

Review

God has warned the nation through Isaiah that because they have rejected His Word, they are in darkness. And the longer they walk in that darkness, the angrier they will become and the more gloom they will find.

9:1a No More Gloom

Gloom will be upon those who reject the Word. But, God promises, there will be no more gloom for "her who was in anguish in earlier times." Who is this? It is the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali. These were two of the twelve tribes of Israel, and their inheritance of the promised land was up north, next to the Sea of Galilee.

The lands of Zebulun and Naphtali are promised a time when there will be no more gloom. And they had plenty of it, for God had judged them previously. Because they had walked in the darkness of rejecting the Word of God, they were carried captive to Assyria (2Kings 15:29).

But God's promise was that this area would be made glorious.

9:1b-2 A Light Will Shine In Galilee

How would the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali be made glorious? The people who had formerly walked in darkness would see a great light. And the light that they would see would be Jesus. The gospel of Matthew tells us when this was fulfilled...

Matt. 4:13-17 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: "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 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."

When Jesus came into the region of Galilee, the people who had walked in darkness were suddenly bathed in the light. John wrote of Jesus,

John 1:4-5 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

And Jesus said,

John 8:12 ...“I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”

John 12:35-36 ...“For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light...”

9:3-5 Breaking The Rod

Speaking to Jesus, the Father tells Him that He will multiply the nation and increase their gladness. This is still yet future, after the second coming of Christ. The Jews who are oppressed and downtrodden will one day have their burdens lifted. They will no longer be under the rod of their oppressors.

The land of Israel will be increased to the promised borders. The gladness of the people of Israel will be unprecedented. Those nations who mistreated the Jews will be judged.

Joel 3:1-2 “For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there on behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; And they have divided up My land.”

Because of their oppression of the Jews, God will judge them severely.

Matt. 25:32-33 “All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.”

Matt. 25:41 “Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels’”

And thus the yoke of their burden and the rod of their oppressor will be broken.

9:6a A Child

How would this all come about? Through the birth of a child. The prophesied son of a virgin (Isa. 7:14), who would be "God with us" (Matt. 1:23). This is the One on whose shoulders all of the government will ultimately rest. The prophets all agree that the Messiah would be the king:

Jer. 23:5-6 “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The LORD our righteousness.’”

Wonderful

He is called "God with us," and "the Lord our righteousness." It becomes more and more evident as you read the Scriptures that this child born to a virgin and destined to govern the world is God Himself. He is also called here, "Wonderful."

You may remember that a "mal-AWK" (angel or messenger) showed up visit some parents-to-be. The couple prepared an offering which was miraculously consumed by fire on the altar. The man...

Judg. 13:17-18 ...said to the angel of the LORD, “What is your name, so that when your words come to pass, we may honor you?” But the angel of the LORD said to him, “Why do you ask my name, seeing it is Wonderful?”

This angel of the Lord was a Christophany, an Old Testament appearance of Jesus Christ.

Counselor

He is also called "Counselor." This is the job description of a king (Mic. 4:9). Calling Him the "Wonderful Counselor" seems to indicate that as He rules, His kingly counsel is divine, or miraculously gifted.

Mighty God, Eternal Father

And, in case there was any doubt that the Messiah was divine, notice that He will also be called, "Mighty God, Eternal Father."

One of the marks of a cult is a group that denies the deity of Jesus Christ. They have found excuses for not believing John 1:1; John 10:33; John 8:58-59; 2Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:8; John 20:26-29; Titus 2:13; 2Pet 1:1... etc. But once again, we see it right in front of our faces: He is the Mighty God.

Now, some people misunderstand the term "Father" here, and confuse the different persons of the Trinity. Calling Jesus a father here doesn't mean that God the Son is also God the Father. It is referring to His position regarding eternity, not His place in deity. Remember that Paul told the Colossians,

Col. 1:16-17 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Jesus has preeminence over all things as their originator, their creator, their father. And so He is called the eternal Father, or a translation which would be more accurate, "Father of Eternity."

9:6b-7 Prince Of Peace

Jesus will also be called the prince of peace. It's interesting to me that the Christmas cards often acknowledge Him as the bringer of peace. But they often misquote the peace He brings. They often say, "Peace on

Earth." But in reality, Jesus said,

Luke 12:51-53 “Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; for from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

This doesn't sound like "Peace on Earth." So where did the Christmas card makers get this idea? From the angels who announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night. But there was a qualifier in the announcement:

Luke 2:14 “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”

Peace on earth - only for those people with whom God is pleased. And so Jesus is the prince of peace, but it is only those who have grace that have peace.

No End

You may remember that when David expressed a desire to build a temple for God, he was not allowed. However, God did send the prophet Nathan to him with some amazing prophetic promises. One of those promises was that David's kingly line would be established forever (2Sam. 7:13,16).

Regarding that very promise, the angel Gabriel told the virgin Mary,
Luke 1:31-33 “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”

The proverb says,

Prov. 16:12 ...a throne is established on righteousness.

And so we would expect nothing less from God's government on earth to be a throne which is established and upheld with justice and righteousness. Ethan the Ezrahite recognized this about God when he wrote Psalm 89, saying,

**Psa. 89:14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of
Your throne; Lovingkindness and truth go before You.**

May we go into the world as ambassadors of a righteous and just king, representing Him rightly to the world.