

**Advent**  
**The Light has Come, The Light is Coming**

Isaiah 9:1-7

Sunday, December 15, 2019

### Introduction

There are certain words that are seemingly ubiquitous this time of year. Christmas songs, decorations and cards all communicate that this is a season for celebrating hope and joy and peace. And while we know that through Jesus these realities are available, we may forget how desperately the people of God longed for these things prior to His first coming.

Most of us are familiar with the great promise of 'a child to come' in Isaiah 9, but the context of this promise reminds us of its significance. In Isaiah 7 and 8 the prophet describes a dark and desperate time in the history of the people of God. The people were living in sin and in rebellion against God and as a result God allowed them to be ravaged by their enemies. Also, the king that was meant to lead them was wicked and foolish and only compounded their suffering.

Isaiah 8 ends with a bleak situation: the people are living in anguish and darkness. But as chapter 9 begins the prophet points forward to a light that is coming; a light that will bring hope. To read Isaiah 7 and 8 is to be reminded of how desperately the people of God were in need of hope, joy and peace, but Isaiah 9 reminds us that Jesus was the One who brought these things in greatest measure.

### The Shattering of the Darkness (9:1-2)

- **In the former time** – As the chapter begins Isaiah announces that the time of anguish for the people of God will come to an end. While the former times were characterized by darkness and despair, light and hope are coming.
- **In the latter time** – While the hope that Isaiah is pointing to is still hundreds of years in the future he is so confident in God that he speaks as if His promises have already come to pass. He writes as if the former times have passed and the latter time, the time of hope, has come.
- **The coming of the Light** – In God's providence the region that was first impacted by the Assyrian attacks also became the first region to see the light. Jesus began his ministry in the very place that Isaiah prophesied the light would come (Isaiah 9:1; Matthew 4:12-17).

- **Application** – Isaiah's confidence in God's promises is a good example of how we should trust God. Isaiah was fully convinced that the light was coming and he looked forward with hope. In the same way we should look with hope to the promises of salvation, joy and peace that remain.

### The Coming of the Light

**The Light Brings Joy (9:3)** - As Isaiah anticipates the coming of the light he praises God for the joy that will come to His people. Just as people rejoice at the time of harvest or after a great military victory, Isaiah foresees a time of great rejoicing for the people of God.

**The Light Brings Deliverance (9:4)** – The reason for the great joy of vs. 3 is revealed as Isaiah describes the deliverance that will come to the people of God when the light arrives. Like an ox set free from its yoke and released from a harsh master, the people of God will be set free from their burdens.

**The Light Brings Peace (9:5)** – A second reason for the great joy of vs. 3 is that the coming light will bring unprecedented and unparalleled peace. While the people have been living through war and conflict, a day is coming when soldiers will burn their boots and uniforms because peace will be established once and for all.

**The Light is a Child (9:6a)** – After describing the coming light and the joy it will bring Isaiah finally reveals the identity of the light. The light that will bring deliverance and peace is a child who will be born. We know that the prophesied child is Jesus, the One identified as Immanuel in Isaiah 7:14.

**The Light is a King (9:6-7)** – While this passage is often quoted in relation to Christmas the overwhelming emphasis of the verse is not on the child's birth, but on who the child will become – the perfect and eternal King.

- **The Perfect King** - While the people of God had been plagued by foolish and wicked kings Isaiah gives hope of the perfect king. A king of perfect wisdom (wonderful counselor) and the mighty God Himself in flesh. At the same time He is the forever father to His people and establishes eternal and lasting peace.
- **The King's Eternal Rule** – While the king's reign was inaugurated at His first coming, we are still looking forward to its' final and complete fulfillment. We still look forward with hope to the deliverance and peace He will bring and the joy we will have as we live in His everlasting light.