

# Everything is ready – please come



Lord our King, we thank you for your abundant love and generosity to all people. Make us worthy of that love and help us to love our neighbour as ourselves, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Becky Mynett *reflects on* Matthew 22:1-14

In today's Gospel Jesus tells the Temple authorities a parable. He is critical of the way they run things, but he has a message for us too. According to Kenneth Bailey, an expert on the Middle East, it is not only traditional for the host of a banquet to send out invitations some time before the event, so that they know how much food to prepare, but on the day itself to send a message: "Everything is ready – please come."

In Jesus' parable, the guests – who have already accepted the invitation – snub the host and murder the messengers. Jesus portrays the leaders of Israel, whose ancestors made a covenant with God, as the guests. The king's slaves are the prophets that God sends to remind Israel of their promises and to show them a vision of God's kingdom. But the prophets are ignored or even murdered. Now God has had enough. In the parable, the king destroys the murderers and burns their city (a troubling verse that probably refers to the destruction of the Temple in AD 70). God then opens the kingdom to whoever will come.

But this comes with a warning. While we are all admitted to the kingdom, we must still reflect its values or, like the man who is inappropriately dressed, we may find that we are not chosen after all. 🍷

## Books of the Old Testament

### Part 23 – Isaiah

by Richard Greatrex

*Richard Greatrex continues our book-by-book series about the Bible.*

Isaiah is the first of a fifteen-book collection of the later prophets. It spans from the late eighth century BC, when Assyria was ascendant, through Babylonian control into Persian rule. It poses scholars questions regarding its formation. Some insist that it is derived from an eighth-century Jerusalem prophet to Kings Ahaz and Hezekiah. Others detect the hand of two authors or editors, while a few even see three. However, although specific themes and styles dominate each section,

many of these are discernible throughout.

In Isaiah God is known as the Holy One of Israel, the Lord who will judge and restore Zion. The prophet insists that the political and religious Jerusalem elites carry a profound ethical responsibility for all those they govern; matters of social justice are high on his agenda. Jesus, who cites Isaiah eight times, also places social justice at the heart of his mission.

Isaiah became so important for Christians that it was known as the Gospel in the Old Testament, teaching vital lessons about faithfulness, service, inclusiveness and social justice as essential elements of a God-centred life. 🍷

“ I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 3:14

## Creatures of the Bible

### The locust

by Caroline Fletcher

Locusts are only around seven centimetres long, but have always been feared. Even today, they inflict devastation: billions of locusts have recently destroyed Madagascan crops, for instance.

The Bible vividly conveys why they terrify people. One of Moses' plagues brought so many locusts to Egypt that they turned the land black and consumed every single plant (Exodus 10:15). Proverbs describes young locusts marching "in rank", for

they advance like a hostile army devouring everything in their path (30:27). Adult locusts have wings and Revelation likens the noise of flying swarms to "the sound of many chariots" (9:9). In flight, though, they are at the mercy of the wind: the Egyptian plague ended when the swarm was blown into the sea (Exodus 10:19).

The Gospels say that John the Baptist ate locusts (Mark 1:6). Some think this means locust beans, but it is entirely feasible that John snacked on these insects. Indeed, many enjoy eating them today. 🍷

## Blandford Methodist Church: Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October

Good morning and a warm welcome to our Morning Worship which is being led by Miss Elizabeth Ward. The stewards today are Margaret Cornish and Pat and Brian Dryden. Thank you to Angela Walden for playing for us, and thank you to Margaret Dymond for the flowers. After the service, please join us in the hall for refreshments.

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### Dates for your diary:

Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October	10.45 am	Morning Worship led by Mrs Joyce Wild
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> October	7.00 pm	Church Council meeting in Okeford Room
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> October	<b>10.30 am</b>	United Church Service, to be hosted by Blandford Methodist Church
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> October	3.00 pm	Bereavement Service, Barton on Sea Methodist – <b>see poster in hall</b>
Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December	3.00 pm	Salvation Army Carol Service
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> December	5.00 pm	Carols on the Green
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> December	10.45 am	Carol Service at our church
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	10.45 am	Morning Worship at Blandford Methodist
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>9.15 pm</b>	Christmas Eve service to be held at Colehill Methodist – all are invited
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> December	9.45 am	Christmas Day service to be held at Blandford Methodist

**Colehill Methodist: Every Monday**, 11.00 am to 12.00 noon(ish), Bible Study, coffee, prayers and plenty of chat. All welcome.

**Bible in a year:** 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October: Isaiah 45 – 64 and 1 Thessalonians 3 – 1 Timothy 1

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**Church Council, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023:** The next meeting of the Church Council is scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> October at 7.00 pm in the Okeford Room. All members of the church and congregation are welcome to attend, but only Trustees will be permitted to vote.

*David Wild*

**Blandford Foodbank** is urgently in need of -

Tinned sausages/hot dogs    Tinned meatballs/ravioli    Tinned chicken in white sauce  
Tinned curry    Tinned soup    Tinned stew    Toothbrushes

The following items are also running low and need restocking - Shampoo    Washing up liquid

For those able to support the Foodbank with items, a box has been placed in the Narthex as a collection point.

*John Cornish*

**Prayer:** Please can we remember to uphold in prayer those members of our congregation who we know are ill or suffering in some way.

If you know of anyone who would like prayer and be mentioned by name in The Link, please let me know (having obtained their permission first to mention them by name).

**Minister:** Reverend Dr Mark Kimber

Enquiries via Lead Steward, John Cornish, on 07799 516 735

**Pastoral Support:** Joyce Wild: Tel: 01258 454091