**Cell Group Bible Study**

**Encountering Jesus in the Old Testament**

**Introduction**

Welcome to the start of our church’s sermon series and cell group bible study on Encountering Jesus in the Old Testament! We will be embarking on this journey for next seven weeks from 8 January till 19 February.

*Why look for Jesus in the Old Testament?*

1. It **deepens our appreciation and love** for Holy Scripture. Reading the bible is no longer one-dimensional but becomes relevant, applicable and most of all, relational. Within the text of the bible we can find more of Jesus revealed and this is such an exciting journey.
2. It helps us **find true life**. Jesus clearly states to all Scripture speaks about him and points to himself (John 5:39-40). And as he alone is the source of life, we find life when we come to him through the Scriptures revealed.

*What is a suggested cell group and bible study format?*

1. You can incorporate the elements of the **4 W’s** for your cell meeting: **Welcome** (personal thanksgiving), **Worship** (songs), **Word** (bible study) and **Works** (prayer for each other and upcoming events of the church).
2. Each of the bible study will consist of three elements:
   1. **Introductory question** for discussion (related to the focus of the bible study)
   2. **Discussion question(s)** based on the passage
   3. **Possible application(s)** in daily life
3. You may not include all of the elements in a single cell group session but please don’t ignore any of these elements over the longer term.

*What can be helpful for cell members to be more involved?*

1. Everyone should try to read the bible passage beforehand or during the meeting.
2. Cell members can be rostered to lead in the various elements within the cell meeting: welcome, worship, bible study or prayer
3. In smaller groups, cell members can keep in touch with one another about how they have been applying the lessons learnt in the sermon/bible study throughout the week. You can also ask cell members to share and update about their previous week’s resolution that they have set for themselves.

*What is helpful for you as a cell leader to have a fruitful meeting?*

1. Keep your cell group meeting and your members in prayer throughout the week.
2. Encourage everyone to share and thank them for sharing – there are no wrong answers (unless it contradicts what God says!) and each opinion should be valued.
3. Look to affirm what your members are sharing – especially about how God may be speaking or leading them in their lives.
4. Feel free to stop at any point to elaborate if the Spirit is leading you to – **you don’t have to complete all of the discussion questions.**
5. Look to end every meeting in prayer committing everyone and the week ahead to God’s blessing and keeping.

**Encountering Jesus Bible Study (29 Jan)**

**Jesus in the Wilderness**

**Big Idea – Jesus understands our weakness and is with us in our troubles**

Key Verse: *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.”* Hebrews 4:16

***A. Introductory Question***

1. What is one place you would ***not*** like to visit and why?

***B. Discussion Questions***

The **wilderness** is defined in the dictionary as an *uncultivated*, *uninhabited*, and *inhospitable* region. It may even be a place where danger and evil lurk. No one goes there by choice. Yet it is a place that God intentionally leads the Israelites into for forty years before entering the Promised Land.

**[Read Deuteronomy 8:1-18]**

1. What are (at least) two **purposes** of God in leading the Israelites through the wilderness?
2. Going through the wilderness can be a trying experience. How did God **assure** the Israelites that he was taking care of them throughout their difficult journey?
3. Name one **response** the Lord wanted from the Israelites through this experience.

***C. Application***

1. Is there someone you know or even yourself who is going through a period of being in the wilderness? What is one encouragement that you can give or glean through this bible study?

In the New Testament, Jesus was driven by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness for forty days to be tested by the devil before he began his ministry (see Mark 1:12-13). One purpose for this can be found in Hebrews 4:16-17:

*“**For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”*

The greatest assurance for any of us is that Jesus understands and is present with us in our times of difficulty. Pray for one another to **not give up but** **persevere in trust** in the Lord through our wilderness journey.

*“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.* Isaiah 60:1