

Sent: Wednesday, November 9, 2022 3:24 PM  
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Isaiah 9

"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!" (Isaiah 9:6)

Remember last week's lesson (on Isaiah 8) where God instructed Isaiah to post a sign (attested to by two witnesses) and announce the birth of another son (to be named Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz) - both with "word-meanings" signaling how God would soon bring judgment on nations that rejected God! How He would cause the "strong and abundant waters" of the Euphrates River (symbolizing the armies of the rising empire of Assyria, under king Tiglath-Pileser) to overflow its banks and sweep through Syria and the northern kingdom of Israel (which had aligned themselves against Judah), and later sweep into Judah as well, "reaching even to its neck" but (by God's grace) allowing it to somehow "keep its head above water"!

How Isaiah would next proclaim how God would "thwart" the plans of any nation that would "gird itself" against God's people, because "God was with them" (Immanuel!) But how "many" from both houses of Israel (both the northern and southern kingdoms) would "stumble" and fall--some, rather than "waiting on the Lord, and following His law and testimony," even consulting mediums and sorcerers for answers when God seemed to be "hiding His face" from them! These would "have no dawn," Isaiah said, and would "pass through the land hard-pressed and famished...and behold only gloom and distress...and be driven away into darkness"! Wow!

All of which sets the scene for Isaiah 9!

But with a great turnaround!

Isaiah 9:1 starts off by stating, "But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish!" Wow! What has changed?

Isaiah prophecies (obviously looking off into the future), that "the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali--two of the ten tribes of Israel located on the northern most part Israel, between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River--which God had once "treated with contempt" (being the two tribes that He allowed to be attacked by the Assyrians and king Tiglath-Pileser, and thereafter "walk in darkness")--would one day "see a great light"! "Later"!

Seven hundred or so years later, Christ would be born! And spend most of His life and earthly ministry in this very area--later known as Galilee! The town of Nazareth, Capernaum, and the Sea of Galilee were located there! And all the disciples, except for Judas, were born and became followers of Jesus there!

Interestingly, Matthew 4:12-16 says, "Now when Jesus heard that John (the Baptist) had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea (of Galilee), in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali (yea!)! This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: The land of Zebulun and land of

Naphtali, by the way of sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles--The people who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a Light dawned!" (Verse 17 notes that it was here that Jesus, the "Light of world" would begin His earthly ministry!)

The New Scofield Bible notes that "the very region where the Assyrian armies brought darkness would be the first to rejoice in the light brought by the preaching of Jesus"!

Isaiah 9:4 notes that the Lord would "break the yoke of their burden...as at the battle of Midian"! You can read the whole amazing story of the "battle of Midian" in Judges 6-8: about how Gideon was called and used by the Lord to "miraculously" subdue the Midianites and deliver the children of Israel from the hands of its oppressors--just as God would (will) one day deliver the nation of Israel for all its oppressors!

And verse 5 indicates that there will come a time when there will no longer be a need for weapons of warfare!

Psalm 46:9-10 says, "He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariots with fire! Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted in the earth!" Wow!

Isaiah 9:6-7 tells us how God will make all this happen! Some day!

"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!" (Which when combined together with Isaiah 's prophecy in Isaiah 7:14 captures and foretells both coming advents of Christ!)

What more could we add?

But Isaiah 9 continues! And it reverts back to the realities of Isaiah's day (which doesn't sound much different from the days in which we're living)!

Obviously, that "great light" which Isaiah speaks about wasn't there yet! (Remember that word "later" in verse 1?) Franz Delitzsch, in his commentary on Isaiah, wrote that "the great light would not arise til the darkness had reached its deepest point...and that there would be a gradual increase in the darkness for Israel"

And that's what we see in Isaiah 9:8-21! Basically, how the anger of the Lord "would not turn away" from Israel, because they would not repent of their sin and trust in Him! (Sounds like "sinners in the hands of an angry God"!)

Constable calls the three examples which follow in these verses, offenses of the sins of pride and arrogance of heart (MacArthur calls it "self-sufficiency"); flawed leadership ("from head to tail"

and "top to bottom"), leading people astray; and selfishness (even brother against brother) and "a wickedness that grows like fire"! (And yet with increasing darkness!)

For these reasons, Isaiah writes (and repeats!) that God's anger "does not turn away and His hand is still stretched out"!

Romans 1:18 says, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness!"

Ray Ortlund, well-known evangelical preacher and teacher (and former pastor of Immanuel Church in Nashville, Tennessee), says this about the anger (or "wrath") of God: "His wrath is His active, resolute opposition to all evil"! What we must understand, he writes, is that "His wrath is no less perfect than the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience! It's like the solemn determination of a doctor cutting away the cancer that's killing the patient!"

Aren't you glad that God, who "didn't turn away His wrath" from Israel, loved them (and us!) so much that He sent His Son!

On to Isaiah 10!

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