**Holy habits - Biblical Teaching: Week 2**

Last week we saw how important the Hebrew Scriptures, or Old Testament, were to Jesus. He said: *Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true (Matthew 5: 17).* How did He do this?

On the day when Jesus was resurrected two of his followers were returning to their home village of Emmaus, several miles from Jerusalem. Jesus joined them as they walked but they did not recognise Him. They spoke of their despair following his Crucifixion. He replied: *“How foolish you are, how slow you are to believe everything the prophets said! Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and then to enter his glory?” And Jesus explained to them what was said about himself in all the Scriptures, beginning with the books of Moses and the writings of all the prophets (Luke 24: 25-27).* Jesus went through the Jewish Scriptures, showing how they spoke about Him. What did He say?

He must have referred to Isaiah’s prophecy about the Suffering Servant (52: 13 to 53:12) as part of “everything the prophets said”. He must have mentioned Zechariah’s prophecy about the King entering Jerusalem on a donkey (9: 9), and about Jonah’s 3 days inside the fish as a sign of His own death and Resurrection (Jonah 1: 17 and Matthew 12: 40). But it was not only the prophets, it was “all” the Jewish Scriptures, so he must also have reminded them about the Psalm he quoted on the Cross. Psalm 22 is an amazing insight to the Crucifixion of Jesus. He deliberately acted to fulfil its words (verse 15; also compare Psalm 69: 21 and John 19: 28-30), and He knew that Psalm 22 ended in victory (verses 29-31) with words that refer to us, just as much as to the two people walking to Emmaus: *People not yet born will be told: “The Lord saved his people” (verse 31).*

There are so many other things in the Hebrew Scriptures that refer to Jesus. For example, instead of the sacrifice of Isaac, we read that *God Himself* will provide the sacrificial lamb (Genesis 22: 8), or think of the way Jesus applies the Hebrew Scriptures to Himself in overcoming His temptations (Matthew 4: 1-11). Why not go through the Gospels, pick out the quotations from the Old Testament, and look up the cross references given as footnotes in many modern Bibles? This will bring the Hebrew Scriptures to life for us, just as it did to the two folk on the road to Emmaus: *They said to each other, “Wasn't it like a fire burning in us when he talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?” (Luke 24: 32).*

*Produced by Glenn Evans on behalf of the Bents Green Holy Habits Planning Group (Debs Barnett, Glenn Evans, Martyn Read, Graham Wassell, Daphne and John Wilkins).  All quotations from the Good News Translation unless otherwise stated. You can find more information on the Circuit Holy Habits Programme on the Sheffield Methodist Circuit website and also the Sheffield Methodist Circuit Facebook page.*