

Isaiah 9:1-7

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Isaiah 9 begins with the word “but,” which prompts us to look back to what is happening in Isaiah 8. Isaiah is prophesying to the people of Judah about the coming Assyrian invasion as judgment for turning away from God. The last verse ends with the image of lost people in “distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish.” So in the middle of this gloom, Isaiah flashes forward to a prophecy of what is to come. We see in verse 1 that he speaks of the future with the certainty of the past tense.

Those who were in darkness will have great JOY - “Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone” (v. 2). That same image of overwhelming darkness is promised to be overcome with a great light. The natural response of God’s people when they are brought out of darkness is increased joy. In verse 3, you see this repeated as they “rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, and they are glad when they divide the spoil.”

Those who were at war will have great PEACE - Verses 4 and 5 paint wartime images of the coming Messiah’s victory over His people’s oppressors “as on the day of Midian.” This refers to the story of the miraculous defeat of Midian by Gideon’s army in Judges 7. This victory is also complete. Every garment rolled in blood being burned for fuel as a fire is what happens when the battle is over and finished. Then Isaiah describes who exactly will bring about this lasting peace.

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.” Isaiah 9:6-7a

This is God’s promise through the words of Isaiah. A great king will come through the line of David and will bring complete and swift victory over the enemy. In him, there will be unending peace, and his rule and reign of justice will last forever.

A Trustworthy Promise - We have the privilege of knowing and rejoicing that the Lord did keep His promise in the first coming of Christ Jesus. The Son of God was born as a child from the line of David and defeated the ultimate oppressor through his death, burial, and resurrection. He is our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Through repentance and salvation through Christ, we were delivered from the domain of darkness and brought to the Kingdom of the Son whom God loves (Colossians 1:13-14). Through the Holy Spirit we are given great joy and peace that “surpasses all understanding” (Philippians 4:6). Praise God!

Yet we also long for Christ to return and to see his ultimate victory over the sin, death, and darkness that we see in the world. We long for Christ’s Kingdom here on earth and unending peace. In this, we can trust the promise made in the last sentence of this passage - “The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.” He will bring this promise in Isaiah to complete fulfillment one day, and we will worship Him forever in complete joy and peace.