

Singing with the Exiles



Gathered by the waters of Babylon, Judean exiles wistfully wondered: Is God for real? If so, does He really care about us? What does our future hold? Will this ever change? God's people had watched their world shatter into a million pieces. They were demoralized and disillusioned. Their disaster looked terminal. Do you feel this way? Does it look as though your current problems are more than you can bear? Do you find yourself asking: Why did this happen? Why did God allow it? Is there any order in the world? Will God really deliver on what He said? Isaiah answers these questions in chapters 40–55 of his book. He announces that just when Israel's history seemed closed and controlled by hopeless Babylonian imperial policy, to the shock and surprise of everyone the Lord will stir up a king named Cyrus and a new exodus will explode in the desert! A Servant will be wounded for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities. And barren Zion will be given so many children that, like the old woman in the shoe, she won't know what to do! Standing behind these marvelous promises is God's almighty Word. "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever" (Isaiah 40:8). The exiles are going home!

That's why we are "Singing with the Exiles" as they are restored to their home.

This Lent, Isaiah 40–55 will shape us as we . . .

Meditate upon daily devotions based upon these chapters;

Study texts from Isaiah in Sunday morning adult Bible class; and

Listen to the following sermons:

(over)

Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2015 – 10 AM & 7 PM
"God Has a Word for That" (Isaiah 41:14–16)

Lent 1, Wed., Feb. 25, 2015 – 10 AM & 7 PM
"He Only Has Eyes for You" (Isaiah 43:1–7)

Lent 2, Wed., Mar. 4, 2015 – 10 AM & 7 PM
"Marked" (Isaiah 44:1–5)

Lent 3, Wed., Mar. 11, 2015 – 10 AM & 8 PM
"Breaking Down the Gates" (Isaiah 45:1–8)

Lent 4, Wed., Mar. 18, 2015 – 10 AM & 8 PM
"Get Out!" (Isaiah 48:17–22)

Lent 5, Wed., Mar. 25, 2015 – 10 AM & 7 PM
"One Little Word Can Fell Him" (Isaiah 49:1–6)

Holy Thursday, Thurs., Apr. 2, 2015 – 7 PM
"He Prepares a Table" (Isaiah 49:7–13)

Good Friday, Fri., Apr. 3, 2015 – 7 PM
"All" (Isaiah 52:13–53:12)

Easter Vigil, Sat., Apr. 4, 2015 – 7 PM
"Nothing" (Isaiah 54:1–8)

Easter Sunrise, Sun., Apr. 5, 2015 – 6:30 AM
"We Are Going Home" (Isaiah 55:6–13)

Plan now to sing with the exiles as we learn from Isaiah to walk the Lenten way to the cross and to the empty tomb. God promises to turn our weeping into joy and our present pain into an endless **Alleluia!**