



*EST FONDS VITAE*

## **DATE**

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## **SERIES**

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ADVENT

## **TITLE & PASSAGE**

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*God-Given Hope*

Isaiah 9:1-7

## **OCCASION**

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A message presented by Pastor Marc Minter on the Lord's Day to the congregation of First Baptist Church of Diana, TX.

## **INTRODUCTION**

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More than 700 years before the birth of Christ, a prophet spoke to an obstinate people about eternal joy and peace to come. One could hardly have hoped for such a thing in the midst of their unspeakable horrors. But the promise was real, and the one who pledged it was/is fully capable and trustworthy. The promise of a peace-making, justice-meting, everlasting King was a comprehensive promise, and Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of it. This is true both in His first Advent and also in His second. In this message, we shall consider the eschatological promises in Isaiah 9:1-7 and the implications for our God-given hope today.

## **MAIN POINT**

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God has promised peace and justice for everyone, everywhere; and the Warrior-King will deliver.

EMAIL QUESTIONS TO [PASTOR@FBCDIANA.ORG](mailto:PASTOR@FBCDIANA.ORG)

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

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### **Isaiah 9:1–7 (ESV)**

1 But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.

3 You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

4 For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

5 For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.

6 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.

7 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.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

## **MAIN POINT**

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God has promised peace and justice for everyone, everywhere; and the Warrior-King will deliver.

## **MESSAGE OUTLINE**

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- (1) A WALK THROUGH THE TEXT**
- (2) ESCHATOLOGICAL PROMISES**
- (3) SOME APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

## MESSAGE

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### (1) A WALK THROUGH THE TEXT

- Setting the scene...
  - **Isaiah was God's prophet** (or spokesman) in the southern kingdom of Judah from about 740-700 B.C.
  - **King Uzziah** had reigned in Judah for 52 years, and for most of that time he was a good king... honoring God and leading the people well.
    - Uzziah began his reign at 16 years old, but his youth did not hinder him from starting off on the right foot. Young king Uzziah “**did what was right in the eyes of the LORD... He set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah [the prophet], who instructed him in the fear of God, and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him prosper**” (2 Chron. 26:4-5).
    - Uzziah single-handedly led Judah to peace and prosperity, as God's blessing remained upon him. Uzziah built fortresses and farms, water-wells and vineyards. He recruited a massive army and trained them well for war, organizing them under solid commanders. Uzziah also fitted his powerful army with technologically advanced weapons and armor, even instructing them in strategy and war tactics.
    - And we are told that Uzziah's “**fame spread far, for he was marvelously helped [by God], until he was strong**” (2 Chron. 26:15).
  - When **Uzziah became strong** in his own eyes, “**he grew proud, to his destruction**” (2 Chron. 26:16).
    - Uzziah presumed to overstep his boundary as king and take on the role of priest as well. Uzziah decided that he would approach God on his own terms rather than submitting himself to the God-prescribed order.
    - When Uzziah arrogantly defied the rightful order of worship, he was immediately struck with leprosy, and he remained a leper until he died.
  - King Uzziah's son, **Jotham**, reigned after him, and Jotham was also a good king... but the people of Judah “**followed corrupt practices**” (2 Chron. 27:2) despite their good king.
  - After Jotham's 16-year-reign, there came another 16-year king, **Ahaz**.

- Ahaz “**did not do what was right in the eyes of the LORD... but he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel**” (2 Chron. 28:1-2).
  - What were “**the ways of the kings of Israel**”?
    - Israel worshipped the localized false gods, setting up idols and even murdering their own children as sacrificial offerings.
- **Saul, David, and Solomon** reigned as kings over the whole of the Hebrew people, but after Solomon, the people split into two kingdoms – Israel to the north and Judah to the south.
  - Israel never had a godly king, but instead adopted the ways of the nations around them.
    - Israel’s prophets were men like Elijah, Amos, and Hosea... all prophets of “woe” or judgement rather than blessing.
  - Now, after Uzziah and his son, Jotham, the southern kingdom of Judah was fully embracing the same abominable practices as her wicked sister to the north.
    - What was worse, these sister-kingdoms were at war with each other... and they were both coming under the judgment of God for their wickedness.
- **Isaiah’s task** was to speak the word of God to an unfaithful, hard-hearted, and sinful people.
  - God’s commission to Isaiah:
    - “**Go, and say to this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’** [To Isaiah, God said], **Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed**” (Is. 6:9-10).
  - But even in the midst of God’s judgment, God promised that He would not destroy the people completely.
    - God promised that a day would come when there “**will be no gloom for her who was in anguish**” (v1)

In the former time he brought into contempt the **land of Zebulun** and the **land of Naphtali**, but in the latter time he has **made glorious** the way of the sea, the **land beyond** the Jordan, **Galilee of the nations**.

- Zebulun and Naphtali were part of the northern kingdom, Israel.
  - Israel was overrun and destroyed in 722 B.C. – about 150 years before Judah’s eventual destruction – so this reference makes these prophetic words extend far beyond Judah.
- This phrase, “**the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations**” explicitly marks off a universal promise, since “nations” refers to “the peoples” or “the Gentiles” (see Matt. 4:15).
  - So, we must view whatever prophecy Isaiah gives here with a wider application than merely to the people of Judah and Israel.
    - This is a prophecy about God’s glory coming to the nations!

2 The people who walked in darkness have **seen a great light**; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, **on them has light shone**.

- When Isaiah is speaking/writing these words, the darkness is still thick and getting worse around the people of Judah and of Israel.
  - Judah is still being besieged by enemies all around, Assyria is still going to do terrible violence to Judah for a long time, and Judah is still going to fall to Babylon 150 years later.
- This promise of light amid darkness is in the past-tense, but not for chronological order... it is a matter of prophetic certainty (R.C. Sproul calls it the “prophetic perfect” tense.)
  - In fact, the New Testament picks up on this prophecy from Isaiah as a direct reference to Jesus Christ.
    - When Jesus began His ministry in Galilee, Matthew tells us that it was in the territory of *Zebulun* and *Naphtali*.
      - Matthew wrote that the arrival of Jesus was “**so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ‘the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned’**” (Matt. 4:16).
- John uses this “**light**” imagery in his Gospel too.
  - “**In him** (‘the Word’ who was ‘with God’ and ‘was God’ in the beginning) **was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the**

darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it... The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world” (Jn. 1:4-5, 9).

**3 You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy;** they rejoice before you as with joy at the **harvest**, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. **4 For the yoke** of his burden, and the **staff** for his shoulder, the **rod** of his oppressor, **you have broken** as on the day of Midian. **5 For every boot** of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every **garment** rolled in blood will be **burned** as fuel for the fire.

- The picture is one of total peace and prosperity... like when Uzziah reigned, but only better.
  - These people who were watching their children die, their crops burn, and their oppressors flourish could not miss the full reversal of circumstances promised here.
    - But who would lead them to such a comprehensive and glorious victory?
    - What king would rule with such force and wisdom so as to bring about this kind of result?
      - “a child... a son” who is both the “Mighty God” and the “Prince of Peace”

**6 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.**

**7 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.**

**The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.**

- Again, we read the “prophetic perfect” tense here.
  - It is certain! There will be a King, and He will establish peace and bring prosperity like never before!
    - But what do we learn about this King from Isaiah’s prophecy?
    - How do the New Testament authors interpret this prophecy?
    - What might we take away from this prophecy and our ability to read it from our own perspective today?

## (2) ESCHATOLOGICAL PROMISES

- **There was some fulfillment of these promises before Jesus' first Advent.**
  - Cyrus, king of Persia, sent the Hebrew people back from Babylonian captivity into Jerusalem to rebuild under the promise of safety and with the blessings of the Persian king (Ezra 1:1-4; cf. Isaiah 45:1, 13)
    - This would certainly be a reversal of the “contempt” and “anguish” that was experienced by Israel during Isaiah’s time.
  
- **These promises are also referring to Jesus' first Advent.**
  - Just consider Matthew’s introduction to his Gospel.
    - He records the words spoken by an angel of the Lord, “[the young woman, Mary] will bear a son, and... shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21)
    - And then Matthew wrote, “All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: [quoting Isaiah 7:14] ‘Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel’” (Matthew 1:22–23)
      - Matthew sees the arrival of Jesus as a direct fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy regarding the coming of the divine King.
        - Every Messianic prophecy in Isaiah builds on this same “Immanuel” from 7:14.
          - Our passage adds to the description.
  - The New Testament authors repeatedly pick up on the theme of “peace” as a result of Jesus Christ’s work during His first Advent.
    - “He [Christ] came and preached peace to you who were far off [Gentiles] and peace to those who were near [Jews]” (Eph. 2:17).
    - “through [Christ], [God] reconciled to himself all things... making peace by the blood of his cross” (Col. 1:20).
    - “since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1).
    - “Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way...” (1 Thess. 3:16).

- **But, the promises are far too definitive and expansive to be anything less than the full experience of all that Christ is and does... both in His first Advent and His second.**
  - ***Eternal Kingly Dominion***
    - The “**government**” is on “his shoulders” (v6) and “his **government**” will increase unendingly (v7)
    - He will sit on the “**throne of David**” and reign “forevermore” (v7)
  - ***Eternal Glory and Light***
    - “there **will be no gloom** for her who was in anguish... in the **latter time** he has **made glorious** the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of **the nations [or Gentiles]**” (v1)
    - Parallelism showing eternal light
      - “there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish” (v1)
      - “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light” (v2)
        - “her” = “the people”
        - “there will be no gloom for [her/them]” = “[they/she] have seen a great light”
      - The imagery is a dawn that has come, and darkness is never to return.
        - Light is wisdom or knowledge or revelation of God
  - ***Eternal Joy and Prosperity***
    - “You have **multiplied the nation**; you have **increased its joy**; they **rejoice** before you as with **joy at the harvest**, as they are **glad** when they divide **the spoil**” (v3)
      - Multiplied the “nation” or “people” speaks to fertility and power
      - Joy at the “harvest” and gladness at the spoil speaks to the gain of the fields and labors
      - There is the sense that everything is well

- **Eternal Peace and Justice**
  - “**every boot** of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and **every garment** rolled in blood will be **burned** as fuel for the fire” (v5)
    - No more war and no more death
  - “the **yoke** of his burden, and the **staff** for his shoulder, the **rod** of his oppressor, you have **broken**” (v4)
    - No more oppression or unbearable burdens
  - The “**peace**” He establishes will “**never end**” (v7)
    - This peace is eternal and comprehensive
- AND... “The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this” (v7)
  - The **zeal** (passion, jealousy, heat) of the **LORD** (Yahweh – the covenant God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) of **hosts** (Sabāôt – Yahweh the mightiest Warrior or Yahweh the all-powerful King)<sup>1</sup> will do this.
    - But, how will Yahweh the warrior-king bring about this eschatological paradise?
- Friends, don’t you know that the same Son of God who humbled Himself, put on flesh, lived under the curse of this world, and died as the object of God’s wrath will come again?
  - Don’t you know that He was raised as the triumphant King who ascended and will return to deliver complete and perfect justice in the world?
    - Doesn’t your heart ache for a good and godly authority who will treat you with care and wisdom?
    - Don’t you long to know more about who God is and who you are?
    - Don’t you plead for a day when all things will truly be well and your joy will be complete?
    - Don’t you find yourself sometimes saying with the psalmist... “**O LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked [be victorious]?”** (Ps. 94:3)?

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<sup>1</sup> Hartley, J. E. (1999). 1865 צָבָא. R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr., & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed., p. 750). Chicago: Moody Press.

- And yet, this promise should be both hope-filled and sobering for us today.
  - If God, the Warrior-King, promises peace and justice, then that means that no sin, no disobedience, no offense is going to go unpunished.
    - And, if God punishes the guilty, then we are in no shape to gloat.
      - God, the Warrior-King, will deliver peace and justice... and everyone will stand before Him with Christ's righteousness or their own severe unrighteousness.

God has promised peace and justice for everyone, everywhere; and the Warrior-King will deliver.

### **(3) SOME APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

#### **1. For the weak, burdened, and ashamed: Do you believe the promise?**

- a. Do you believe that God has absorbed the fury of His own wrath in the person and work of Christ, so that you may enjoy the blessings of His promises?
- b. Do you believe that God is working all things for your good and for His glory... bringing you closer every day to the final destination of perfect peace, justice, joy, light, and glory?
- c. Do you trust this Warrior-King who is the Savior of the guilty and the weak?

#### **2. For the indifferent, bored, and distracted: Do you believe the promise?**

- a. Do you believe that your short time in this world will soon be done?
- b. Do you believe God is the incomparable Warrior-King who rules over all as He pleases and acts with perfect justice?
- c. Do you fear, revere, esteem the LORD of hosts?

### 3. For the mature, watching, and weary: Do you believe the promise?

- a. Do you believe Yahweh the Warrior-King will do as He said?
- b. Do you believe that His work in the world is according to His good pleasure and not according to your preference?
- c. Will you continue growing in Christ, watching for His coming, and trusting in His timing?

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## SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR THIS PASSAGE/TOPIC

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*To Us a Child is Born* by Stephen Witmer

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/to-us-a-child-is-born>

*The Child of Prophecy* by John MacArthur

<https://www.gty.org/library/blog/B151216/~>

*Fulness of God in Helpless Babe* by Marshall Segal

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/fullness-of-god-in-helpless-babe>