



Groups

Thanks for checking out our sermon-based Study Guides! If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some basic instructions beginning at the bottom of page 2.

SERMON-BASED STUDY GUIDE
for the Sermon given on January 30, 2022,
"In Times of Trouble" Isaiah 43



The hope of the series of Promiseland is to identity the promises and problems the people of God face. The series is rooted in the book of Isaiah, and will be examining the context of the children of Israel in exile. While we modern day Westerners have not been exiled in this way, many have us felt the cultural ground move beneath our feet and a sense of cultural displacement over the years. Today, we want to discuss the promises of God in times of trouble.

Group Discussion Questions

Q – Early in the message, Pastor Bryan stated that we are “living in an in-between time; between the already and the not-yet.” He also showed the Promiseland graphic and described “we inhabit the boundary between promise and fulfillment.” Let’s look at the graphic together (Leader, if on Zoom share the screen or in-person, show picture) and spend a few moments reflecting on each side of it and then the graphic as a whole. What thoughts and feelings come to you?

Q – Let’s read Isaiah 43 together and meditate on it privately for a few moments. What verses do you connect with?

Q – Verse 1 identifies God as the “one who created you Jacob” and “formed, you Israel” and then shifts to Isaiah’s current audience. Jacob lived at least 1000 years before the writing of the second half of Isaiah. Read verse 2 again. What is the point Isaiah is making in connecting these two ideas?

(The same Yahweh who was with Jacob and the formation of Israel is the same Yahweh who is with you in exile.)

Q – Read verses 5-7 again – what is the promise that is being made here?

Why do you think that promise was a challenging one to believe?

(The promise is that the children of Israel would return to their homeland after this exile. The problem was imagining the mighty Babylonian Empire either allowing them to return or to be conquered. Which is what happened. The Babylonians were conquered in 539 BC by Cyrus the Great who allowed the Israelites to return back to their homeland. This promise took approximately 150 years to fulfill).

Q – Bryan made the point that while we are not promised “immunity” from trouble and hardship, we can experience “deliverance.” Throughout the series we have identified the promises of strength, justice, presence and now, deliverance. What promise do you find yourself praying for today? Let’s spend a few moments in prayer and remember that just as God was with the Israelites in the beginning, in exile, and in their return home, God is with us just the same. What does it mean to live in the promise of God’s deliverance?

How to Use These Study Guides:

- Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
- Begin each meeting with a short time of checking in with one another.
- You may want to begin the discussion by reading the Scripture passage together out loud, or by summarizing the passage if everyone has read it ahead of time.
- Don’t feel like you need to discuss every question included in the Study Guide. Pick one or two to start with, and see how the conversation flows.
- If your group meets over Zoom:
 - You may need to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
 - Try to be sensitive to attention spans over Zoom—keep the meetings shorter than they would be in person.
- Be sure to set aside time for sharing prayer requests and praying together.

Group Leader Support: Please reach out to your Campus Pastor or your Coach if you have any questions about leading your group or concerns about your group dynamic. If you have questions about or feedback on the Study Guides, please reach out to Pastor Tim or Pastor Rachel from the Group Life team.