaiah 11-12

Introduction

We have been looking at God's faithfulness in the past. Based on this we can look with confidence into the future because the Bible has a solid track record in predicting future events. Hundreds of prophecies have already been fulfilled, including many about the Lord Jesus Christ.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to give us hope and confidence in God as we face the end of not only the year, but the end of this century and millennium.**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) The Scripture reading is, from our viewpoint, a look back to the Incarnation and a look forward to the Millennium. As you examine your own past experiences how do you feel about them and as you face the future, what are your thoughts?

- (2) Isaiah 1-39 focuses on events between about 740 BC and 700 BC. The Jewish nation had been split into the northern part (Israel) and the southern part (Judah). What was the condition of the people at that time? (See Isaiah 6:5 & 9:9-10:2)

- (3) Note how God dealt with the Jewish people: He sent Assyria (a powerful empire located near present day Iraq) to punish them. The northern kingdom was carried into exile and the country was brought low. Later the southern kingdom would also be exiled and the house of David itself would be reduced to a stump. Against this backdrop what hope does Isaiah 11:1, 10-16 bring?

- (4) Other references are made in scripture to the root of Jesse (Isa. 11:1,10, & Rom. 15:12) and of David (Rev. 5:5 & 22:16). What do you know about these men?

What do you know about roots? About branches? Why do you think these are appropriate terms, and to whom do they apply?

- (5) Looking back to the Incarnation, note the reference in Isa. 53:2 and see how Jesus fitted the description in Isa. 9:2-42. How did Jesus fulfill the prophecy in Isaiah 11:1-5? What is yet to be fulfilled?

- (6) Looking forward to the future, what hope of coming restoration and well-being does the rest of Isaiah 11 give?

- (7) Read Isaiah 12:1-2. How does this strike right at the core of the spiritual and emotional issues for the exiled people of Isaiah's day?

Why is the issue of "*anger ... turned away*" so crucial for us to understand also?
What happens when we fail to

grasp hold of this truth?

- (8) Enter the New Year with the song of praise in Isaiah 12. Read the whole of it together ... and rejoice!

Prayer