

## Isaiah Lesson 9

Isaiah Chapter 9

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**Introduction:** Last week, we studied about the confirmation of the sudden destruction of the kingdoms of Syria and Israel. This was to be followed by the invasion of their land by the Assyrians.

In chapter 9, along with the approaching of God's judgment against His people, there still remained hope for Israel. Their hope would be born of a virgin in a manger and will soon be revealed as their King. The final portion of the chapter returns to warning of the impending judgment of God.

### I. For to Us a Child Is Born

*Isa 9:1 Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.*

*Isa 9:2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.*

Though dark days of judgment were ahead for Israel. The dimness of gloom refers to the invasion of the northern kingdom from the north by Tiglathpilneser, king of Assyria. Pekah was the king of Israel at that time. This Assyrian invasion came from the north through the land of Zebulun and Naphtali and the Galilee region. The inhabitants of Galilee and all the land of Naphtali were carried away captive. (See II Kings 15:19-29.)

All that was not taken or useful was destroyed. The greater thought is that the distress both houses of Israel had faced up to this point was nothing compared with what was to come. The judgment of God was literally gathering in great proportion on the northern horizon. All the ensuing conquests of Israel (Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman) the invasions came from the north through Galilee.

The prophecy here undoubtedly is that of the coming of our Lord. Though born in Bethlehem, He lived and ministered primarily in and around Galilee. This region of Israel, though they walked in darkness resulting in an ongoing threat of attack would eventually see great light. Through the route of invasion and attack of

Israel (“the land of the shadow of death”), God would someday cause great light to shine upon them. That enlightenment would be in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

*Isa 9:3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.*

*Isa 9:4 For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.*

*Isa 9:5 For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.*

Looking through the darkness of the impending judgment, the prophet foresees the glory of the Day of the Lord to come. Some commentators believe the word not used here to be inaccurately inserted. The thought however is that the day was coming when though the nation of Israel would be multiplied, there would not be any increase of joy.

The only joy found in the land was from internal and inherent causes: harvest or dividing the prey of hunting. However, there was a reason for joy. The day is coming when Israel will rejoice with great joy over the lifting of her captivities, oppressions, and dispersion. It would be as when Gideon overthrew the Midianites in Judges 7:16-22.

That day of course will be when the King of kings sets foot upon the Mount of Olives from heaven to establish His kingdom. The fog of war and the blood of battle is often frightful and confusing, but the day is coming when the King of kings shall return in “flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God” (II Thessalonians 1:8).

In that day, “with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked” (Isaiah 11:4). When Jesus Christ returns in power and great glory, He will deliver Israel from the attack and invasion of the Nations under the leadership of the Antichrist. The power of the Messiah is made clear in the following two verses.

*Isa 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

*Isa 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.*

The deliverance of Israel will come by the birth of God's only begotten Son. He is one and the same as the One born of the virgin noted in Isaiah 7:14. This Son would be God's gift to Israel. Both advents of our Lord are presented. Certainly, His first coming is in view with His birth and incarnation. Then, His second coming wherein He will rule and reign over the entire earth.

Of interest is that the only place in the Bible where the word government is found are in these two verses. The government of not only Israel but of the entire world will be upon His shoulder in that day. The prophet proceeds to list several the names and titles of our Lord. The Deity of Christ is clear. At the same time, He is called the everlasting Father. The unity of the Godhead is in view. Christ and the Father are one. The Father is in Him. And, He is in the Father.

Though there certainly is a distinction between the Father and the Son, we do not err to refer to the Son as the Father. One is found in the other. Finally, the magnificent child which would be born would be called The Prince of Peace. Not until He comes to rule and reign will there be peace on the earth.

He is the author of not only peace of heart, but peace of nations and every relationship in between. The first phrase, "of the increase of his government," has the sense 'of the greatness of His government,' there shall be no end. Moreover, there will be no end to peace under the government of the Messiah. He will sit upon the throne of David.

Clearly implicit is that Jesus Christ will rule and reign from Jerusalem and the royal throne of Israel. His kingdom will be ordered and established with justice (judgment) and righteousness forever. The greatness of His kingdom will be accomplished with the zealotry of the Lord. It will be performed with His personal vigor, zeal, and enthusiasm. It will overshadow all human government as the sun outshines the moon.

## **II. Judgment on Arrogance and Oppression**

*Isa 9:8 The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel.*

*Isa 9:9 And all the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart,*

*Isa 9:10 The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycomores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars.*

*Isa 9:11 Therefore the LORD shall set up the adversaries of Rezin*

*against him, and join his enemies together;*

*Isa 9:12 The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.*

After the glimpse of the glories of the Messiah, the prophet returns to the impending wrath of God against His rebellious people. Isaiah makes clear that God had spoken especially to the northern kingdom in days gone by. Still in their state of pride, they mocked the gracious warning of God. God had warned them of impending judgment. Yet, arrogant Israel had said that though structures of brick and sycamore timber were knocked down, they would rebuilt with hewn stones and cedars.

They, in effect, mocked the warning of God by boasting of rebuilding in the aftermath of the destruction with stronger and more expensive material. Against Israel's arrogance, God foretold how that He would take the adversaries of the Syrians (i.e., the Assyrians) and join their forces with Israel's enemies. This resulted in the entire Syrian nation and the Philistines opposing Israel. Though Rezin, king of Syria, was then a friend of Pekah, King of Israel, Rezin would soon be killed by the Assyrians in battle and Syrians forces would be drafted into the Assyrian army to be used against Israel.

God would forge an alliance between the various enemies of the northern kingdom to execute judgement upon Israel. With foreboding prescience, the prophet warned, "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." Though God would chasten Israel, His anger would not be abated and His hand of judgment would remain outstretched against His rebellious people. See also Isaiah 5:25, 7:17, 20, and 10:4.

*Isa 7:17 The LORD shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria.*

God was not done dealing with His people.

*Isa 9:13 For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the LORD of hosts.*

*Isa 9:14 Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day.*

*Isa 9:15 The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.*

*Isa 9:16 For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.*

The cause for God's wrath is further enumerated. Though God would chasten His people in judgment, they would refuse to return and seek Him. The day was fast approaching when God would judge every level of society in Israel. The explanation of who the head and tail is found in the following. "The ancient and honorable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail."

The leadership of the nation is likened to the head thereof. Implicit in referring to false prophets as being the tail is God's contempt for them. It would seem that the reference to "branch and rush" is in opposition to the head and tail. The greater truth is the fact that Israel was being led into destruction by their own leaders. The spiritual errors of the land came from the very top. Wicked kings and false prophets were leading them to their doom.

*Isa 9:17 Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows: for every one is an hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh folly. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.*

*Isa 9:18 For wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke.*

God had no joy in the youth of the nation. To the contrary, He would have no mercy upon them—even orphans and widows. They all were hypocrites and evildoers. They all spoke with vile mouths. Therefore, the wrath of God continued against His own people. His hand of judgment would remain against Israel. As fire begins to burn in the weeds and then spreads into the trees, causing a great forest fire, so was the coming judgment of the Lord upon the land. The wickedness of the people would bring God's wrath right down to their level and then spread as a great brushfire across the land.

*Isa 9:19 Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire: no man shall spare his brother.*

*Isa 9:20 And he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied: they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm:*

*Isa 9:21 Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: and they together shall be against Judah. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.*

The smoke of the wrath of God would darken the land. Moreover, the people of Israel itself would be the fuel for the fire. Implicit is that in the coming wrath upon the land, brethren would rise up against each other, fighting over what little food was left. Famine and starvation would be such that relatives would desperately fight each other for what little food they could find.

Hinted at is even cannibalism from the starvation of war. Not only would God judge the north (Manasseh and Ephraim), He would also use the northern kingdom to chastise Judah. Fulfillment of this is found in II Chronicles 28:5-8 wherein the northern kingdom defeated Ahaz, king of Judah.

*2Ch 25:5 Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of their fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbered them from twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand choice men, able to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield.*

*2Ch 25:6 He hired also an hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel for an hundred talents of silver.*

*2Ch 25:7 But there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the LORD is not with Israel, to wit, with all the children of Ephraim.*

*2Ch 25:8 But if thou wilt go, do it, be strong for the battle: God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help, and to cast down.*

God's hand of judgment remained against Israel and Judah. His wrath still burned.

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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