

Isaiah 9:1-7

Promise of...

Nevertheless - no matter how dark the days, no matter how pressing the judgement, no matter how painful the chastisement or how overwhelming the circumstances - there is the whisper in the wind of the tempest, "nevertheless" God is the source of all mercy and goodness and His mercy remains. He has promised that all who are His are being governed for their own good, that He has the workings of His mercy and grace hidden in the wings, going forth for all that He has intended and promised. Even when the darkness seems impenetrable - His light is breaking forth. The gloom is parting, the darkness is lifting, the night is breaking forth into dawn... the Psalmist gives us hope to cling to in the midst of the darkest despair...

Psalm 30:4–5 (NKJV)

*⁴ Sing praise to the Lord, you saints of His,
And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.*

⁵ For His anger is but for a moment,

His favor is for life;

Weeping may endure for a night,

But joy comes in the morning.

And Isaiah here gives us a host of reasons to remember that promise and trust its fulfillment, regardless of where we may currently be in this cycle of God's patient warning, correcting chastisement, or gracious restoring... He is still doing all as He does with the same purpose as He always does - our good and His glory.

I. PROMISE OF LIGHT

- i. God's judgement is cloaking the land and people in darkness
- ii. This judgment is far from over, in fact it is really just beginning. But note that the promise of its

ending and the good that it will ultimately bring is present even at its inception.

- iii. That judgement had the dual purpose of breaking those opposed to God and refining those who were His own.
- iv. That judgement set the stage for the coming of the light to call as His own all who He had chosen among Israel as well as the gentiles

II. PROMISE OF PEACE

- i. God's judgement had brought war upon the land
- ii. He used gentile and pagan kings to do His bidding when His people had refused to obey and turned instead to false gods, magic and necromancy
- iii. His promise of peace will also bring joy. For an agrarian people there is no greater joy than a good harvest, for a military people there is no greater joy than the dividing of the spoil - for a people called by God there is no greater joy than

the presence of God... this is the hope that is promised, joy.

- i. Increasing the number of those who are His own - revival and awakening
- ii. Breaking the yoke of the burden
- iii. Breaking the rod of the oppressor
- iv. The cessation of war and the advent of peace
- v. The display of good coming out of the bad. It is in there, we just cannot see it.

III. PROMISE OF MESSIAH

It is important to note that although the OT is littered with Messianic promise, types, Christophanies, pictures and prophecies... they have only now really begun to take shape. Isaiah was among the first prophets to really give much in the way of detail. And here in chapter 9, we already have his 3rd ... they have increased in detail and in clarity. Until this time the expectation of Messiah had still been a general expectation, but here in Isaiah, the promise begins to shape the expectation, and their own desires begin to cloud the message.

This is always a danger to us, and one that must be avoided. We must learn to allow the scripture to speak to us, to say what it says and not allow our own perceptions or expectations, thoughts, hopes or fears to color our understanding and thus cloud it... Isaiah is startlingly specific about the nature and **person** of this promised Messiah.

- a. This coming One will be one of us, coming into the world in the usual way
- b. He will be a King
 - i. His throne will be forever
 - ii. His government will be over David's Kingdom fulfilling God's promise to him
- c. His Kingdom will be established with total perfect balance
 - i. Increase of His reign
 - ii. Increase of the resulting peace
 - iii. Judgement
 - iv. Justice

d. He will be unlike anyone before or anyone after

- i. Wonderful
- ii. Counsellor
- iii. Mighty God
- iv. Everlasting Father
- v. Prince of Peace

e. He will be empowered and enabled by God Himself, and God's zeal will accomplish all that He has promised. The Zeal of the Lord - God's jealous concern for His own people and their welfare, based upon their relationship to Him - likened to the relationship between a wife and her husband. Thus, we also see this described or translated as jealous...

IV. PROMISE OF BLESSING

Ultimately, He will restore God's people to a right relationship with God AND bring into that right relationship ALL those whom God has chosen, regardless of their ethnicity or background. Christ is the Messiah for ALL. There are none who are

excluded from this promise based on anything that we would think mattered.

- a. Rebellious and backslidden Jews
- b. Gentile and Pagan
- c. Seemingly righteous
- d. Blatantly wicked
- e. Pro-God, Anti-God, Pro-Christ, or anti-Christ
- f. Whether we are speaking of culture, politics or morals there is only ONE question that matters. Are you found in Christ. We so often settle for the easy out, taking our comfort from the sameness that we share with people who are of like mind, opinions or preferences. But God has saved all of us by grace, and there is no pre-qualifications. We are ALL guilty and in need of mercy, and we MUST see that and act accordingly. We MUST offer the gospel of Christ to all, and with all the passion and power we possess - because at the bottom of it all, this is the promise here, that God will save a people for Himself, will watch over them jealously and will fashion of their ruined lives, glory for Himself as He blesses them with His own promised good!