

First Sunday After Christmas, December 27, 2020

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

³You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. ⁴For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. ⁵Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

1. Who are the people walking in darkness? Have we seen this "light"?
2. Verse 6 – What do each of these names mean?
3. What is David's kingdom? Where is it?

Isaiah 35:1-10

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, ²it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God.

³Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; ⁴say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you." ⁵Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. ⁶Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. ⁷The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

⁸And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. ⁹No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, ¹⁰and those the LORD has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

1. Is Isaiah talking about Israel? What happened to the land of milk and honey?
2. Why is he talking about the land as though it were a person?
3. Who are those with fearful hearts? Why are they afraid?
4. What is the Way of Holiness? (verse 8)

Luke 2:1-30

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

Commented [WC13]: A great light: The coming of the Messiah is synonymous with the coming of light to remove the darkness of captivity (42:16; 49:6; 58:8; 16:1, 19-20). 2 Corinthians 4:4 "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Commented [WC14]: Wonderful, Counselor is actually one term in Hebrew. A wonder is indicative of a miracle. Counselor is often used in parallel with king (Micah 4:9). Plus, miraculous counsel is given by this God-like King. In fulfillment of this verse (and Psalm 2:9), the Son will rule the nations of the world (Revelation 2:27; 19:15). "Wonderful ...Counselor": in contrast to Ahaz, this King will implement supernatural wisdom in discharging His office (2nd Samuel 16:23; 1 Kings 3:28). "Mighty God": as a powerful warrior, the Messiah will accomplish the military exploits mentioned (in 9:3-5; 10:21; Deut. 10:17; Nehemiah 9:32). "Everlasting Father": The Messiah will be a Father to his people eternally. As Davidic King, He will compassionately care for and discipline them (40:11; 63:16; 64:8; Psalms 68:5-6; 103:13; Proverbs 3:12). "Prince of Peace": The government of Immanuel will procure and perpetuate peace among the nations of the world (2:4; 11:6-9; Micah 4:3).

Commented [WC15]: Hebrews 12:12 quotes this verse from Isaiah to make the point that even in a time of chastening from the LORD, we should take strength and courage in the LORD, knowing that it is His Fatherly love and care that has allowed and directed the chastening.

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

²¹ On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

Jesus Presented in the Temple

²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.

²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."

Luke 2:1-30 NIV

1. Glory is mentioned 400+ times in the Old Testament. How does the vision or reaction to God's Glory change from the Old Testament to the New Testament?
2. How is Jesus our Peace? Look up: Colossians 2:13-15, Ephesians 2:14, Hebrews 7:2, Ephesians 6:15, Philippians 4:7, Romans 5:1.
3. What do you think was going on in Mary and Joseph's minds?
4. Why is Simeon's message important? Who heard it?

Commented [WC16]: It denotes God's awesome splendor and holiness. He is the God or King of Glory. Psalm 24:7ff; 29:3. Sinful man could not behold this glorious God. Moses feared when God appeared in glory.

Commented [WC17]: the New Testament "glory" is used in association with God's visible revelation of Himself to man. When the glory of the Lord shone around the shepherds they were afraid. Luke 2:9. But he said: "Fear not for I bring you good news." The revelation of glory made them unafraid. By faith we look forward to the glorious appearance of the great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself in our stead. Titus 2:13. When God became man, man believed in his glory although he could not yet see it. John 1:14 says "We beheld His glory." II Peter 1:16 says "We were eye-witnesses of His glory." They saw Him transfigured, Luke 9:31-32, revealing the glory of God. We see God's glory in Jesus' miracles. John 2:11; 11:40. Jesus and the Father glorified each other when Jesus died and rose for us. John 13:31-32. "Glory to God in the Highest" means that Jesus is my Savior. Now His is the glory. Galatians 1:5; Hebrews 13:21. When we die we shall be glorified. Romans 8:17; Philippians 3:21; I Corinthians 15:43.