

Advent in a Small Town week 3

12/20/2020

Isaiah 9:1–7 (CSB)

BIRTH OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

9 Nevertheless, the gloom of the distressed land will not be like that of the former times when he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. But in the future he will bring honor to the way of the sea, to the land east of the Jordan, and to Galilee of the nations.

²The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
a light has dawned
on those living in the land of darkness.

³You have enlarged the nation
and increased its joy.
The people have rejoiced before you
as they rejoice at harvest time
and as they rejoice when dividing spoils.

⁴For you have shattered their oppressive yoke
and the rod on their shoulders,
the staff of their oppressor,
just as you did on the day of Midian.

⁵For every trampling boot of battle
and the bloodied garments of war
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child will be born **for us**,
a son will be given **to us**,
and the government will be on his shoulders.

He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷The dominion will be vast,
and its prosperity will never end.
He will reign on the throne of David
and over his kingdom,
to establish and sustain it
with justice and righteousness from now on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this.

Introduction: A Setting of Turmoil.

A. Have you ever noticed that almost every time I introduce a book of the Bible, the context and history is always messed up?

1. When we were in Amos, the world was falling apart.
2. When we finished Thessalonians, persecution and suffering.
3. Pick a book, and more than likely the context is a season of difficulty and hardship.
4. That is because God's Word was given to people who were living in the real world.
 - a. A world full of sin.
 - b. A world wracked by pain, anger, and hatred.
 - c. A world bent on destruction, even if that destruction was considered the pursuit of a better world.

B. Isaiah is a series of prophecies during the dying days of Israel.

1. Except, they didn't think they were dying, at least not yet.
2. They thought they were strong and God was on their side.
3. What they didn't fully realize was that God was sending judgment in the form of the Assyrians.

a. The Prophets, like Isaiah, had been sent to declare the Day of the Lord's judgment for the sins of His people.

b. And nothing short of full repentance would stop God fulfilling His plan.

C. My favorite parts of Isaiah are not the messages of doom and destruction.

1. My favorite parts are those where God declares that deliverance is coming.
2. That even in the midst of judgment, that God was going to restore the Kingdom of Israel.
3. Even though exile was coming and WOULD not be avoided, that it was only temporary.
4. Man's rule and plans are temporary; God's are eternal.
5. The only real solution to humanities' problem would be found through a man that did not share humanities' sinful DNA.

Isaiah 7:14 (CSB)

¹⁴Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: See, the virgin will conceive, have a son, and name him Immanuel.

6. God's solution to the world's problem was a supernatural one.

D. We find ourselves in a time of turmoil.

1. And we have people, especially Christians, who are loving the doom and gloom message.

2. We have so-called prophets declaring everything but the Gospel and pronouncing a message that calls not for repentance and revival but war and anarchy.
3. Even in our day, there are plenty of people telling us to hoard this, stockpile that, and get ready for War.
 - a. I remind us that we can and should prepare for natural and manmade problems.
 - b. But there is no amount of prepping outside of getting right with Jesus that will prepare you for the Last Days.
4. As the armies of Assyria massed upon the northern borders of Israel, the Word of God through Isaiah was different than what we would expect.
 - a. The message was not to steal, kill, and destroy the enemy.
 - b. The message was not a message for a supernatural king to arise to the defense of Israel.
5. Instead, God declared that He was sending His Servant, a Child, who would rid the world of the weapons of war.
 - a. He would establish a throne of justice.
 - b. He would bring hope to the oppressed by destroying the oppressor's yoke.
 - c. He would establish His kingdom in righteousness and holiness.
 - d. And the WEAPON that God chose was the Advent of His Son, given for Us.
 - e. It was Jesus who would come to save us from our enemies.

1. A Shared Experience.

- A. Throughout Isaiah, Isaiah shares in the experience of the people.

1. Although he was not guilty of the same sins, he still identified with the sinful people.

2. Sin is never committed in isolation: the sins of the people are the sins of the nation and the sins of the nation are the sins of the people.

a. God did not spare even His prophets when it came time for them to go into exile.

b. Especially in the Old Testament, sin is a communal activity.

3. For example: The Fall of Jericho in Joshua 6.

a. The victory of Jericho, where Israel marched around the walls, was a HUGE victory.

b. Part of the condition to God bringing that victory was that nothing could be brought out.

c. No looting, so to speak.

d. And the whole army was obedient, except for one man.

e. Joshua **7** The Israelites, however, were unfaithful regarding the things set apart for destruction. Achan son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of what was set apart, and the LORD's anger burned against the Israelites.

1. Only one man sinned, but God declared the sin to belong to the whole nation.

2. The result was that Israel lost the next battle to a far smaller enemy.

3. They would continue to lose unless they dealt with the sinful person.

4. As we start studying Exodus in January, we will see the seriousness of national sin.

- a. Even though individuals were to bring sacrifices for themselves when necessary, once a year a sin offering was given for the sin of the nation.
- b. Isaiah understood this shared sinfulness.
- c. Even though Isaiah was not individually guilty, he identified with the fallenness of his people.

B. On a far greater scale, this is what Jesus has done for us through His Advent.

- 1. Jesus was perfect and without sin.
- 2. Yet, He bore for us our sin.
 - a. He shared in our fallenness.
 - b. He was Baptized although He was perfect.
 - c. His baptism, in part, was to share in our identity.
 - d. Therefore, when He went to the cross for sinful humanity, He shared in suffering that was meant for you and I.

2. The Good News of Isaiah 9 is that Jesus was coming for people like US.

A. ⁶For a child will be born **for us**, a son will be given **to us**...

- 1. The original hearers would have been the Jewish people.
 - a. The original hearers were those Jews facing war, famine, and exile.
 - b. The original hearers were people in desperate need of help and hope.
- 2. God uses Isaiah to proclaim "A Child will be born, for US".
 - a. Remember, Isaiah shared in the sinfulness of his fellow people.
 - b. And he also shared in the salvation of his fellow people.

c. Repentance and Revival belong to all of God's people, but we must practice both.

B. I want to remind us that all of our nations problems are not because of some people far away.

a. We too share in the sin of this nation.

b. We too are in danger and in turmoil.

c. We too share in the sins of this nation, even if we have not participated directly in her sins.

d. But the Good News is that when God's people participate in repentance, we can share in revival.

e. If God's people will humble themselves, and pray, and seek His face...

C. Jesus didn't come just to save the people you disagree with.

a. He came because YOU and I needed a Savior too.

b. It was for people like US that Jesus was sent.

c. It was for people like US that Jesus was born.

d. It was for people like US that Jesus lived and that He died and arose Again.

e. Jesus' Advent was for our salvation.

His Advent brought what we could not bring:

3. His Advent brought a Wonderful Counselor:

A. The Hebrew word for wonderful is the closest word for supernatural that the Hebrew language had.

1. It is a wisdom that far exceeds man's wisdom and knowledge.

2. This wisdom transcends our limits.

3. The Hebrew wording calls Him: a Wonder of a Counselor.

B. The idea of the Counselor in the New Testament is One who comes alongside us.

1. Jesus brought the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the One who Comes alongside us in our sin and our pain.
2. He comforts and guides and instructs as the wonderful Counselor.
3. If you want to know how to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit will help.
4. If you need wisdom, pray and ask for it and He will guide you.
5. God is the source of all Wisdom and Understanding, and He gave us the embodiment in Jesus.

C. When we watch the news and watch all of these experts telling us contradictory things, we can still have peace because all of the world's wisdom is not entrusted to them.

1. I am thankful for smart, educated, and brilliant people.
2. But they are not God.
3. The Advent is a reminder that there is coming a day when we will be in the presence of Jesus, the One who is the most wonderful Counselor.

4. [Isaiah said His Advent was as Mighty God.](#)

A. Isn't it amazing that this prophecy starts out as a Child and He becomes Mighty God?

1. The child promised would not stay a child.
2. He would not stay in a manger.
3. He would not need His diaper changed forever.
4. But He would grow and mature and achieve what God had declared.

B. The promise of Isaiah 9 would not be a wimp.

1. He would be able to take everything Satan and the world would throw at him.
2. No temptation would bring Him down and no pain would make Him stop.
3. He would raise the dead and sweat drops of blood in the Garden.
4. He would take the beatings of the Romans, enough to kill a normal man, and still be able to withstand the punishment of the cross.
5. Jesus, when the time was right, gave up the Ghost, His Spirit, and when the time was right, would pick it back up again.
6. NO power in hell, on earth, or the universe would stop Jesus, Mighty God.
7. This king will have God's true might about him, power so great that it can absorb all the evil which can be hurled at it until none is left to hurl (53:2-10; 59:15-20; 63:1-9).¹

C. Is this not the same Jesus we claim to worship today?

1. In one sense, we are still waiting for all of Isaiah 9 to be fulfilled.
2. It is only partially fulfilled.
3. However, we have complete confidence that God will fulfill the rest of His plans.
4. So, child of God, why are you downtrodden?
5. Why are you so defeated?
6. Is Advent not the time to be reminded that unto US was given a child who was also Mighty God?

¹ John N. Oswalt, [*The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39*](#), The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), 247.

5. Jesus' Advent brought the Eternal Father.

A. We don't grasp the idea of eternal very well.

1. We all have a beginning.

a. Jesus didn't.

b. Yes, He came as a baby, but He existed along with God always.

c. Jesus was not created, He is eternal (one of the great mysteries of the faith).

2. Yet, God did not give us, in our difficulty and pain, a finite God.

a. He didn't give us someone who was temporary or mediocre.

b. He gave US one that would be called Eternal, Father.

3. This is good news.

a. When we are trying to just survive the week, God has it all figured out.

b. While we stress about things that are temporary, God holds the plans of the Ages.

c. While our bodies break down and do it's natural thing, we have the hope of a better resurrection.

B. He is Eternal, Father.

1. For just a moment, let us lay-aside our ideas of earthly fatherhood.

2. Our Eternal Father is a lot different than our earthly.

a. He ALWAYS guides us and works for our good.

b. He never leaves us.

c. His resources are not limited.

d. His time is infinite.

e. He won't beat your mom or abuse you but LOVES you in ways that is completely pure.

3. God gave us Jesus so that we would never be without a perfect Father.

a. Some of your stories include fathers who were amazing.

b. Others, your father was not someone that you are proud of.

c. As we move forward, there is a growing movement that declares "the future is genderless" (Google it).

d. But as believers, we take joy in receiving the great gift of "Eternal father".

6. Jesus' Advent brought us the Prince of Peace.

A. One scholar asks this question:

1. What sort of king is this? He is a peaceful king, one who comes in peace and one who establishes peace, not by a brutal squashing of all defiance, but by means of a transparent vulnerability which makes defiance pointless. Somehow through him will come the reconciliation between God and man that will then make possible reconciliation between man and man (53:5; 57:19; 66:12; Luke 2:14; John 16:33; Rom. 5:1; Heb. 12:14).²

2. Most of us are at the point in 2020 where we believe anything can happen, right?

a. So when the aliens arrive, we hope they say "we come in peace".

b. Let's be honest, none of us would be really surprised at this point.

B. What many of us do want is peace.

² John N. Oswalt, [*The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39*](#), The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), 248.

1. WE want peace inside of us instead of this ball of anxiety.
2. We want peace in our home and in that specific relationship.
3. We want peace in our government and in our world.
4. But have you noticed that with all of our pursuits to find lasting peace, we still keep coming up short?

C. True peace can only come from the "Prince of Peace".

1. There is coming a day when Jesus will bring complete and perfect peace to this Earth He created.
2. But, until then, we must keep going to Him to receive that measure of peace He has for each one of us.

D. Part of the solution to Israel's problem of invasion was a promise of a future Prince who would bring peace.

1. The princes of Assyria and the Babylon would bring war and destruction.
2. The Prince of heaven would bring peace.
3. If any of us believe that a human prince, king, or president is going to bring real peace and healing, then we are sadly mistaken.
4. But someday, Jesus will bring a peace like has not been experienced before.

E. Isaiah prophesied that the Government will be upon this "child's shoulders". Vs. 6

1. Can I confess that I've had a strange calm about the days we are living in?
2. One reason is that I'm not listening to all of the junk out there.
3. But more importantly, I'm spending more time in the Word and reading about what God says about His plans.

4. And so I have been experiencing a strange calm that is totally not like me.

a. Part of it comes from my understanding that the God I serve is the one who has the governmental structure on His shoulders.

b. He can carry the load that would crush all of us.

c. The one who carries it is no-one less than the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace.

As you Celebrate Christmas this week, make it about Jesus.

A. This is a hopeful holiday.

1. That God, in His perfect timing, sent His Son for US.

2. People who live in the city and in the country.

3. The rich, the poor, the young and old.

4. HE sent His Son for every tribe, nation, and people.

5. For unto US a Child is Given.

B. So when you need peace this week, take a moment and pray.

C. When you need life this week, take a moment and be in the presence of Eternal Father.

D. When you need strength this week, worship Mighty God.

E. When you need wisdom this week, Come to the Wonderful Counselor.

This week, we join with millions around the world to worship "Immanuel, God with US".