

Growth Teams

Week Beginning
Sunday 8th November 2015

Going deeper

Isaiah chapters 40-55 are written to encourage those Jews who were to be taken into exile by Babylon (Isaiah 39:5-7). That is Jews like Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They are meant to be a comfort (Isaiah 40:1) that God had not forgotten them and that He would one day bring them home. This particular section has a certain resonance with Daniel 3.

Read Isaiah 43:1-7

5. How is God's relationship with Israel described in verse 1? How would this encourage them in exile?
6. How does verse 2 link with Daniel 3? Not all of Israel would literally pass through fire. How does this verse and the story in Daniel 3 encourage the Israelites in exile more generally?
7. When Babylon seemed to be the all-powerful and most important nation of the time, how do verses 3 and 4 encourage the exiles?
8. Verses 5 and 6 promise a future return from exile, which eventually happened when the Persians overthrew the Babylonian empire. For the exiles of Daniel's time, however, this was in the distant future. Do you think the promise mattered to them?
9. As Christians that in a sense are exiles in our present world (cf. 1 Peter 1:1-2), how do these verses offer us encouragement?

Now do the applying it to our lives questions...

Growth Teams

Growth Teams are a wonderful opportunity to go deeper with other Christians. They are a great place to build real friendships and support networks, to pray for one another and to look more carefully at the topics we consider on a Sunday.

Our main focus on Sundays until Christmas is going to be the book of Daniel. The Daytime growth Teams will be looking at this book, whilst for this term instead of evening Growth Teams we are running the course: ***How to like the Old Testament again***, This Tuesday 7:30-9:00pm in church.



**Growing in Christ
to glorify God
and enjoy Him forever.**

Daniel 3 (page 886)

Space to take notes on the talk

_____ for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego

State Religion that _____

How to live for God in a hostile world:

a. Know that God is _____

b. Know that God is _____

Starter question

- ❖ When have you found it hardest to be known as a Christian or to follow Christ?

Responding to the talk

1. What point from this week's talk did you find most helpful, challenging or hard to understand?
2. Read Daniel 3:1-12
 - a. In what different ways did Nebuchadnezzar ensure people worshipped his golden statue?
 - b. If you were a non-Jewish friend of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego how might you have tried to persuade them to take part?
 - c. What pressures do we face today to conform to the world in a way that is not living for God?
3. Read Daniel 3:13-18
 - a. What choice do the three Jewish friends face?
 - b. How would you answer Nebuchadnezzar's question in verse 15?
 - c. What can we learn from the way the three answer the king?
4. Read Daniel 3:19-30
 - a. Why is Nebuchadnezzar so angry and how is his anger shown?
 - b. Why does Nebuchadnezzar change his attitude so completely?
 - c. What encouragement would the three friends have had from having a fourth person in the furnace with them?

You may like to do the 'Going Deeper' questions over the page.

Applying it to our lives

6. A Christian friend has been asked by their boss to do something, which means contradicting their Christian faith. What would you advise them to do?
7. Many Christians are killed for their faith and not rescued by a miracle. Why can we still claim that God is able to save?