

**Isaiah Saw His Glory #2
The Light of the World
(Isaiah 9:1-7)**

Intro: I once heard a preacher speak of a sign that had been posted on the pulpit where he proclaimed his messages. It borrowed the language of a Greek man who approached the apostles and said, “*“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”* (John 12:21) Everyone who preaches should remember that when they enter the pulpit.

One way to see Jesus is through the eyes of the prophets. We noticed last week the words of the apostle John, “these things Isaiah said because He saw His glory and he spoke of Him” (Jn. 12:41).

Let take another look through the eyes of the prophet Isaiah as he records the visions God gave Him of the Christ (Is. 9:1-7).

Isaiah saw...

A day of darkness for Israel

Because of Israel’s unfaithfulness to the Lord, the prophet had to speak of a time of gloom and anguish for the Jewish people because of their sins. Throughout the 8th chapter of Isaiah the prophet speaks of the punishment that would come upon Israel through the Assyrians because Israel did not trust in the Lord.

And they will pass through the land hard-pressed and famished, and it will turn out that when they are hungry, they will be enraged and curse their king and their God as they face upward. Then they will look to the earth, and behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and they will be driven away into darkness. (Isaiah 8:21-22)

But now Isaiah looks beyond this period of judgment by the Assyrians to describe...

A day of light for Israel (As Isaiah sees that day in prophecy, he sees three things)

Light for people in darkness

But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them.

Zebulun and Naphtali were located on the northern end of Israel and as such were the first to fall victim to the punishments that Assyria brought upon the nation in 732 BC (2 Kg. 15:29).

In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria came and captured Ijon and Abel-beth-maacah and Janoah and Kedesh and Hazor and Gilead and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria. (2 Kings 15:29)

It is interesting that the Assyrian records mention the conquering of these three distinct areas and how that the Assyrian king had set administrators over them.

Thus, just as they were the first to see the day of darkness, they will also be the first to see the day of light. Simply put, there would be a brighter tomorrow for Israel, and especially for those who lived around the Sea of Galilee.

But what would make this such a bright day?

Liberty for people in servitude

Thou shalt multiply the nation, Thou shalt increase their gladness; They will be glad in Thy presence as with the gladness of harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For Thou shalt break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian. For every boot of the booted warrior in the battle tumult, and cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire.

God would deliver them from their oppressors. Like an ox under the yoke, staff, and rod of a cruel master, so Israel would be delivered from her enemies never to fight them again.

The bloody boots (sandals) and coats that they had worn in battle would no longer be needed. They would just be tossed into the fire to be consumed.

The result of this victory bring joy and peace. There would joy like there was at a great harvest, or like when a great battle has been won and the spoils are being divided among the survivors of the battle.

How would this day of victory and joy be accomplished?

Lord for people in disorder

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this. (Isaiah 9:1-7)

Isaiah prophesies that God will give Israel a “son” who would be their king and in him they would find their deliverance. Like other nations, Isaiah mentions the titular names ascribed to

Israel's king. These names are not worn as proper names but are description of His character:

Commentators debate whether the first two terms should be separated or taken together. Either way the idea is that this king to come is a counselor who is also a wonder, a miracle that amazes those who see Him. His wisdom to teach is supernatural.

The second term Mighty God is used in Is. 10:21 for God Himself. Thus this name suggests that the Christ would possess the power of God Himself and there is the suggestion that He Himself would be God coming into the world as man.

"Eternal Father" or "Father of eternity" indicates his relationship to time and history. He is above it all. He was there when the world began and will be there when it ends. He is the father of a spiritual family, being to them a source of love, training, provision, and protection.

Prince of Peace indicates that He will bring the conflict to an end through His rule, resulting in peace between man and God, between man and his fellow-man, and within each man as he experiences the tranquility of His kingdom.

He would sit on David's throne and rule over Israel. His rule would be just and righteous and unending. In Him the kingdom of God would be manifest in the world. You can imagine how this picture would have stirred the hearts of the faithful in a time of imminent despair and destruction.

But who was this amazing "son" or "child" born among men through whom these things would be accomplished? Matthew answers that question once and for all in his gospel:

Isaiah saw Jesus!

Jesus is the Great Light of mankind!

Now when He heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, and to those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a light dawned. From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:12-17)

Matthew proclaims that those who became followers of Jesus in Galilee were experiencing the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy! Is it merely coincidental that Jesus should begin his ministry in Galilee? But Jesus also claimed to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah by being the source of light that brings men out of the anguish of darkness:

Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12)

His name "Jesus" subsumes all the descriptions of Isaiah's "son"

He is the wonderful counselor who teaches
in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

(Colossians 2:3)

He is the mighty God who delivers

... our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; (Titus 2:13)

He is the everlasting father who begets

"Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me." (Heb. 2:13)

He is the prince of peace who reconciles

For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

(Ephesians 2:14-16)

Conclusion: Jesus is the Anointed one of whom Isaiah spoke. His great light can shine upon us; and we can have a part in His kingdom.

Darkness did not end in Isaiah's day. Even today there is the darkness of depression, of ignorance, of oppression, of fear, of helplessness all of which is the product of sin and its ultimate consequence of death. The good news of Isaiah is that "a savior has been born..."

If you will accept Him as your Savior...

His light will show you the way out of darkness

His liberation will bring joy and peace

His Lordship will bring order out of the chaos in your life.

The church consists of those who submit to Jesus' rule; they are God's kingdom on earth. Those who follow the Lord become His kingdom on earth, experiencing the transformation from darkness to light just as Isaiah spoke:

giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, (Colossians 1:12-13)

This is the great attraction of the gospel.

But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike. (Acts 8:12)