



# LENT

## Bible Reading Initiative 2025

### WEEK 3

**BODMIN**  
LIGHT & LIFE CHURCH

**DAY THIRTEEN: Mon 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

**Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4**

It was right at the start of Jesus' ministry, just after he had returned from being tempted by the devil in the desert, that He went to the synagogue and quoted the first few of these verses from Isaiah (Luke 4). These verses, given to the prophet Isaiah hundreds of years previously, were foretelling the coming of the Messiah, Jesus. He lived them out to the max – he fulfilled them beautifully, astonishingly. The gospels are littered with examples of lives changed from despair to joy.

Read verse 3 slowly and spend time in adoration of the transformation that Jesus the Messiah brings to people's lives. Give thanks for those who you know who have been touched by the love of Jesus. Give thanks for how these verses are coming true through the outreach of our church, through SkillSHARE, and through other initiatives.

These verses are primarily fulfilled in Jesus. But, as his followers, we are called to do and say as he did. These words from Isaiah are meant for us too. In our own strength this is impossible, but this is where the anointing in verse 1 is important. Anointing in the Old Testament is normally reserved for kings and priests as anointing is a symbol of authority being given. But Jesus, the *Messiah*, the *King of Kings* and the *Great High Priest*, is full to overflowing with authority. It is only with the power of the Holy Spirit, who lives in each believer, and with *His* authority, that we can follow Jesus in this ministry.

So, take time now to pray for those who you know who need to hear the Good News, who are broken-hearted, are held captive in one way or another, and those who mourn, are depressed, or despairing. Pray with the confidence that comes from knowing that Our God is one who longs for all to know him and be made whole. Pray with enthusiasm and joy knowing that Jesus wants to bless with 'oil of joy', 'crowns of beauty', 'garments of praise'. Pray that God would guide you into action today.

*Mike Wisheart*

**DAY FOURTEEN: Tues 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

**Reading: Jeremiah 29:11-13**

Those of a certain age may remember the TV programme that always ended with the phrase "I love it when a plan comes together". We often make plans that, for one reason or another, seem to fail. A special family picnic that is cancelled because of rain, a new job opportunity lost because we were not called for an interview, a visit with a friend postponed because we were sick. However hard we try, we are often disappointed because something else gets in the way.

The Israelites had spent 70 years in exile in Babylon and had almost forgotten what their homeland looked like. Suddenly God declares, "It's over, you will return". Can you imagine the anticipation and excitement as they made plans for their return?

However, along with the promise of good plans came some instructions from God. Call on me, pray to

me, seek me. God wanted his people to put him first, to know that he had good things in store for them, to know that he had good plans for them.

God's plans are always good. They do not fail whatever the situation. They will not disappoint us. They are there to give us hope and a future. God never imposes his plans on us, he doesn't treat us like puppets or rule over us like a dictator - he loves us and wants us to enjoy the things he has planned for us. He wants us to ask him what he wants us to do, not only in the future, but on a day-to-day basis, so it would be good to start each day with a prayer, and to ask him to guide us in his plans for the coming day.

I can just imagine God watching us and smiling as he says, "I love it when a plan comes together"!

*Janet Brierley*

**DAY FIFTEEN: Wed 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

***Reading: Micah 6:8***

Micah was one of the Old Testament prophets that lived in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC and spoke God's words to the people of Israel. In spite of God delivering the Israelites from Egypt, enabling them to pass through the Red Sea and supporting them over 40 years in the Wilderness, they had disobeyed God many times, replaced Him with idols, cheated and defrauded one another and lived proud and immoral lives. Micah pronounced God's judgement on Israel, and, because of their sin, they would be conquered by a foreign nation and taken into exile as captives. Within 200 years the Assyrians took Israel captive.

Micah points out that God is not looking for some elaborate way of putting things right with God. All He wants is very simple and it is:

- to behave in a right and just way
- to be kind and compassionate to one another
- to walk humbly with God.

We would struggle of ourselves to reach this standard of behaviour. However, Micah hints in his prophecy (Micah 5:2) that one day the Messiah (Jesus) would be born in Bethlehem, a stone's throw from Jerusalem. And we now know that He would be the one to forgive our sin, if we ask Him, and to provide the Holy Spirit who would enable us to live lives that would please God. Let's thank Him for that today.

*Norman Brierley*

**DAY SIXTEEN: Thurs 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

***Reading: Joel 2:28-32***

Joel, the prophet, was into locusts! Ravenous winged beasts that would devastate crops, wasteland, and homes with 'teeth of a lion and fangs of a lioness' – a vivid picture of an invading army that would ransack Israel, bringing judgement on the Israelites because of their sin of disobeying God. The invasion would be overwhelming to people, animals and land.

In the midst of this upheaval, Joel calls the nation to return to the Lord in genuine repentance. As a result, God would bring about restoration of relationship with him and blessing to the nation. That blessing would come and be evident in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among the people, signs and

wonders would be experienced. In fact, anyone who would call on the name of the Lord would be saved!

In Simon Peter's day, we read (in Acts 2:17) that this prophecy and blessing of the Holy Spirit in lives was experienced, and down the centuries since then the outpouring of the Holy Spirit has taken place and would culminate in the 'Day of the Lord' at the end of time when judgement by God would come on those that oppressed his people.

God's promise is that He will pour out his Spirit on all people! Yes, you and me!

*Norman Brierley*

**DAY SEVENTEEN: Fri 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

***Reading: Isaiah 55:1-5***

Two for the price of one, buy one get one free, special price - limited time only offer. We seem to be surrounded by "special offers"! TV advertisements, online comments, emails, phone calls, postal leaflets, in-shop deals - we are bombarded on all sides. Yes, there are some things that are real deals, but we can easily get drawn into buying items that we don't really need or duped into deals that are not real. We have to look carefully at the small print to see if the offer is genuine or not.

Jesus says, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry" (John 6:35). He also said, "Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst" (John 4:14).

We spend our time looking for things to satisfy, but we so easily look in the wrong places. Knowing Jesus gives us the things that life cannot - forgiveness, peace, hope. And the good news is that we don't have to pay anything for them - they are free to all who ask. There is no small print to consider, and we can depend on God to keep his promise. Bread and water are very basic items, but if we have nothing else, they can satisfy our deepest need.

In these verses, God is offering a real deal. Spiritual bread and water for nothing. Is it too good to be true? No. Will the product live up to our expectations? Yes. Ask God to satisfy you with all he has on offer to deal with today's issues.

*Janet Brierley*

**DAY EIGHTEEN: Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2025**

***Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-17***

I imagine that this text was about Israel being saved from their enemies, but I love the thought of God singing over us in delight, despite all our faults and sins.

In Genesis, we read about God creating man and that it was *very* good. I think that God must have been singing in delight then too, before sin came and spoiled the relationship. How sad God must have been when this relationship was broken: from feelings of joy to feelings of complete heartache.

It reminds me, too, of the story of the prodigal son. There were no recriminations or condemnation, just pure joy that his son had returned. This is such a great picture of God's love for us and reminds us that he is always "looking out" for us.

Perhaps today we could think about God's joy in the relationship we have with him. No condemnation or guilt comes between us. Imagine Him singing over you today. How does it sound?

*Gill Horwell*

**DAY NINETEEN: Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025**

***Reading: Jeremiah 29:10–14***

Have you ever felt bewildered by life? Life can sometimes throw an unexpected curve ball. Relationships/friendships may struggle, we may have health issues, or our circumstances may change dramatically without much warning.

Jeremiah writes to the Israelites who are in captivity in Babylon sharing a message from God for them. If they were at all like me, they would have been keen to know how God was going to sort this situation out quickly. God, however, in his message says, “When 70 years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you” – 70 years! That’s a long time to wait! What is it they say about God’s timing not being our timing?!

Going back a bit to verse 5, God tells the Israelites to “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce” in their place of captivity. In other words, keep going with the normal things of life, yet waiting for him to come through.

Then comes the good bit. God promises the Israelites that when the 70 years are complete, He will come to them and change their circumstances. Verse 11 is a family favourite for us. Despite how bewildering life may be sometimes, God has a plan! We can have hope because God already knows and sees us – he has plans for us that will be for good. If we seek Him with all of hearts our futures are secure in Him.

*Wendy Langford*