

# the Royal

## MAKING SENSE OF THE BIBLE

**"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 Pet. 2:9**

### **Week 2: "Making Sense of the Bible Introduction (Pt. 2)"**

This week the royal will look into the origins of the (7) books. In order for the royal to have a clear understanding of what he is reading, the sage will need to give him a little more of the history and the reliability of the books he now possesses. Not only are the books to be read, but they are to be studied with diligence.

What we will look at this week in our Small Groups is:

- ▶ Hermeneutics is done with proper tool of studying Scripture called *exegesis*.
- ▶ The royal is to discover the original meaning of the text through these proper rules, rather than using *eisegesis*, which would tempt him to make up his own meaning of the text.
- ▶ An in-depth study of Monday's devotional exercise in Isaiah 40, and how we can properly apply the text.
- ▶ Optional homework assignments designed for personal enrichment.

When going over the Small Group Sermon Discussion this week, try to challenge yourself in not reading into the text, but rather understanding what it really is saying to that audience at that time.

Have fun and we pray that God will truly bless your time in fellowship together through the study of His Word.

In Him,

Rock Church Small Group Team

## **Part 1: Opening/Recap Weekly Challenge/Small Group Sermon Discussion**

### **Opening:**

- Open in Prayer
- Worship (optional)
- Recap Week 1 Homework
- Small Group Sermon Discussion

### **Recap Week 1 Weekly Challenge:**

1. Recite **Col. 1:16**
2. Discuss experiences practicing the **Discipline of Study**.

### **Small Group Sermon Discussion:**

1. Within your group, discuss the meanings of hermeneutics, exegesis, and eisegesis and discuss how they affect your studies of Scripture.
  - ▶ Hermeneutics means the art and science of biblical interpretation.
  - ▶ Exegesis means pulling the original meaning out of the text.
  - ▶ Eisegesis means putting your own meaning into the text.
2. Referring to your lesson plan from Sunday, discuss some of the key reasons for the reliability of Scripture (e.g. Dead Sea Scrolls, dating, manuscripts, etc.).

## **Part 2: Read, Reflect, and Respond – Isaiah 40**

### **Read Isaiah 40:**

- ▶ The Book of Isaiah was written between 740-700 BC by the prophet Isaiah under the rule of King Uzziah (6:1).
- ▶ He was writing to Judah, the sister nation of Israel, who were a people conquered by the Assyrians because of their ongoing sin and of their turning of their backs on the One True God of Israel.
- ▶ Isaiah presents more insight into the nature of God than any other book of the Old Testament.
- ▶ To Isaiah, God was first of all a Holy God. His Holiness was the first thing that impressed the prophet when he saw Him in all His glory in the Temple (6:1-8).

## Part 2: Read, Reflect, and Respond – Isaiah 40

(continued)

- ▶ The chapters that lead up to chapter 40 reveal what was going on through King Hezekiah's life as king of Judah (2 Chron. 29-32).
- ▶ The king was developing laws that required Israel to turn away from their sin and stop worshipping foreign gods.
- ▶ Hezekiah also reinstated the Passover that was commanded in the Law (2 Chron. 30:13). If Judah would repent of their sin, God would return with His blessings, which leads us to Isaiah's great proclamation of the goodness of God.
  
- ▶ Read Isaiah 40 as a group.

### **Reflect Isaiah 40:**

Now that Hezekiah reestablished the ordinances of worship that God commanded Israel to do from the beginning, this brings much hope to Israel and allows God to move more effectively on their behalf. It was because of their willful disobedience that they experienced many challenges. However, God is always faithful to redeem His people when they repent. This raises a few key questions for us to ask ourselves and each other:

1. What are some things in this chapter that reveal the goodness of God?
2. Read 40:21-23. Based on these few verses, describe the power and sovereignty of God.
  - ▶ Notice the poetic imagery Isaiah uses to describe the power of God. You will see a lot of this type of language used in most of the book of Isaiah and most of the other Major Prophets.

### **Respond Isaiah 40:**

1. Why do you think we (as Israel before us) sometimes choose the way of sin rather than obedience to God?
2. How has God rescued you from a rough situation (depression, abuse, financial struggles, etc.)?
  - ▶ If nobody has anything to say, draw them closer to the text. Allow the words of Isaiah to show that God is mighty enough to save.

## Part 3: Weekly Challenge

- ▶ **Scripture Reading Guide:** Go through the devotions that correspond with each day. These are given to everyone in their lesson plan every week. (May 10-15)
- ▶ **Scripture Memory:** "And He has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.' Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me." **2 Cor. 12:9 (NASB)**
- ▶ **Bible Study Tool:** Navigate through [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org) and discover the great resources available for free for your personal gain.
- ▶ **Optional Spiritual Formation Practice:** Each week we will introduce a "spiritual discipline" that each person can enjoy to enhance his or her personal devotion. This week is the **Discipline of Submission.**

The Discipline of Submission is really the act of complete humility. In our culture we have been taught to expect respect and demand recognition. When we are submissive in our actions and attitudes toward others we are essentially living as a Christ-like servant. Submission simply means that you do not always get what you want. In fact more often than not, you don't get what you want. It requires the swallowing of our pride and our comforts and lives as true servants of Christ. Richard Foster states in his book, *Celebration of Discipline*, "Jesus calls us to self-denial without self-hatred. Self-denial is simply a way of coming to understand that we do not have to have our own way. Our happiness is not dependent upon getting what we want." Jesus, Himself, states, "And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, **If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all** (Mark 9:35 KJV)." We are often taught the idea of servant hood but the pursuit of action is often hindered by our busy schedules and desire to provide for ourselves and those we love.

You are encouraged to **slow down and practice submission.** Serve others rather than be served. Give to others rather than only receiving. Take time to think and act outside of your general comfort zones to serve others.

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