

Government and Peace (Isaiah 9:6, 7)

By Pastor Jeff Alexander (12/14/2014)

Introduction

1. The text before us is very popular at this time of the year.
 - a. It is a passage of hope and promise, but it is set in the context of rebuke and threat of judgment.
 - b. Not so much a Christmas message but an opportunity to investigate important truths at a troubling time. Could we be in the last hour of history? Is the return of Christ very near?
2. Chapter 7 begins a new section that runs through chapter 11.
 - a. God's Word to a stubborn and hardhearted people
 - b. Thus, our text (9:6, 7) is not one of hope and comfort but of warning and declaration.
3. It reveals God's plan for including all nations in His kingdom.
 - a. 9:1-2 quoted in Matt. 4:15, 16
 - b. "You" (v. 3, 4) — the Lord's doing

I. The Setting

1. This prophecy was made in the days of Ahaz, the king of Judah and of the house of David.
 - a. Ahaz was an arrogant and stubborn king who refused to acknowledge God.
 - b. He preferred to trust his own abilities and, although he feared the Aram-Israeli alliance, he refused to hear the message of God's prophet, Isaiah, or to obey his instructions.
 - c. Yahweh assured the terrified king that the feared invasion from this alliance would not happen (7:3-9). He should ask a sign to encourage his trust in Yahweh's word(7:10-12). The king refused with a feigned humility.
2. The stubbornness of the king merely reflected the attitude of the nation.
 - a. The broader implications of this attitude involved the whole race of Adam.
 - b. The nature of human fallenness is the false promise of Satan that any human can be his own god.
 - c. The compounded tragedy of Israel is in the rejection of God's involvement in Israel's own existence and protection.
3. The response of Yahweh affirmed that His ultimate purpose would be realized in spite of Israel's stubborn unbelief.
 - a. The sign was given even after the king's refusal to ask (7:14). Two babies were predicted: one born supernaturally in the future, the other born naturally within the year to Isaiah's wife. The immediate fulfillment would signify the end of the feared alliance while the second and greater would signify the end of sin's reign.
 - b. A third prophecy announced that stubborn Judah was to endure a terrible time (7:17-25). The predicted Assyrian invasion provided the context for the next part of the prophecy and the setting for the text before us.
4. Chapter 8 contains four messages from Yahweh.
 - a. Isaiah was to have another son (vv. 1-4).
 - b. Israel was instructed not to fear nor to compromise with her enemies (vv. 5-16).
 - c. The feared alliance would soon be destroyed by the Assyrian invasion (vv. 17, 18).
 - d. Israel will be punished if she continued to practice occult rituals instead of trusting Yahweh (vv. 19-22).
5. Two important truths are noted from the eighth chapter.
 - a. Tribulation, but not destruction, would fall upon Judah because of her unbelief (vv. 6-8). The sole reason for this restraint pertained to God's purpose for Immanuel (v. 8).

- b. Isaiah was not to call conspiracy what others called such; rather he was to fear the Lord (vv. 12-15). The prophet responded in vv. 17, 18. “Fearing God is becoming so acutely aware of His moral purity and omnipotence that one is genuinely afraid to disobey Him. Fearing God also includes responding to Him in worship, service, trust, obedience, and commitment” (*Bible Knowledge Commentary*).

II. The Symbolism

1. Satan loves symbolism and uses it profusely while at the same time hiding its real significance and deceiving most people.
 - a. People flaunt triangles, squares, and circles, hand-signs and other seemingly innocent signals while hiding their true significance from the uninitiated.
 - b. God does not need symbolism; however, He will use it to convey his point.
2. Our text uses imagery that conveys God’s success in His plans against Satan’s continued efforts to prevent them.
 - a. Isaiah’s message is presented against the backdrop of Genesis 3:15 and Psalm 2.
 - b. Both Satan and God have been working to bring about their own ends.
 - c. While it appears that the question of which side will ultimately win is not settled, the fact is, it is already determined and assured.
3. The glory of a simple declaration needs to be unfolded.
 - a. A Child is born (Gen. 3:15). God promised a “seed of the woman” to bring a crushing blow to Satan’s efforts to bring sin and unrighteousness into God’s creation. Redemptive history is marked by a string of attempts to keep that Son from being born. Yahweh declares that Satan has failed: *a Child is born*.
 - b. A Son was given (Psalm 2). Israel wanted a king like all the nations and got their desire in Saul, but his legacy was short-lived. God wanted a king after his own heart; His kingdom and a dynasty that would never end began with David.

III. The Success

1. His permanent triumph is declared (9:1-5).
 - a. In His first coming (vv. 1, 2).
 - b. In the glory of His resurrection (vv. 3-5, 7).
2. The reason for the triumph explained (vv. 6, 7)—the great King (Psa. 2:6).
 - a. This King is to take upon His shoulder a great responsibility—the robe of kingdom government (see Isa. 22:20-25) with great splendor and majesty (Psa. 21:6).
 - b. This King bears a great name—“Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” The name signifies what He is.
3. His success is declared in the triumph of His work (v. 7).
 - a. Its increase—no limits
 - b. Its establishment—no opposition
 - c. Its substance —justice and righteousness
 - d. Its duration—eternal
 - e. Its energy—the zeal of God, not the efforts of man
4. Satan’s kingdom is built on the false hope of *peace and security* (Isa. 39:8; Ezek. 13:10; 1 Thess. 5:3). Peace and security produce *slavery*.
5. God’s kingdom is built on the sound premise of obedience resulting in true peace (*shalom*, Num. 25:12; Isa. 32:17, 18). The peace that comes from obedience produces *freedom*.