



“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 (NKJV)

Week 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. The royal learns the art of studying Scripture and that it is called *hermeneutics*, and that proper hermeneutics has to be done using a tool 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. Not following the Biblical rules could allow for some great dangers in the royal’s preparation and journey.

In our small groups this week, we will discuss what the royal has learned and we will dig a little deeper so that we can also practice these same rules of Bible study for our journey and preparation for the Kingdom.

Part 1 (30 min):

- Open in Prayer
- Optional Worship
- Weekly Recap of Sunday Sermon (Small Group Discussion):

Small Group Discussion:

1. Hermeneutics is defined as the art and science of Biblical interpretation. There are two styles of hermeneutics which are called Exegesis and Eisegesis. Within your group, discuss the meanings of each of these words and how they affect your studies of Scripture.
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 (30 min): Read and Reflect

- **Read** Isaiah 40, "What are some of God's challenges to His people during the time of Isaiah's writing?"
- **Reflect** on the text and original intent, then discuss what this means to us for today.

Isaiah 40 Read (Pre-observation):

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 also 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). 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.

Check out this great free online Bible study resource: www.blueletterbible.org

Isaiah 40 Reflection (Meaning for today):

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:

- ▶ What is a specific challenge that you have faced because of disobedience?
- ▶ How did God reveal Himself faithful upon your repentance from the disobedience?

Part 3 (15 min): Respond

Isaiah 40 Respond (Biblical application):

- ▶ Why do you think we (as Israel before us) sometimes choose the way of sin rather than obedience to God?
- ▶ What are some practical ways we can avoid falling into the same traps that Israel did? Discuss.

Part 4 (5 min): Personal Discipline in Growth

- ▶ **Scripture Reading Guide:** Go through the devotions that correspond with each day. These are given to everyone in their lesson plan every week. (May 10th-15th)
- ▶ **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 Corinthians 12:9 (NASB)
- ▶ **Bible Study Tool:** Navigate through www.blueletterbible.org and discover the great resources available for free for your personal gain.

- ▶ **Optional Spiritual Formational 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.