

After Darkness, Light!  
Isaiah 9: 6-7

- 1. Scripture: Isaiah 9:6-7: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and uphold it with justice and righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.”**

Introduction: (Many notes taken from volume 10 of Thomas Boston’s Complete works on Isaiah 9)

- Isaiah is a book that foretells the certainty of terrible judgments soon to come upon Judah and Jerusalem. Chapter 1 starts by describing Judah’s wickedness towards God and their subsequent unfaithfulness. It sets the tone by giving us very descriptive imagery of everything God plans to bring about on them by way of His wrath as judgement on their sins.
- The entire nation sits in the ominous shadow of the Assyrian empire. Historically we know that as the prophecies were fulfilled Assyria’s military might conquered the northern kingdoms of Israel first and work its campaign down into the southern kingdoms ultimately destroying Judah and it’s capital Jerusalem.
- All throughout redemptive history up until this point God has made covenants and renewed those covenants with His people through their representatives and to any sensible person it appears that all is in jeopardy.
- If Judah and Jerusalem ultimately fall and the house of David dies out and then where will the Messiah come from.
- What makes the story even more interesting is that God has chosen to send His people a prophet to convey this harsh reality but when Isaiah receives his call to prophet in chapter 6, he is told that absolutely nobody will listen to him. In 6:9 Isaiah is told by God that no matter how long the people hear him they will not understand, no matter how long they see him they will not truly perceive the truth. In the end these people are scheduled for destruction and no amount of preaching will stir their hearts and minds to repentance.
- In chapter 3 we see some descriptions of the types of judgement God will bring the people.

- a. The Lord promises to take away their fine things like jewelry, and where they once had beautiful perfumes, they will now smell like a rotting corpse.
  - b. The beautiful hair of women will be replaced with scab. Their crown of their glory being reduced to the image of an ugly wound, and to make matters worse they will be violated by their oppressors.
  - c. They will be without food, and they will be miserable and angry.
  - d. They will not pursue God for relief, but even if they did God would not grant it.
  - e. All the men will die by the sword and the women will be left without providers. In 4:1 we see where there will be 7 women begging a single man to give them children.
- In chapter 8 we see the people are in such darkness that instead of walking in the light of the Lords blessing they are cursed to stumble over him in the dark as one does a rock. They are so cursed and miserable that while they suffer the afflictions of poverty, sickness, and hunger they will turn to witches and demons and all manner of detestable practices, and this behavior is evidence that for them the light will never come. The bible says that there will be no dawn for these.
  - Chapter 8 ends with “And they will look to the earth, but behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish. And they will be thrust into thick darkness.
  - This gloom and darkness may as well be a description of hell on earth. A hopeless state of being with no reprieve and no way out.
  - But Isaiah doesn’t leave us in this gloom without hope, immediately after describing this darkness, his prophecy bursts forth with hope. In verse 2 he says, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.”
  - Isaiah speaks of this light in the prophetic tense, by this I mean he speaks of a future event in the past tense as if it has already come to pass. God’s providences are so certain that when a prophecy is communicated there is no possible way it can’t come to pass. It is an absolute certainty.

## **2. “For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given”.**

- A. The light that will pierce the darkness is a child.
- Isaiah makes this announcement with zeal and enthusiasm. It’s almost as if Isaiah were saying, “Take heart all you who are lost and unable to save yourself... “unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given”!

- This child has an effect on those who are lost in the darkness. Those that can't comprehend now do. Those that could hear now understand. Those that sought after happiness but were met only with want and misery, carnal in nature and never satisfied, now have hope.

B. Something special happens when these are awakened by this light. We're told in verse 3 that the church grows as a result of this change in them. They are converted. These saved sinners receive a spiritual joy that they share with others under the effects of its power. They all rejoice in its fruits. Where there was only gloom without hope, hope has now been given and its fruit is abundant.

- Usually when children ruled it was judgement and a curse upon the people. Chapter 3 says, "And I will make boys their princes, and infants shall rule over them". But not this child. There is something different about this child that makes him a great blessing, a gift unlike any other.
- This passage never prophesied that Jesus would be one of these boy kings, but rather its highlighting that the Sonship of Jesus would not be an ordinary one. All other men who had ever ruled were common men born of earthly fathers. Jesus is no son of a man; Jesus is a son from eternity.

C. *The virgin birth teaches us much about this, and it is a marvelous testimony to the uniqueness of The Christ and the origins of his birth.*

- Remember that the Christ has two distinct and separate natures that are inseparable from both his person and work.
- The humanity of Christ came by way of his sonship to Mary, but his divine nature came by way of his eternally unique status as the Son of God. This is what is being referred to when Jesus is spoken of in scripture as begotten of the father. This term is referring to the uniqueness of Christ. No other can be a Son of the Father like Christ because only Christ shares the same essence as an eternal and uncreated being.

D. Isaiah understood the need that his people had of this unique and beautiful child. When you hear the glad tidings of the gospel pronounced do you feel concern for its necessity?

- Our concerns as people will always where our interests are most dear.
- Our interests should all be as such that when the good news of the gospel is proclaimed we feel warmth and affection towards it. It should raise our affections at least in some small way. If we are truly warm to it then we will have a felt desire to share it with the lost and enjoy its benefits with others inside the church.

- We can enjoy it all the more because we have an understanding of how much we need it. The only people that can enjoy the benefits of a doctor are those that are desperately in need of his help. Matthew 9:12 says, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick".
- If the proclamation of the gospel does not rouse the heart of its hearer, then the hearer doesn't understand his need of it. Today we make it easy for the for men to be complacent because when confronted with a need we usually find some way to preach that all the answers a man needs can be found within himself. Whether it be through occult practices, secular therapy and counseling, and self-love/self-care.

*E. Who is the light of Christ presented to?*

- In Isaiah we see that Christ wasn't presented to everybody. Many died in the darkness without even the smallest glimpse of the light of Christ. At Christ's birth, his star hung in the sky for all to see yet only a few comprehended its meaning.
- Thomas Boston says, "There are indeed many in the world to whom (Christ) is not presented; they have neither voice or fame, nor seen his shape represented in the word; but wheresoever the gospel comes, there Christ is presented".
- Today, as Christ rules presently at the right hand of the Father, he is spiritually in the word and the sacraments, being presented to all members of the visible church and anyone else who hears the gospel. Christ is seen today by faith.
- Today is a perfect example of what I mean. Here we gather to look back on centuries of darkness that ended with the light of Christ bursting forth onto the scene. And today his light still shines bright to those that God has providentially brought into its presence.

F. Application: As to how we apply this I would compel you that if upon introspection you find yourself with no sense of warmth or need in your heart for the truth of the gospel, wake up and embrace it. It has been given to men that men might be saved!

- Naturally we are all like the men and women of Isaiah's day. Maybe we see the overwhelming darkness and the shadows of impending doom encompass us. Maybe our hearts fail with fear or we've become so discouraged by things in life we can't control that we despair of life entirely. But take heart! "For to us a child is born, to us a child is given".
- For those who the light has been presented to effectually and not just visibly, we have a responsibility to look at reality through the eye of faith. "The eye of faith looks at the doom and gloom, and real though it may be, it is not the whole picture or even the end that God himself has in mind. The people of God must decide what reading of their

experiences they will live by. Are they to look at the darkness, the hopelessness, the dreams shattered and conclude that God has forgotten them? Or are they to recall God's past mercies, to remember his present promises and to make great affirmations of faith". -Motyer pg. 99

G. What do great affirmations of faith towards Christ look like?

- It looks like embracing him. Believing on his person and his work for salvation and rejecting any counterfeit form of salvation. A believing heart dedicated to his service.
- It looks like giving him a kiss of love. Kisses of old were representative of honor being given. To kiss the king meant that you were submitting to him as Lord. Kiss the Lord Jesus and honor him with your submission.
- It looks like blessing him. We pray from the heart that his kingdom would come.
- It looks like offering him pure worship. Pure worship comes from the heart and through the lips. When our souls are dedicated to his worship our body follows suit.
- It looks like giving him gifts. What gift do you give a king whose body at present is not here in our midst? We give him ourselves, wholly dedicated to serve him by obeying his precepts and commandments.

**3. "And the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace".**

- At this point we know that the child will be born to men through God's own power, and we know that he has been given to men as a gift, but now Isaiah reveals to us the nature of his character and royal attributes.

A. The Government

- The burden of maintaining the well-being of a nation and its people is an overwhelming one. We see where Moses wise though he was so burdened with his responsibilities that 70 men were appointed to help him. When President Trump was on the Joe Rogan show he said that he was ultimately responsible for the appointments of 10,000 people.
- Christ is so capable of his governing abilities that were told all its responsibilities lie squarely on his capable shoulders. What a relief to his people that they have one so capable that they can rest in him trusting his divine capabilities.
- Up until this point we have had a series of kings and Judges that the people can reflect on who failed miserably. Some had good ruling characteristics, but nobody was capable of carrying the burden on their own and nobody ruled perfectly. Isaiah is showing us

that this is not true of Christ. Christ will be more capable than the best of the rulers that have come before him and he will be the perfect embodiment of a king.

## B. Wonderful Counselor

- Isaiah attributes unto Christ 4 names that reflect his royal characteristics, the first one being “Wonderful Counselor”.
- Many read this casually and think the term wonder refers to Christ doing a “great job”. This is not the case. The meaning conveyed by the prophet here is that Christ himself is a supernatural wonder. He is wonderful because He himself is a “wonder”.
- The counsel that he will provide clearly originates outside humanity’s capabilities. All of Christ’s wisdom is supernatural and perfect. In the commentaries, many examples are given of kings that showed themselves to be clever, but they were not considered wise. The best wisdom a man can offer of himself is utter foolishness to God.
- Isaiah is pointing those who understood how awful life was living under previous foolish kings and that the Son who is born will be the wisest and most supernatural of them all.
- Under Solomon, the supernatural wisdom of God ushered Israel into a golden age, it wasn’t a perfect picture of Christ’s rule, but it was a type. The wisdom of a king greatly effects a nation towards in whether it moves towards an earthly and heavenly good or it’s spiritual decline and destruction.
- The supernatural wonders of Christ know no limits but here is a short list.
  - a. He has a divine nature that comes directly from his unity with the Father in the Godhead.
  - b. Jesus had a virgin birth.
  - c. In his life he was divinely sustained and abounded in signs and wonders, not to mention absolute perfect obedience without corruption.
  - d. Death couldn’t hold him and by his own power he returned!
  - e. He ascended into the heavens and actively rules at the right hand of the father.
  - f. He will judge the whole earth.
  - g. He will reign forever without end.

- What do we do with this knowledge of such a Wonderful Counselor? We preach his wonders testify to them before men. We give our hearts to him and compel others to do so in kind.

### C. Mighty God

- The second name of Christ associated with his royal throne is “Mighty God”.
- God reveals to us through the prophet that this king will be mighty like God because he is in fact God incarnate.
- There is no better qualification one can have than this that sets you apart to provide for your people and preserve them. Christ the King won’t just be able to provide for the physical needs of the people but he will preserve them spiritually too.
- There is no enemy or scheme of Satan that can achieve victory over him. Our mighty God is already victorious. He is a great terror to all evildoers.
- We are to fear him reverently and hallow his name.

### D. Eternal Father

- He is the Eternal Father because not only is he our creator, he bestows upon the elect the privilege of being adopted into his household, receiving all of the intimate blessings that come with it.
- Those who are fatherless have the greatest father of all to guide them in their responsibilities and development. No orphan is outside of God’s ability to raise, enlighten, and mature.
- The fact that he is eternal only adds to the immensity of the blessing. Throughout the history of Israel, good kings only lived so long. Periods of blessing could quickly become periods of spiritual darkness. The Judges for instance, over a period of 400 years God would raise up individuals that would deliver Israel from oppression but after their success, they would eventually die, and the people return to the darkness that they might live in wickedness once again.
- The comfort to all men in that our king will rule forever as Eternal Father is that he will never abdicate his throne, he will never die, and he will never fail in his duties. The Son that is given to men is no temporary king and to this day he rules at the right hand of the father. He shepherds his church by growing it, nurturing it, maintaining its purity, and advancing its interests for his glory and to our benefit as believers.

- Like any intimate relationship with a father, we should be encouraged to spend great time and effort in knowing his mind.

#### E. Prince of Peace

- Every man adopted into his kingdom will know supreme and everlasting peace.
- Every man that stands opposed to him will only know and crushing defeat. The enemies of his kingdom, church, and people are guaranteed failure to the degree that it's future reality is already of such certainty that it can be spoken of in the prophetic tense.
- Do you believe that the prophecy of Isaiah has already been fulfilled or not? Do you believe with certainty that this child given to us is the Wonderful Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace?
- This Son who was given to us extends his invitation through an outward call that all men everywhere repent of sin and turn to him for salvation alone.. Will you take him or not?

#### **4. Verse 7: "Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and uphold it with justice and righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this"**

- As you read on into verse 3 remember we're told that he multiplies the nation, this includes the expansion of his church. In verse 7 we're told that there will be no end to the increase of his government and of the peace that attends its glory.
- Isaiah's message brings hope to any that might think the covenant God had made with Israel was in jeopardy. Nothing could be further from the truth. God is a covenant keeping God and we are the covenant breakers. God himself achieves all that he sets out to achieve and the house of David is in no way threatened because God himself promises to keep it safe by his own hand.