

Messianic Prophecy: Isaiah 9:1-7

1A Introduction: Historical Backdrop

- 1B** Judah has a future. This is the message of Isaiah 9.
- 2B** Nations scheme against the Southern Kingdom, including their own kinsmen to the north in Israel.
- 3B** Their own king Jotham has gone into idolatry and terrible degeneracy.
- 4B** Historical Background to Isaiah 7-8: (from *BSac* 137:546 (Apr 80) p. 142)
 - 1C** “The historical situation can be summarized in the words of Isaiah 7:1. “And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz...king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the...king of Israel went up to Jerusalem to war against it; but could not prevail against it.”
 - 2C** “In 735 B.C. Ahaz ascended the throne. Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, had been occupied in the far east for the preceding two years.
 - 3C** “Rezin and Pekah formed an alliance and used the occasion to launch an invasion against Judah—an adventure they would not have dared had Uzziah still been alive.
 - 4C** “Rezin marched down the eastern side of the Jordan and conquered Edom; Pekah swept over Judah and defeated the armies of Ahaz in one great battle, slaughtering 120,000 Judeans and carrying off 200,000 captives along with a large amount of spoil (2 Chron 28:5; 2 Kings 16:5).
 - 5C** “Their motive was probably vengeance against Ahaz for refusing to enter into an alliance with them against Assyria. It is no wonder that Ahaz was afraid that his enemies would prevail, end the kingdom of Judah, and annihilate the family of David.
 - 6C** “In his distress Ahaz was about to appeal to Assyria for military assistance. However, Assyria was a selfish, conquering power; and an alliance with them could have been purchased only at the price of Judah’s independence. It would not have been long before Jehovah would have been swept from His own Temple and the gods of Assyria installed in His place.
 - 7C** “Isaiah met Ahaz to assure him that God would deliver Jerusalem and to warn him against a disastrous entanglement with Assyria.
 - 8C** In chapter eight, the prophecy continues through the naming of Isaiah’s third son, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, which means, “the spoil speeds, the prey hastes.” This referred to the destruction of the two threatening nations by a third, Assyrian.
 - 9C** Assyria had been preoccupied but would now turn its attention west again.
 - 10C** Isaiah 8:6-9, 6 “Inasmuch as these people refused The waters of Shiloah that flow softly, And rejoice in Rezin and in Remaliah’s son; 7 Now therefore, behold, the Lord brings up over them The waters of the River, strong and mighty— The king of Assyria and all his glory; He will go up over all his channels And go over all his banks. 8 He will pass through Judah, He will overflow and pass over, He will reach up to the neck; And the stretching out of his wings Will fill the breadth of Your land, O Immanuel. 9 “Be shattered, O you peoples, and be broken in pieces! Give ear, all you from far countries. Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces; Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces.

- 1D The Shiloah was a little brook on the side of Mt. Zion in Jerusalem. It was a clear running brook, and refreshing on a hot day.
 - 2D Here it is representative of the reign of David and the rule of the Lord through the Law.
 - 3D Instead they have taken the rule of foreigners for their own, as their new refreshing brook.
 - 4D Instead the Lord will send them a terrible river that becomes a destructive flood: Assyria.
- 11C Isaiah 8:18-22, 18 Here am I and the children whom the Lord has given me! We are for signs and wonders in Israel From the Lord of hosts, Who dwells in Mount Zion. 19 And when they say to you, "Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter," should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? 20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. 21 They will pass through it hard-pressed and hungry; and it shall happen, when they are hungry, that they will be enraged and curse their king and their God, and look upward. 22 Then they will look to the earth, and see trouble and darkness, gloom of anguish; and they will be driven into darkness.
- 1D Yet God exists, and He desires for the return of His children.
 - 2D The idolaters will tell the people of Israel that they should seek mediums and wizards but of course there is no need for that if you have a God.
 - 3D Yet if they do not seek God, there will be terrible anguish and lasting gloom. They will be in the darkness of their own souls.
 - 4D It is into this gloom that a Great Light comes.
 - 5D Hebrew has several words for darkness. This Muaph is the word for the dim twilight just before dark. It is a daily gloom that always holds the promise of a new day, even if that day is a long way off.
 - 6D This gloom also describes the gloom of psychological depression in response to difficult circumstances.

2A Exposition:

- 1B Isaiah 9:1, 1 Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, As when at first He lightly esteemed The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed her, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, In Galilee of the Gentiles.
- 1C Zebulun and Naphtali are in Galilee; they are the countryside of Israel, often out of the way and forgotten.
 - 2C God at first lightly esteemed these two tribes.
 - 3C No nation would really want anything to do with the region by way of conquest. It is not particularly rich or useful, except to the people who live there.
 - 4C Yet the tribal lands were subject to invasion and Gentile domination because of their nearness to the road on the sea side of Israel.
 - 5C Yet it says that the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed.
 - 6C Daylight is coming to this region.

- 7C Jesus' early Galilean ministry is the fulfillment of this prophecy. Matthew 4:13-15, 13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 15 "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:
- 2B Isaiah 9:2, 2 The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.
- 1C The Great Light is the teaching ministry of Jesus Christ.
- 2C For centuries the people of Israel remained in darkness because of their way of life, which excluded God.
- 3C Then Christ came and began to teach, shedding the light of truth on the land.
- 4C The land of death-shadow, *tsalmawet*, is sheol, the place under the earth where souls await final judgment.
- 5C Job 10:21-22, 21 Before I go to the place from which I shall not return, To the land of darkness and the shadow of death, 22 A land as dark as darkness itself, As the shadow of death, without any order, Where even the light is like darkness.' "
- 6C These will also see the Lord – though the fulfillment there will not be until He dies on the cross and visits there.
- 7C So there are two categories: the darkness of spiritual death, and the darkness of physical death.
- 8C John 1:4-5 refers to this prophecy, 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
- 9C The life of Jesus Christ is unconquerable even by death, and it is intended to be the light of men.
- 10C Likewise Luke 1:76-80, 76 "And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, 77 To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins, 78 Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; 79 To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace." 80 So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.
- 11C In turn, Israel becomes a light to the Gentiles through Messiah, Luke 2:25-32, 25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, 28 he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: 29 "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; 30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation 31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, 32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."
- 12C John 3:19-21, 19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20

- For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”
- 13C John 8:12, 12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”
- 14C John 9:5, 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”
- 15C John 12:46, 46 I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.
- 3B Isaiah 9:3, 3 You have multiplied the nation And increased its joy; They rejoice before You According to the joy of harvest, As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.
- 1C The Messiah is truly the glory of Israel.
- 2C It is only through Him and because of Him that they prosper and rejoice.
- 3C This rejoicing is like when great riches are found in the leftovers of battle, or when a particularly bountiful harvest comes in.
- 4C So it should be when Messiah comes. A few recognized it.
- 4B Isaiah 9:4-5, 4 For You have broken the yoke of his burden And the staff of his shoulder, The rod of his oppressor, As in the day of Midian. 5 For every warrior’s sandal from the noisy battle, And garments rolled in blood, Will be used for burning and fuel of fire.
- 1C The Messiah will mean political freedom for Israel.
- 2C Likewise, He will bring an end to warfare by His strength. Through His rule the nations will live in peace.
- 3C Although this leaps forward to the time of Messiah second advent.
- 5B Isaiah 9:6-7, 6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.
- 1C The Messiah, the Son of God, is given to Israel first. He is for them, so that they and He together can be for the entire world.
- 2C He is the strength behind the government of Israel and the world. He is shouldering the load through His light and wisdom and also through His might.
- 3C Now there is given a list of names for Messiah, each descriptive of His essence and character.
- 1D *Pele* is “wonderful” in the sense of the miraculous, an act that can only be of God. This is not a reference to the miraculous nature of His birth, but of His life.
- 2D *Yo’ets* is someone who gives counsel, a wise plan to guide an individual or organization. Because the context is about Messiah’s national and world leadership, this describes the underlying plan of government for the peace and prosperity of His rule.
- 3D *El gibor* is “mighty God” in the sense of a hero in battle: 1 Chronicles 11:15-19, 15 Now three of the thirty chief men went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the army of the Philistines encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. 16 David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then

in Bethlehem. 17 And David said with longing, "Oh, that someone would give me a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" 18 So the three broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and took it and brought it to David.

Nevertheless David would not drink it, but poured it out to the Lord. 19 And he said, "Far be it from me, O my God, that I should do this! Shall I drink the blood of these men who have put their lives in jeopardy? For at the risk of their lives they brought it." Therefore he would not drink it. These things were done by the three mighty men.

1E This might however is attributed to the divine, to God Himself. The Messiah will be God.

2E This is a clear statement about the deity of the Messiah. He is heroic as God in human flesh.

3E Mark 14:35-36, 35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. 36 And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."

4D *Avi'ad* is "everlasting Father" Jesus the Messiah is eternal God, from everlasting to everlasting.

1E Isaiah employs Father not in the sense of God the Father, but in the sense of eternal being and creator.

2E John 1:1-3 clarifies, 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

5D *Shar-shalom* is a great play on words, indicating the product of the reign of Messiah. For the first time in history, a ruler will bring a true and lasting peace.

6D There will be endless prosperity and peace in this government. Usually governments degenerate into corruption and loss.

7D Furthermore Messiah will be on David's throne.

8D And it is all accomplished through the zeal of the Lord of hosts.