

Isaiah

A Light in the Darkness
Isaiah 9

1



Introduction

This passage contains verses that are often quoted during the Christmas season. This morning we want to put them in context.

Isaiah has just prophesied about the great devastation that will be brought upon Israel and Judea at the hand of the Assyrians.

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Introduction

Everything looked bleak and hopeless. This darkness came as the consequences of their sin. They turned their back on God and failed to trust in Him. As a result of rejecting God and His Truth, they entered into darkness.

Isaiah gives hope. The people would be delivered by God's light, His presence, shining in the agonizing despair of this world.

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Isaiah 9:1-2

Nevertheless the gloom *will* not *be* upon her who *is* distressed, as when at first He lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed *her*, *by* the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles.

²The people who walked in darkness
Have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them a light has shined.

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Isaiah 9:1

Nevertheless the gloom *will not be* upon her who *is* distressed, as when at first He lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed *her*, *by* the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles.

In spite of the people's fear and apprehension, a bright and glorious future lay ahead. A day would come when all darkness and gloom, anguish and despair would be erased. The extreme devastation and suffering caused by the Assyrians (and others down through history) would never again happen, not *in that day*.

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A glorious change was coming to the promised land and to the world. One day in the future, this land that had been so devastated would be greatly honored by the Lord. This is a clear prophecy concerning Jesus Christ, and was fulfilled when Christ chose His disciples and carried on a large part of His ministry in Galilee. The Messiah, the Son of God Himself, honored this land by His very presence and ministry.

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Matthew 4:13-16

And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

¹⁵ “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:¹⁶ The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.”

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Isaiah 9:2

The people who walked in darkness
Have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them a light has shined.

The hope for this bright, glorious future would be found in a great light. This is a clear reference to Jesus Christ, for He is the great light of the world.

John 8:12

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

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When the Messiah came, four wonderful blessings
would be poured out upon the world.

- 1) The Messiah would give light to all who were held in the bondage of sin and darkness, all who were living constantly under the shadow of death. A person who walks in darkness is a person who cannot see where he is, where he is going, or where he has come from.

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Isaiah 9:2

The people who walked in darkness
Have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them a light has shined.

Darkness is a symbol of sin, evil, and ignorance.
A person who walks in darkness is ignorant of ...

- God the Father;
- Jesus Christ who came to earth to reveal God the Father and the world's alienation from Him;
- the real purpose and objective of life.

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Isaiah 9:3

You have multiplied the nation *and* increased its joy;
They rejoice before You According to the joy of harvest,
As *men* rejoice when they divide the spoil.

2) The Messiah would enlarge (increase the population) the nation of believers and increase their joy. Messiah would bring great joy to the people. This joy would flood their hearts as much as their rejoicing over a great harvest. Such joy is deep down within the soul. Note that the people would rejoice before the Lord, obviously praising Him for the light, the salvation He brought to them.

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Isaiah 9:4

For You have broken the yoke of his burden
And the staff of his shoulder,
The rod of his oppressor,
As in the day of Midian.

3) The Messiah will deliver all who are under the yoke of bondage or oppression. Just as God gave Gideon victory over the Midianites, so He will give victory to any who trust Him. No matter what the bondage (sin) is that enslaves a person, the Lord will give the person with enough power to overcome it.

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Isaiah 9:5

For every warrior's sandal from the noisy battle,
And garments rolled in blood,
Will be used for burning and fuel of fire.

4) The Messiah will bring peace to the people and nations of the world. All military equipment and uniforms that are so often covered with blood will be cast aside and burned. Peace will sweep the earth, both peace within the human soul and peace among nations.

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Isaiah 9:6

For unto us a **Child is born**, **Unto us a Son is given**;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty
God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Messiah is the one who will bring this peace. Isaiah makes 5 statements about Messiah.

1) His human and divine nature. A child is born, reflects Jesus' humanity. The seed of the woman to redeem mankind. A Son is GIVEN reflects His Deity.

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2) The Messiah will come to govern. He will rule over the whole world, executing perfect righteousness and justice among the people. The government will be upon His shoulders, which means that He will have the indisputable right to govern. As the exalted Lord, He will rule as the King of kings and Lord of lords.

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Isaiah 9:6

For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given;
 And the government will be upon His shoulder.
 And His name will be called **Wonderful, Counselor**, Mighty
 God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

3) The Messiah will have four very famous and descriptive names.

He is the Wonderful Counselor. He is our Creator and know how we are to function. As God, He knows all things. He took on our humanity and suffered all things like ourselves. He understands and is able to give us wise counsel. He indeed is a Wonderful Counselor.

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For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, **Mighty God**, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

He is the Mighty God. Isaiah does not call Him God, but the Mighty God. Since He is all knowing, omnipresent, and all powerful, He will be able to do all that He wills and purposes to do. All the statements about Messiah's kingdom will come to pass. He is the Mighty God, Creator of Heaven and Earth.

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And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, **Everlasting Father**, Prince of Peace.

He is the Everlasting Father. The focus here is not so much on the eternal nature of Messiah, but that He will love His people as a Father loves His children. He will care for His people. He will nurture and nourish, comfort and assure, instruct and inform, lead and guide, correct and discipline them. He will do anything His people may need out of a deep, loving concern for them.

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And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty
God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**.

He is the Prince of Peace. Prince speaks that Messiah will rule. His reign will be marked by peace. Through His sacrifice on the cross, Jesus brought peace between man and God. As the King of kings, He will usher in a thousand year reign of peace. Through redemption He bring peace to the human heart and between mankind.

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Isaiah 9:7a

Of the increase of His government and peace
There will be no end,
Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,

4) Jesus will return to this world to establish God's kingdom on earth. As God promised, the Messiah will rule in peace, sitting on David's throne; and He will rule forever.

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Isaiah 9:7b

To order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

5) The Messiah's work will be guaranteed by God's zeal. A burning passion floods the heart of God, a passion to make absolutely sure the promise of the coming Messiah is fulfilled. Nothing could have prevented the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

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So What ...

This week we will celebrate Christmas. The coming of Messiah. God Himself, taking on human flesh and stepping into our lives to redeem us from our sin.

Lets remember who we are celebrating this Christmas!

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