

**Claiming a resource: in what ways are
Biblical texts and the beginnings of
Christianity
a heritage for Quakers today?**

Study outline

If you have not already registered to receive the materials, you can do so by contacting Elizabeth (below).

Study materials can come by the means of your choice - email or post. They will reach you in instalments. The materials are also being posted gradually on the Quaker website, and you'll be notified when they are available. (Writing demands so much time that preparing text for the website has taken a back seat - my apologies.)

1 *Introductory* - Background information about the Bible, and the contexts of its people.

2 *What can we say about Jesus?* This has two aspects: evidence about Jesus from the *Gospels*, other New Testament writings and elsewhere; what each of us wants to say about Jesus.

3 *Friends and followers of Jesus* - growth of a community. This uses the *Acts* and *Epistles*, and some other documents, relating to the period up to c.135 CE (CE = Common Era, equivalent to AD). Are these people on the same search as us?

4 *Origins* - the formation of the Hebrew people, their tradition and their faith. We consider mainly the first five books of the Bible, known as the Hebrew *Torah*. This combines with reflection on what it is for us as Friends to be a community.

5 *Voices from the desert and the city* - The role of prophets in Jewish history and faith. Are we called to be prophets today? What can we say?

6 *Speaking our hearts - Psalms* and other writings which are like the spiritual journal of the Jewish people. In what ways do emotion and reflection contribute to our spiritual life as Friends?

7 *Quakers and Christianity* - what has Christianity meant to Friends over the centuries, what does it mean today to Friends worldwide and to us? Though early Friends will not be forgotten, the focus on them will be limited.

The seminar at the Quaker Settlement, 12 - 14 November, is an opportunity for Friends to reflect together on this material and its meaning for us.

If you would like to take part in any aspect of the seminar by Zoom, please contact Elizabeth to see what is possible.

Elizabeth Duke, 752 Highgate, Dunedin 9010
elizabeth.duke@actrix.co.nz