



SESSION 4: Isaiah

The Suffering King

Session 3

Key takeaways for Pre-Disciples:

- God has a plan to defeat evil and death, and restore humanity back to a life-giving relationship with himself.
- The way God will do this is through a promise to one old couple that they will have many descendants and through them God will bless all the peoples on the earth.
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Part 1

identity

worship

mission

Part 1: catch up

- Icebreaker question – Get everyone to share about how their week has gone, what has been happening in their life in the past 7 days. Listen out for things you could pray for.
- Ask everyone how they got on sharing the story
 - (this is not to keep tabs on people, but is a helpful reminder that part of them learning the story well is you asking them every week if they managed to share it.)
- Ask someone to re-tell last week's story

Part 2 (story)

identity

community

mission

Abraham (Genesis 12-15)

Story-Audio-Link: <https://christ-central.org.uk/pre-disciple/>

This is the story from God's word.

*And kept his promise to Abraham, miraculously, Sarah gave birth to a son. And he had children, his son had 12 sons and they had children and their children had children. Until Abraham's descendants became a great nation of God's people. **But this nation forgot God. Instead of God being their king, they wanted their own kings and leaders ruling over them. Now some of them were good but many of them were evil. They led the people away from trusting in God, to trusting in idols made of wood and stone. Just like the other peoples,***



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their relationship with God and each other was broken and distorted, and the land was full of evil and injustice.

But God did not forget his promise, and in one of their darkest moments, God sent a spokesperson to the people with a message of hope.

*He told them: God is going to **send his promised King**. But he won't be what you expect, **he won't look impressive** by the world's standards, he will be gentle and humble. **He will be hated and rejected**, and he will be whipped, and beaten **and put to death**. But **this won't be because of his own disobedience and evil**, he will be innocent. You see we're all kind of like sheep. You know how sheep are. They wander off the path and stray away, and all of us wander off of God's path. **We all disobey God but God will put all of our disobedience on this king. He will carry our burdens and our brokenness. He will die for the evil we have done. He will be crushed so we can be healed.***

*But, the amazing thing is that God will give him life again, **and because of this promised king many people will have a restored relationship with God.***

That is the message that God gave to the people, and from that time on the people waited expectantly for the Promised King to come.

Re-tell the story as group: allow everyone to share a section of the story. If there is more than 6 people consider breaking up into pairs to retell the story.

Questions for discussion

1. What do you like about this story/What stood out to you?
2. What bothered you about this story?
3. What does this story show you about God?
4. What does this story show you about people?



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Part 3 (practice / takeaways)

identity

worship

mission

Ask the remaining questions:

5. What does this story mean for your life? How will you live your life differently having learned this story?
6. How will you remember this story? (tell it!)
7. Who are you able to tell this story to?

Encourage everyone in the group to think of people in their life whom they could retell the story to; mention that at the next session we will recap the story and ask who remembered to tell the story. Again it is helpful to emphasise the reason for going and telling the story ourselves is that it is the best way for us to remember the story.

Other useful media resources

- 1.) This is a really helpful video on the theme of God's Promised King(The Messiah) through the bible from Adam and Eve to Jesus
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dEh25pduQ8>
- 2.) This video speak directly to why God's Promised King must go through suffering and death to deal with humanity's evil
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_OIRWGLdnw&t=186s

Notes for leaders - questions / topics that may arise

This seems like such a clear prophecy about Jesus. How is it that people didn't recognize Jesus as this Promised King when He came?

- 700 years had passed since this prophecy. When Jesus was born, God's people were being ruled by the Roman Empire and they really wanted a victorious warrior king to come and save them from the Romans. The King described here, though, was a different sort of king. We'll see in the future stories how this plays out – why people didn't like Jesus and what kind of King God meant Him to be. As for this prophecy, how often it seems that people overlook the things they don't want to hear!

Why does this King have to die for evil and disobedience of people?



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Once humans break their relationship with God, evil and death are introduced into God's creation. God is determined to deal with the evil and suffering that humanity has brought in to the world. However in the Bible, evil brings two main consequences which must be addressed. Prof Tim Mackie writes 'evil has the direct effect of hurting other people. This direct effect must be made right by fixing whatever problem the evil has caused. For example, if a person steals from another person, they must make it right by returning whatever item was stolen. There is another, indirect effect of evil that the Bible talks about, though. This effect is one of a ruined relationship with God, destruction of trust, and emotional damage. This effect of evil must be corrected in another way.'

- God could just get rid of all causes of evil by wiping out all that is bad and evil in his world. However, because all of us are entangled in evil, God is committed to restoring us back into a relationship of trust with himself by dealing with our evil another way, the bible calls this way -- sacrifice.
- In place of us facing the consequence of our evil, in the bible, God provides his people with an animal that dies in their place as a symbol that their evil has been dealt with and they can now be forgiven. However these sacrifices did not change the heart of the people and they continued in evil and injustice. In Genesis 2 God tells humanity that the consequence for evil and disobedience is death and then in Genesis 3 their relationships between God, each other and all creation is broken and distorted. Now in Isaiah's prophecy, God promises to send a king who will bear this consequence and curse, and will decisively deal with the evil of the people by becoming the sacrifice himself and dying in their place. This allows for a restored world and a restored relationship with God to be possible.

Why did God wait so long to send this Promised King?

- 700 years passed between this prophecy and when Jesus was born. In that time, God's people disobeyed him often, and kings led them astray. Finally neighbouring countries came to conquer them, and God's people were scattered throughout the world. God's timing is rarely explained in the Bible – but what we do know is that He felt that the time for Jesus to be born was just right. Remember that in the story of David becoming king, we heard that God does not make decisions the way that people make decisions. However, through every story so far we have seen that God's love is extravagant and consistent. Although we don't always understand His timing, we've seen God's amazing love for His people.



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Feedback from Group Leader

In our vision for discipleship, we have identified 4 key ingredients to healthy and growing disciples. As you are leading your group, for each session, make some notes under each heading for how the group is faring in each of these areas

identity

worship

community

mission