

**Jesus' Pancake**

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin the kindergartner and Ryan the three year old. When the boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake, their mother saw the opportunity for a good lesson.

"If Jesus were here," she said, "He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'" "OK," Kevin said as he turned to his younger brother. "Ryan, you be Jesus!"

Young children are not the only ones who have interesting ideas about God. We all need reminders about who God is, what he desires for us, and what it means to belong to him. This week, let's study together what Isaiah has to say about God's mightiness and tenderness, his eternal word and purpose, and why we can trust him to do all he says he will do. Let's discover this incomparable God who offers us himself.

**Monday – God's Comfort for God's Beloved**

"Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; adversity not without many comforts and hopes." Francis Bacon, 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c. English philosopher and statesman

1. Please read Isaiah 40:1. What does the word "comfort" mean to you?
2. What common themes about God's comfort can you find in Psalm 23:4, Psalm 86:11-17, Matthew 5:4 and 2 Corinthians 1:3-4?
3. With whom does God our comforter dwell according to Isaiah 57:14-15?

**Making it Personal:** What can you do to develop a contrite attitude before God?

**Tuesday – God's Tenderness for God's People**

"Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair, but manifestations of strength and resolution." Kahlil Gibran, 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> c. Lebanese-American writer

1. Please read Isaiah 40:2. How is the fact that Jesus paid for your sins a tender response to your sinfulness?
2. What warning did the Pharisees deliver in Luke 13:31-35? What did Jesus offer Jerusalem instead?

**Text Insight:** This Herod was the son of King Herod the Great who tried to kill Jesus as an infant (Matthew 2:13-18).

3. What assurance do you find in Isaiah 52:8-9 that Jesus will fulfill his desire to comfort his people?

**Making it Personal:** Do you desire God's tenderness in your life? Pray that he will guide you in accepting his offer of tender love and forgiveness.

**Wednesday – God's Glory for God's Creation**

"A man can no more diminish God's glory by refusing to worship Him than a lunatic can put out the sun by scribbling 'darkness' on the wall of his cell..." C.S. Lewis, 20<sup>th</sup> c. Anglo-Irish writer

1. Please read Isaiah 40:3-5. Have you ever clearly heard God? When?

**Text Insight:** The rough and rocky wilderness terrain is most likely a metaphor for those things that get in the way of seeing God clearly.

2. According to verse 5, what is the purpose of pointing people to God? Pray that God will lead you in glorifying him in this way.

**Digging Deeper:** Read John 1:15-35 and list the ways that John the Baptist fulfilled Isaiah 40:3-5.

**Thursday – God's Word for All Eternity**

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly..." Colossians 3:16

1. Please read Isaiah 40:6-8. How does the Word of God compare with all you see around you?
2. How is Jesus described in John 1:1-14?

**Text Insight:** Jesus, being the Word, is God expressing himself.

3. In 1 Peter 1:17-25 Peter ties together Isaiah's prophecy with John's description of Jesus. How does this passage support the truth that God's work in the lives of those who trust Jesus is eternal?

**Making it Personal:** Does the Word dwell in you richly? Pray that God will guide you in studying his word and growing in your relationship with him.

**Friday – Here is Your God!**

"There is no mystery in heaven or earth so great as this: a suffering Deity, an almighty Savior nailed to a cross." Samuel M. Zwemer, 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> c. American missionary

1. Please read Isaiah 40:9-11. What comes to your mind when you read the words "Here is your God!"?
2. Compare God's mightiness in verse 10 with his tenderness in verse 11. Jot down some ideas of how you might describe to someone the compatibility of these two attributes of God.
3. How does Jesus' description of himself in John 10:1-18 expand upon Isaiah 40:9-11?

**Prayer Focus:** Pray that God's people will be living and speaking in such a way that others will see God.

**For the Weekend:** Read Isaiah 40:12-31. Note how verses 12-14 and 27-31 act as bookends for the various comparisons: powerful nations (verses 15-17), other beliefs (18-20), and all creation (21-26). How does Isaiah 40:1-11 prepare the reader for verses 12-31?