

# The River of God – Week 4

The River of God in the Teaching of  
the Prophets

# Rivers in the Desert

Last time:

- River of God refreshing New Eden of Canaan
- River of God refreshing hearts of worshippers

Time of the Prophets:

- Canaan a 'desert' (Isaiah 64:10; 51:3)  
physically and spiritually
- Exiles lived in 'desert of the nations' (Ez 20:35)
- But, promises of return and of transformation

# Rivers in the Desert

## **Isaiah 41:17-20**

- People's desperate plight (v 17) – echoes of Exodus wanderings; thirst = spiritual poverty
- God's answer: he'll quench their thirst (v 18)
- He'll plant a paradise (v 19) – worship-related?
- Applies to individual; church; community; whole creation (Rev 22)
- Ultimate purpose (v 20) – seen to be a work of God alone; he alone is worthy

## **Isaiah 43:18-21**

# Rivers in the Desert

## Isaiah 44:1-5

- Chosen, created and to be helped by God
- Grounds for banishment of fear (vv 3-5)
- Parallelism shows water = Spirit; thirsty land = descendants: Spirit onto next generations
- Results of outpouring of Spirit:
  - i. (v 4) fresh, immediate growth;
  - ii. (v 5) personal testimony of belonging to God and to his people

## Isaiah 35

# The River from the Temple (Ez 47)

- Ezekiel – lived in the exilic period
- Chapters 8-11: glory of God departs; disaster ensues
- Ch 47 – part of vision of restoration blessing
  - i. Source of the river – temple; God's presence; 43:2-5 – the Glory returns; blessing restored
  - ii. Miraculous growth of the river (vv 3-6)

# River from the Temple (ctd)

Effects of the life-giving waters (vv 7-12)

- Blessing replaces judgement
- The dead comes alive
- The barren becomes fruitful
- Healing is provided
- Whole land becomes a New Eden, a New Creation
- Similarly today
- 'where the river flows everything will live' (v 9)