

**Sunday July 10th 2022 –  
A service of worship for use at home  
Prepared by Susan Johnson  
Bible Month Week 4. Isaiah: God's promise of a new world**

Nottingham North East  
Methodist Circuit

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Today is the final day of exploring parts of the book of Isaiah. We are looking at a times after the exile in Babylon when some of God's people had returned to their land. The prophet Isaiah shares God's vision of a new world for the people. We are reminded of God's faithfulness in the world. So we sing together

**Hymn – StF 52 Great is thy faithfulness**

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee  
Thou changest not, Thy compassion, they fail  
not  
As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be

*Great is Thy faithfulness, great is Thy  
faithfulness*

*Morning by morning new mercies I see  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me*

Summer and winter, and springtime and  
harvest  
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love  
*Chorus*

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth  
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to  
guide  
Strength for today and bright hope for  
tomorrow  
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside  
*Chorus*

**Prayers of adoration and confession**

Creator God we come to you this morning to give you thanks and praise for your world is full of endless beauty revealing your majesty and might. We see your strength in the mountains, your holiness in the deep still waters, your grace in the generosity of life from the smallest ant to the largest whale. We see your love for us in humanity that you have created in your image. And so we worship you.

But today in your presence we are also aware of the times we have not shown that image to others in our action, and thoughts. We would ask your forgiveness and the help of your holy spirit to do better next times.

Silence

Lord, We hear your words in the quietness, Our sins are forgiven in Jesus' name.

Amen

**We say the Lord's prayer.** Our Father.....Amen

This Isaiah was writing at a time when the nation was looking for restoration after living in exile in Babylon, the rebuilding of Jerusalem and were looking forwards to the return to their lands.

**Isaiah 65: 17 – 25**

<sup>17</sup> For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth;  
the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.

<sup>18</sup> But be glad and rejoice forever

in what I am creating, for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy and its people as a delight.

<sup>19</sup> I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it or the cry of distress.

<sup>20</sup> No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days or an old person who does not live out a lifetime,

for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed.

<sup>21</sup> They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

<sup>22</sup> They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat, or like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

<sup>23</sup> They shall not labour in vain or bear children for calamity,<sup>[a]</sup> for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD—

and their descendants as well.

<sup>24</sup> Before they call I will answer,  
while they are yet speaking I will hear.

<sup>25</sup> The wolf and the lamb shall feed together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, but the serpent—  
its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy

on all my holy mountain, says the LORD.

Life would be prosperous again. They would have their own homes and their land would be fruitful.

This hymn , which echoes the final words of John Wesley reminds of a new world .

### **Hymn - StF 610 Best of all is God is with us ( May be sung to 341 All for Jesus )**

Best of all is God is with us,  
God will hold and never fail.  
Keep that truth when storms are raging,  
God remains though faith is frail.

Best of all is God is with us,  
hearts are challenged, strangely warmed,  
faith is deepened, courage strengthened,  
grace received and hope reformed.

Best of all is God is with us,  
life goes on and needs are met,  
God is strongest in our weakness.  
Love renews, will not forget.

Best of all is God is with us,  
in our joy and through our pain,  
till that final acclamation:  
'life is Christ, and death is gain'.

Best of all is God is with us  
as we scale eternal heights,  
love grows stronger, undiminished;  
earth grows dim by heaven's lights.

### **Sermon**

So we see what Isaiah values in his new world, but it is a different context to our world today. We have not been living in the UK in exile, indeed in living memory we have not been invaded as a country. How would we describe ourselves here in the UK?

I suggest that we are a nation that relies on technology, Artificial intelligence, social media input, the cult of the celebrity. We do very little manufacturing and are just beginning to see the importance of farming and agriculture to our lives. Looking very closely at what we how far it has travelled. These are just some suggestions and I'm sure you will have more ways to describe yourselves.

So the big question is what would we need in our vision of a new world?

Let's look at a vision that Jesus used at the start of his ministry taken from a reading from the book of Isaiah.

### Luke 4: 16-21

<sup>16</sup> He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, <sup>17</sup> and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

<sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,

<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."<sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. <sup>21</sup> He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

Jesus mission at the start of his ministry was all about people. People who needed his help: help that the Spirit would give him.

Help for the poor, freedom for the oppressed and healing for those who needed it. He knew and said that the poor would always be with us and today, we who are followers of Jesus are called to be on the lookout for those who need help and support, comfort and healing from whatever is necessary. This new world will be a place where people who are in need will be helped and there are many that we know of today.

2 weeks ago the new President of the Methodist Church gave his inaugural address, speaking about the greatest commandment, to love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves. Our neighbours are now worldwide due to our technological advances. We know about people who are refugees, people who are seeking asylum, people fleeing war situations, people living with health issues both physical and mental. The list goes on. In some cases these people may be known personally to you, but all are known to God. We have our immediate neighbours and those on the other side of the world.

The President, Revd Graham Thompson also spoke about the heritage within Methodism. Siting John Wesley who said something like, "I know of no holiness without social holiness". Leading to Methodism that always and consistently is called to engage with others and their needs in the world. Our personal holiness is not enough. **We need to act.**

So let's look afresh at what we can do to those who are struggling with rising food prices, rising sea water, being caught up in war situations, struggles for power, loss of opportunities for work, nowhere to call home.....

We are called to help. So that the new world may begin to come – the new world is the kingdom of God where there will be no more tears and pain, we will be able to see everyone we meet as fellow human beings made in the image of God and will be able to offer them respect because of that.

There is so much to be done. May God help us see where our mission to others is and how we can help. Amen.

## **Hymn – StF 706 Longing for light**

Longing for light, we wait in darkness  
Longing for truth, we turn to You  
Make us Your own, Your holy people  
Light for the world to see

Chorus

*Christ, be our light*  
*Shine in our hearts*  
*Shine through the darkness*  
*Christ, be our light*  
*Shine in Your church gathered today*

Longing for shelter, many are homeless  
Longing for warmth, many are cold  
Make us Your building, sheltering others  
Walls made of living stone

*Chorus*

Many the gifts, many the people  
Many the hearts that yearn to belong  
Let us be servants to one another  
Making Your kingdom come

*Chorus*

## **Prayers of intercession using StF 696**

For the healing of the nations  
For the healing of the nations,  
    Lord, we pray with one accord;  
for a just and equal sharing  
    of the things that earth affords.  
To a life of love in action  
    help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead your people into freedom,  
    from despair your world release,  
that, redeemed from war and hatred,  
    all may come and go in peace.  
Show us how, through care and goodness,  
    fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living,  
    let it from the earth be banned:  
pride of status, race or schooling,  
    dogmas that obscure your plan.  
In our common quest for justice  
    may we hallow life's brief span.

You, Creator-God, have written  
    your great name on humankind;  
for our growing in your likeness,  
    bring the life of Christ to mind;  
that by our response and service  
    earth its destiny may find.

Amen

## **Hymn - StF 404 God's spirit is in my heart**

God's Spirit Is In My Heart  
He Has Called Me And Set Me Apart.  
This Is What I Have To Do,  
What I Have To Do

*Chorus*

*He Sent Me To Give The Good News To The  
Poor  
Tell Prisoners That They Are Prisoners No  
More  
Tell Blind People That They Can See  
And Set The Down Trodden Free  
And Go Tell Everyone The News That The  
Kingdom Of God Has Come  
And Go Tell Everyone The News That God's  
Kingdom Has Come.*

Just As The Father Sent Me So  
I'm Sending You Out To Be,  
My Witnesses Throughout The World,  
The Whole Of The World

*Chorus*

Don't Carry A Load In Your Pack,  
You Don't Need Two Shirts On Your Back  
A Workman Can Earn His Own Keep,  
Can Earn His Own Keep

*Chorus*

Don't worry what you have to say,  
Don't Worry Because On That Day  
God's Spirit Will Speak In Your Heart  
Will Speak In Your Heart

*Chorus*

## **Blessing**

We go out into the world with a task to do.  
May the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us all  
now and always.  
Amen

