

**Day One: Isaiah 11:1-9**

- What will descend from Jesse, the father of King David (1)? How does it feel to picture Jesus as a vulnerable shoot or singular branch? How will the Holy Spirit dwell in this “shoot” (2)? What will he delight in (3)? What are some Gospel stories that testify to these truths about Jesus? Describe his method of discernment (3-5). Ask Jesus to intervene in situations, both personal and global, that desperately need his righteous and just judgement.
- When Jesus demonstrates his incredible might and wisdom, what will happen (6-9)? How does this picture of greatness unleashed, one where a child is not only safe from danger but in a leadership position, compare to other notions of greatness? Do CEOs, world leaders or champion athletes prove themselves great in this way? What is the Lord trying to tell us about Jesus-style greatness? How does he want you to redefine greatness in your own life?

**Day Two: Daniel 4**

- Summarize King Nebuchadnezzar’s salutations (1-3). What sort of first impression do you think he’s trying to make? Describe the circumstances of his dream (4-5). What did the King do in response to it (6-9)? Summarize the dream (10-17). Out of all the wise men, why did Nebuchadnezzar trust Daniel the most (18)?
- How did Daniel initially respond to the King’s request, and what was his interpretation of the dream (19-26)? What advice did he then issue (27)? Compare Nebuchadnezzar’s self-image, symbolically expressed as a large tree, with the whisper of Jesus in Isaiah 11:1. As you reflect, what is the Lord speaking to you?
- Summarize the dream’s fulfillment (28-33). Imagine verse 30 with the King speaking from a place of humility and servanthood; what would it say instead? Describe Nebuchadnezzar’s remarks about his restoration (34-37). What would it look like for him to live by these words: bring honor and glory to God, walk humbly, etc.?

**Day Three: Matthew 23:1-12**

- Whom is Jesus addressing (1)? How does he describe the role of the religious leaders of his day (2)? Why should people do only what they say, not what they do (3-4)? How do you think God feels about these religious leaders’ concept of greatness?
- What motivates the religious leaders to do what they do (5)? Describe their practices, preferences and aspirations (5-7). What motivates you to engage in spiritual practices? What sort of reward do you seek, if any? How might your beliefs about greatness come into play? Pray for power and insight to grasp the God-given definition of greatness. How would this impact you?
- Why does Jesus speak out against assigning titles of superiority to people (8-10)? How does this then inform the posture we should take as we relate to one another (11-12)? Pray for grace to heed these words and to embody them in both heart and action. Today, how can you flee from self-exaltation and fully embrace humility?

**Day Four: Mark 10:13-16**

- Set the scene of this text (13). Why do you think the disciples expressed such sharp disapproval? Honestly reflect: in what ways do *you* consider children unworthy of the very best? Like in verse 14, this may cause Jesus to be indignant with you. How do you

think the Lord wants us to respond to his indignation? Repent and allow him to give you a whole new outlook on children.

- How does Jesus want to interact with children (14)? Why (14)? What are your relationships with children like? What can you learn from them (15)? If you don't think of children in these ways, once again ask God to give you his outlook on them.
- After speaking about children and their role in the kingdom of God, what did Jesus do (16)? Imagine yourself as one of these children. How does it feel to be in Jesus' arms and to be blessed by him? How might spending more time with children amplify the sense of being close to God and his kingdom?

#### **Day Five: Mark 10:35-45**

- Who approached Jesus, and what did they say to him (35)? How did Jesus initially respond (36)? What did James and John want him to do for them (37)? Why do you think they wanted this?
- What did Jesus say next (38)? In this context, what do "cup" and "baptism" symbolize? Why do you think they assumed they could follow Jesus in these ways? How would all of this unfold (39-40)?
- How did the other disciples respond to this interaction (41)? Jesus then took this opportunity to explain true greatness to his followers; summarize his remarks (42-45). How does this speak to the importance of humility? What about sacrifice?
- Now, consider the influential roles in your life. What opportunities are there for you to take on the mantle of servanthood in both attitude and action? Ask the Lord to bless you in these endeavors and to continue to speak to you about true greatness.