

DELIVERANCE THROUGH GOD'S LIGHT SHINING IN THIS WORLD: FULFILLED IN GOD'S CHILD OF REDEMPTION, JESUS CHRIST ISAIAH 09:01–07

Introduction

When enemies threaten God's people, they are delivered by God's light shining in the gloomy darkness of this world. In the previous chapter everything looked black and ominous. A spirit of anguish and distress gripped the hearts of people. They felt completely helpless, for they were living in a war-torn nation. Most of the nation had already fallen to the Assyrians, who had swept across the land like the mighty flood waters of the Euphrates River (8:7-8). It was indeed a dark, dismal and hopeless day for the people of Judah.

Remember that this devastating invasion by Assyria was a prophecy being predicted by Isaiah. It had not yet happened. Rather, he was warning the people that their sin, their rebellion against God, would bring this terrible judgment upon them. Their wickedness would be the cause of these terrible days of anguish and distress. Nevertheless, Isaiah closed his prophecy with a most wonderful promise: the people would be delivered by God's light, His presence, shining in the agonizing despair of this world.

I. Isaiah 09:01 The Promise of a Bright, Glorious Future

In spite of the people's fear and apprehension, a bright and glorious future lay ahead (v. 1). A day would come when all darkness and gloom, anguish and despair would be erased. The extreme devastation and suffering caused by the Assyrians (and others down through history) would never again happen, not *in that day*. In the past the LORD had been forced to discipline His people due to their terrible evil. And soon He would allow Assyria to invade the promised land to humble His people. When the Assyrians launched their invasion, the first to feel the brunt of their attack would be the land of Zebulun and Naphtali, which thereafter would become known as Galilee of the Gentiles.

Although Isaiah referred only to these two tribal territories, he obviously was using these as examples of what the LORD was going to do for all oppressed lands and people. A glorious, dramatic change was coming to the promised land and to the world. One day in the future, this land that had been so devastated would be greatly honoured by the LORD. All the land of Galilee would be honoured. This is a clear prophecy concerning Jesus Christ, a prophecy that was fulfilled when Christ chose His disciples and carried on a large part of His ministry in Galilee (Mt. 4:13-16). The Messiah, the Son of God Himself, honoured this land by His very presence and ministry.

II. *Isaiah 09:02–05 The Hope for this Glorious Future: Found in a Great Light (Christ)*

The hope for this bright, glorious future would be found in a great light. This is a clear reference to Jesus Christ, for He is the *great light* of the world (vv. 2-5; Jn. 8:12).

Amazingly, Isaiah was making this prediction about the Messiah some 700 years before Christ came to earth. When the Messiah came, four wonderful blessings would be poured out upon the world.

1. The Messiah would give light to all who were held in the bondage of darkness and death, all who were living constantly under the shadow of death (v. 2). A person who walks in darkness is a person who cannot see where he is, where he is going or where he has come from. Darkness causes a person to stumble and fall, sometimes causing injury to self or others. Darkness is a symbol of sin, evil and ignorance. Thereby, a person who walks in darkness is ignorant of...
 - God the Father
 - Jesus Christ who came to earth to reveal God the Father and the world's alienation from Him
 - the real purpose and objective of life

Natural man, that is, the sinful nature of man, stumbles and gropes about in the darkness of this world. He is blinded to anything beyond this physical world; therefore, he knows nothing of the spiritual realm or dimension. His only hope is the hope of living a long life before death overtakes him. His hope is limited to what man can do for him, limited to the capability of other sinful human beings. Thus he walks in darkness, ignorant of the truth about life now and hereafter. He walks continually in the shadow of death. However, the message proclaimed by Isaiah offered wonderful hope for a glorious future. He declared that God was going to give a *great light* to the world, the light of the coming Messiah and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Moreover, all who walk in darkness and live in the land of the shadow of death will have the opportunity to see a great light. No longer will they be forced to live in darkness nor under the shadow of death, for a *great light* will come to the people.

John 1:4 *In him was life, and that life was the light of men.*

John 8:12 *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

John 12:35 *Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going."*

John 12:46 *"I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness."*

2 Cor 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Eph 5:14 This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

1 John 1:5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

Psa 27:1 The LORD is my light and my salvation — whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life — of whom shall I be afraid?

2. The Messiah would enlarge (protect) the nation of believers and increase their joy (v. 3). Due to the ravages of war, the population had been drastically diminished. But the promise was that the population would thrive, even be multiplied, when the Messiah came. The Messiah would also bring great joy to the people. This joy would flood their hearts as much as their rejoicing over a great harvest or when they divided plunder among themselves. Such joy is deep down within the soul. Note that the people would rejoice before the LORD, obviously praising Him for the light, the salvation He brought to them. Again, keep in mind that this is a prophecy being predicted by Isaiah some 700 years before the Messiah (Christ) ever came. Isaiah proclaimed that when the Saviour came, He would provide protection for His people and fill them with the fullness of joy.
 - a. The LORD does protect His people.

John 17:11 "I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name — the name you gave me — so that they may be one as we are one."

2 Tim 1:12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

2 Tim 4:18 The LORD will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Gen. 28:15 I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.

Psa 34:7 The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.

Psa 91:4 He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

Psa 125:2 As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forever more.

- b. The LORD does fill us with the fullness of joy.

Lk. 15:5 *“And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders.”*

John. 15:11 *“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”*

John 16:24 *“Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”*

John 17:13 *“I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.”*

Rom 14:17 *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

Psa 16:11 *You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

Psa 30:5 *For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favour lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.*

Psa 126:5 *Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.*

Psa 132:16 *I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her faithful people will ever sing for joy.*

Isa 12:3 *With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.*

Isa 35:10 *And the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.*

3. The Messiah will deliver all who are under the yoke of bondage or oppression (v. 4). Just as God gave Gideon victory over the Midianites, so He will give victory to any who trust Him. No matter what the bondage is that enslaves a person, the LORD will infuse the person with enough power to overcome it. And if enslavement is being forced upon a believer by others, the LORD will give the power to endure the suffering being inflicted upon him. Even if the believer is being oppressed to the point of death, the believer will be given the power to conquer death. Quicker than the eye can blink, the believer will be escorted into the very presence of the LORD Himself. Isaiah was proclaiming that the Messiah will set the people free from the enslavement being forced upon them by their enemies. The Messiah will have the power to break any oppression or bondage weighing His people down. He will deliver those who put their trust in Him, breaking the yokes, bars or chains of those who persecute His people.

1 Cor 10:13 *No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

2 Cor 1:8-10 *We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability*

to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us.

2 Tim 4:18 *The LORD will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

Heb 2:14-15 *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

2 Pet 2:9 *If this is so, then the LORD knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.*

Psa 91:3 *Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence.*

4. The Messiah will bring peace to the people and nations of the world (v. 5). All military equipment and uniforms that are so often covered with blood will be cast aside and burned. Never again will the military equipment or uniforms be produced. Peace will sweep the earth, both peace within the human soul and peace among nations. Universal harmony will exist everywhere. Of course, this is a clear reference to the future kingdom of the Messiah, the messianic kingdom known as the Millennium.

Some of the predictions in this passage were obviously fulfilled when God defeated Assyria and delivered Jerusalem (see notes, Isa 37:1-38). And as the apostle Mathew clearly states, other events found their fulfilment when Christ Himself came to earth (Mt. 4:13-16). But the ultimate fulfilment of the prophecy regarding the bright and glorious future will be in the last days of human history, during the millennial reign of Christ upon earth. (See note, Isa 2:1-5. Also see *Millennial Reign of Christ*, Isa 2:1-5.) For now, however, the emphasis is upon the peace that the Messiah will bring to human hearts and to the nations of the world.

John 14:27 *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”*

John 16:33 *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

Acts 10:36-37 *You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.*

Rom 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our LORD Jesus Christ.*

Rom 8:6-7 *The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.*

Rom 14:17 *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

Gal 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

Eph 2:14 *For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.*

Phil 4:6-7 *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Col 1:20 *And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.*

Col 3:15 *Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.*

1 Pet 3:11 *He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.*

Ps.34:14 *Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it..*

Isa 53:5 *Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.*

III. Isaiah 09:06–07 Jesus Christ would Bring a Glorious Future to Earth

The person who will bring this glorious future to earth will be the Messiah, Jesus Christ Himself (vv. 6-7). Isaiah predicted five startling facts about the coming Messiah:

1. The Messiah will come first as the God-Man (v. 6). Both His humanity and deity are predicted by the prophet. The words *a child is born* refer to the Messiah's humanity. He will come to earth as a child, born through the conception of a woman. The words *a son is given* point to the deity of the Messiah. The child's being given indicate that in some special way God Himself will send the child into the world. The words *a son* refer back to Isaiah 7:14, which indicates that Immanuel Himself — *God with us* — will come to earth as the Messiah. Of course, all of this points to the coming of God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ — to earth (Jn. 3:16). The very thought of such a miraculous event staggers the human mind. Nevertheless, it was the clear prophecy of Isaiah, and the prediction was made some 700 years before Christ actually came. Yet come He did. And today we are actually looking back upon this historic event, this pivotal point of human history. On the night that Christ was born, the very angel who appeared to the shepherds seems to refer to these words spoken by Isaiah: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the LORD" (Lk. 2:11). As Mathew Henry says:

Christ's being born and given to us is the great foundation of our hopes, and fountain of our joys, in times of greatest grief and fear. ” (Mathew Henry. Mathew Henry's Commentary, Vol. 4, p. 59.)

2. The Messiah will come to govern. He will rule over the whole world, executing perfect righteousness and justice among the people (v. 6; Mica 5:2; Zec 14:9). The government will be upon His shoulders, which means that He will have the indisputable right to govern. He will set His shoulder to the task of ruling His people and the world. He will not shrink from the duty given Him by the Father. As the exalted Lord, He will rule as the King of kings and Lord of lords.
3. The Messiah will have four very famous and descriptive names. Note that these names are compound. Single names are simply inadequate to express the extent of the Messiah's excellence or superiority. Even the compound titles are inadequate to describe Christ's supremacy, but they do convey the author's intent to wholly glorify the Saviour.
 - a. The Messiah will be called *Wonderful Counsellor*. Since Christ has come, we have a far better idea of just what this name means. Christ lived as a man, bearing all the trials and temptations of humanity. He even suffered incomprehensible persecution and was eventually executed as a criminal. Due to His intense suffering, He is able to be the most empathetic counsellor imaginable. He knows what it is like to endure pain, to feel hunger and thirst, to experience poverty and homelessness. He knows the feeling of being rejected — even by His own family — and of being forsaken and left all alone. Such are the experiences that confront so many of us as we live out our lives. Thus when we need a counsellor, Christ is the one Person who can feel what we feel, and He stands before us as the *Wonderful Counsellor*. He is the one Person who can comfort us, who can give us solid guidance about how to handle the problems facing us. As the *Wonderful Counsellor*, Christ can guide, encourage and strengthen us to conquer whatever trial or temptation confronts us. As the *Wonderful Counsellor*, He will teach us how to walk victoriously throughout life.

Heb 4:15-16 *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

Psa 40:17 *Yet I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me. You are my help and my deliverer: O my God, do not delay.*

Psa 103:13 *As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.*

Isa 41:10 *So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

Isa 63:9 In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

- b. The Messiah will be called the *Mighty God*. As predicted earlier in this verse (v. 6), the Messiah will be divine. So here He is actually called the *Mighty God*. As God, He will do things that no one else could conceivably do, for example, the very things that are covered in this passage (9:2-5, 7). In addition, as God, He is omnipotent (all-powerful), omniscient (all-knowing), and omnipresent (present everywhere). He is able to save any who cry out to Him for salvation. As the *Mighty God*, He has the power and knowledge to rescue people from all trials and temptations. He has the power to deliver people from any bondage or oppression, whether due to some enemy or to a personal addiction. In the words of Mathew Henry:

He is the Mighty God — God, the mighty One. As he has wisdom, so he has strength, to go through with His undertaking: he is able to save to the utmost; and such is the work of the mediator that no less a power than that of the mighty God could accomplish it. (Mathew Henry's Commentary, Vol. 4, p. 60.)

- c. The Messiah will be called the *Everlasting Father*. Although He is eternal, this is not the major thrust of this name. The emphasis lies upon the fact that the Messiah will love His people as a father loves His children. He will care for His people: nurture and nourish, comfort and assure, instruct and inform, lead and guide, correct and discipline them. He will do anything His people may need out of a deep, loving concern for them.

A question might be asked about this title: How can the Messiah, the Son, be called the *Everlasting Father*? *The Nelson Study Bible* says this:

Everlasting Father describes a King and Father who provides for and protects His people forever (40:9-11; Mt. 11:27-30). Thus the word Father is used here of the Saviour's role as an ideal king. (Nelson Study Bible, New King James Version, Nashville, TN; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Inc., 1997), Isa 9:6.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary makes three comments about this title:

First, the Messiah, being the second Person of the Trinity, is in His essence, God. Therefore, He has all the attributes of God including eternity. Since God is One (even though He exists in three Person), the Messiah is God. Second, the title "Everlasting Father" is an idiom used to describe the Messiah's relationship to time, not His relationship to the other Members of the Trinity. He is said to be everlasting, just as God (the Father) is called "the Ancient of Days" (Dan. 7:9). The Messiah will be a "fatherly" ruler. Third, perhaps Isaiah had in mind the promise to David (2 Sam. 7:16) about the "foreverness" of the kingdom which God promised would come through David's line. The Messiah, a Descendant of

David, will fulfil this promise for which the nation had been waiting. (John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, Editors. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, p. 1053.)

Mathew Henry says the following:

He is the Everlasting Father, or the Father of eternity: he is God, one with the Father, who is from everlasting to everlasting. His fatherly care of His people and tenderness towards them are everlasting. He is the author of everlasting life and happiness to them, and so is the Father of a blessed eternity to them. He is the Father of the world to come... the father of the gospel-state, which is put in subjection to him, not to the angels (Heb 2:5). He was, from eternity, Father of the great work of redemption: his heart was upon it; it was the product of his wisdom as the counsellor of His love as the everlasting Father. (Mathew Henry's *Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 60.)

- d. The Messiah will be called the *Prince of Peace*. He is the promised Saviour of the world, the One who will bring peace to the human heart and peace among the nations. Note the word *Prince*, which indicates that the Messiah will be a ruler who governs in peace. He will achieve His purposes through methods of peace and carry on His work in a peaceful spirit. The people over whom He rules will be a people of peace. While the Messiah rules upon the earth, there will be no more war, brutality, divisiveness, prejudice, hatred or bitterness. Peace will reign throughout the world.

But even more important, because the Messiah will bring peace to the human heart, He will solve the problem of mankind's alienation from God. He will reconcile people to God. And when people are reconciled to God, they have *peace with God*, and the *peace of God* floods their hearts. They walk through life with the full assurance that their sins are forgiven and they are accepted by God. Confidence floods their souls, the confidence that they will live eternally with the Father and with the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah.

4. The Messiah will return to this world to establish God's kingdom on earth (v. 7). As God promised, the Messiah will rule in peace, sitting on David's throne; and He will rule forever (see note, 2 Sam 7:11-17, esp.v. 13). The great promise given to David concerning the Messiah was already well-known throughout Israel when Isaiah made this prophecy. Sitting eternally upon the throne of David, the Messiah will establish perfect justice and righteousness on earth. Imagine a world in which there is no lawlessness or violence, no prejudice or intolerance, no injustice or unrighteousness whatsoever. This will be the world ushered in by the coming of the Messiah, when He comes to sit upon the throne of David forever.
5. The Messiah's work will be guaranteed by God's zeal. A burning passion floods the heart of God, a passion to make absolutely sure the promise of the coming Messiah is fulfilled. Nothing could have prevented the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy.

Some 700 years after the prophet's prediction, the Messiah came into the world and died. He rose again and ascended into heaven, returning to the Father — all in order to save mankind. As we now look to the future, the promise that Christ will return to establish God's kingdom on earth is yet to be fulfilled. But it will be fulfilled. Just as the Messiah came the first time to save the world, so He will come a second time to sit upon the eternal throne of David and to judge the world. This prophecy is guaranteed by God's holy zeal. Jesus Christ is the promised Child of God's redemption. (John. "The Preacher's Outline & Study Bible," Vol. 5. Chattanooga, TN: Leadership Ministries Worldwide, 1996, Jn. 1:45). ■