**Isaiah- God saves** (mornings 2019)

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| Date  | Speaker | Passage | Title | Extra |
| Aug 25 | CH | Isaiah 1 | Rejection of the Holy One |  |
| Sep 1 | Bob Akroyd | Isaiah 2  | God is right to judge  |  |
| 8 | Weekend Away | - | - | - |
| 15 | Wayne Sutton | Isaiah 6 | Isaiah: God’s messenger |  |
| 22 | Derek Lamont | Isaiah 11 | The gift of grace |  |
| 29 | CH | Isaiah 13:1-14:2 | King of the nations |  |
| Oct 6 | David Knowles | Isaiah 40 | Comfort to those in exile |  |
| 13 | CH | Isaiah 42 | God’s true servant |  |
| 20 | Ian Naismith | Isaiah 46 | Idols and the one true God |  |
| 27 | CH | Isaiah 52:13-53:12 | Salvation accomplished |  |
| Nov 3 | Athole Rennie | Isaiah 58 | The fasting God requires |  |
| 10 | Peter Maiden | - | - | Centenary Service |
| 17 | CH | Isaiah 61 | A glorious future |  |
| 24 | CH | Isaiah 65:17-66:24 | Rest in the promises of God |  |

This wonderful book, so often quoted in the NT is crucial to our understanding of God’s salvation through the Messiah Jesus Christ. It’s in many ways the centre piece of the story of Israel in the Biblical story which finds it’s fulfilment in Jesus. The book’s message is summed up in the meaning of Isaiah’s name: YHWH is salvation! In it we learn so much about God, the sovereign King, Holy, just, yet gracious comforter. God is the living God, creator and compassionate redeemer of Israel and all who put their complete trust in Him.

The book Isaiah is actually a rather sobering reality check yet brimming with hope. It challenges us to think who we really are when no one sees but God. However we also discover the beautiful grace of God who is mighty to save through His true suffering servant Jesus Christ. Isaiah asks us who we put our trust in and calls us to rest in the promises of God who will bring about the glorious future described in the latter chapters. The book Isaiah also helps us to understand life in exile. How do we live in the here and now in light of the new heaven and new earth?

Isaiah’s message falls into 3 main parts: chapter 1-39 deals with the present reality the Israelites faced; chapter 40-55 deals with life in exile; and chapter 56-66 deals with life after the exile looking to the ultimate future) really work as a whole. Isaiah’s long and faithful ministry ran from about 740 to 687BC starting in the last year of Uzziah’s long reign in Jerusalem. This was a time of relative peace in Judah and Israel though by the time of Uzziah’s death, Assyria had reasserted her power. Interestingly the people of God believed God was pleased with them, since they were enjoying a period of greater prosperity than at any time since the death of King Solomon. However the first 39 chapters confront the Jewish nation with God’s perfect character and spell out what he will do to the unless they turn from their sinful behaviour and become like him.

We encourage you to read Isaiah alongside the series. What can make reading Isaiah challenging is the mixture of genres used, from poetry to narrative to apocalyptic. Phil Moore’s ‘Straight to the heart’ series can be helpful. His book on Isaiah is called ‘God is bigger than you think’ covering Isaiah in 60 short readings. Yet have a go at reading Isaiah itself.

Eugene Peterson says this: ‘Isaiah deals with virtually everything that is involved in being a people of God. Isaiah will change our understanding of the word Holy to see that Holiness is a most attractive quality. Something blazing rather than something pious or pastel tinted.’ May we through the study of this book renew our trust in the Holy One of Israel.

**‘Surely this is our God; we trusted in him and he saved us. This is the Lord, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation’**

*Isaiah 25:9*

(P&T June 2019)