

September 27: Streams and the Way

Gather: Bible, paper, pen

Introduction:

Last week we thought about life in the wasteland and those times in our lives that feel like that is what we are in – dry, barren, or overgrown with weeds. This week we are exploring what streams may look like among those times, how we've seen them in the past, present and future.

Streams & the Way

Read **Isaiah 43:18-21** and **Isaiah 41:17-20**. What stands out to you in this passage?

Re-read verse 19. What do you think the way in the wilderness was that he was making? What about the streams in the wasteland?

Some context for Isaiah 43 to help you: The Israelites were under Babylonian captivity at the time. They had entered the Promised Land, turned to other gods and the kingdom was divided into Israel and Judah. They were then conquered, and, at the time of Isaiah 43, they were under Babylonian exile. They are waiting for freedom.

Visual Exercise:

This is a reflective activity that combines prayer and sight. Using the image on the bottom of the next page to help you focus, take some time to look at and study it while thinking about the following things:

- How the image relates to the passage you read. (Re-read the passage if needed)
- Take a first look and simply observe your feelings and thoughts, the items, lines and colours in the image. What do these remind you of? Is something specific drawing you in?
- Take a second look and think about your reactions. What are you feeling and why? What draws you in? Why? Does something speak to you?
- Write down those thoughts, feelings, any questions that come to mind, etc. Does anything new or a different way of thinking come to mind?
- Spend time in prayer. If something really struck you or maybe you felt a call from God to take note of something, talk to him about it. Is there any action you feel you are called to?

Think about the streams in the midst of your wasteland. Where have you seen them in the past? Take a moment and write out the new things, the relief and rejuvenation that God has given you throughout your life so far.

Now ask yourself, "What new thing is God doing in my life now?"

How will you respond to that new thing? How will you prepare for it?

Memory Verse: Isaiah 43:18-19 "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."

Prayer: Take a moment to think of where you need God's rejuvenation. In what ways are you feeling like you're stuck in the desert/wasteland? How have you seen streams in your own life and where do you feel like you need them now?

Listen and pray through the song *Desert Soul* by Rend Collective.

Challenge: Think of how you might be able to take part in helping others find relief. Can you be a friend to the friendless, especially now that you're back at school? Maybe you could give a family member a break by helping with a chore or sharing encouragement. Pick something and do it!

Visual Exercise:

