

August 3

Scriptures: Read Isaiah 8 & 9

Key Verse: “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given...” (Isaiah 9:6)

Overview

In chapter eight, Isaiah gives further details about the prophecy of the coming Assyrian invasion, which is described in the meaning of his son’s name, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, “hasten [to the] booty-speed [to the] prey”. The reason for their coming destruction was that they did not trust in God who daily gives peaceful blessings and healing, like the gentle, fresh, continuous, and satisfactory waters of Shiloah (or Siloam) which gather in a pool in the southern part of Jerusalem (cf. John 9:7; 4:13-14; Jer. 2:13). Instead, the people looked for help in the impressive wealth and strength of violent and strong men who are compared to the mighty flowing Euphrates River; yet this river (symbolizing the king of Assyria) would sweep through Immanuel’s (God’s) land, as God purposed, and would bring destruction in its path (8:6-8).

Those who trust and fear God, however, will find that He is a sanctuary, “for God is with us” (8:10). But to the majority of people who have rejected Him, He will be a “stone of stumbling”, and so Isaiah fervently warns the people to fear the Lord or else they will fall and be destroyed. This stone is a picture of Jesus and His Word (cf. Rom. 9:33; 1 Peter 2:8; Luke 2:34). Those who reject Him will fall, but the righteous find a refuge and comfort in Him — the Cornerstone and Rock of Ages.

Isaiah resolved to trust in God and fulfill his prophetic commission. He and his two sons were raised up by the Lord “for signs and wonders in Israel” (8:18; Heb. 2:13). His son’s names alone signified his message of hope and warning: Shear-Jashub (7:3), meaning “a remnant shall return”, and Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, whose name predicts the coming judgment of God.

Isaiah also warns the people to not trust in witchcraft and spiritism, something that the Lord detests (Deut. 18:9-20; Lev. 20:27). Those who get involved in such evil practices have “no light in them” (Jesus, the Light, is not in their hearts), and therefore they “will be driven into darkness” (8:19-22; cf. 2 Cor. 4:4, 6). The Lord’s Holy Word is all-sufficient and authoritative, and through it we can discover the will of God. It is the sole guidebook for a successful, blessed, and sanctified life (cf. Acts 20:32).

In chapter nine, we read of the great prophecies concerning the birth, ministry, reign, deity, and sovereignty of the Messiah. He is the same “Immanuel” who would be the sign from God (7:14), and He is none other than the Lord Jesus who began his earthly ministry in Galilee. As Isaiah prophesied, these ungodly people who walked in darkness saw a great and gracious light, and this Light was Jesus (cf. Matt. 4:15-16). He is the Light of the world (John 1:4-5, 9; 8:12; 2 Cor. 4:4, 6). He is the Redeemer who revealed God’s love and grace to undeserving man and brought great joy to those who believed in Him (9:1-3).

Some of the reasons for joy are: (1) Jesus broke the power and authority (yoke, staff, and rod) of His people’s oppressors, as Gideon did to the Midianites with only a few good men (9:4; Jud. 7:22-23), thus bringing liberty and rest (Matt. 11:28-30); (2) After the bloody war, Jesus will

usher in an era of peace (the Millennium), which will be initiated by the burning of everything having to do with war (9:5); (3) All these joys would not be if it were not for the greatest joy; the incarnation of Jesus, born as a human child sent from God as a divine gift: “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given” (9:6; Luke 1:14).

In his description of the Messiah and His names, Isaiah clearly states both the Messiah’s humanity and deity. His name is “Wonderful”, which in the Hebrew denotes that which is miraculously accomplished by God. Jesus’ conception, humble birth, life without sin, vicarious death, and glorious resurrection is truly wonderful and no one can understand this “mystery of godliness” except the Father (1 Tim. 3:16). He is also the “Counselor”, who reveals the will, mind, and heart of God, and if we follow His words we will be lead in the right way — the way to the Father (John 14:6-11).

The next two names of the Messiah especially declare His deity: He is called “Mighty God”, for He is the all-powerful, eternal Victor, and He is the “Everlasting Father”, literally “Father of eternity”, for truly He is the Author and Giver of eternal life, and the Father is One with the Son (John 10:30; Luke 1:32; Heb. 1:2-3; Rom. 9:5; 1 John 5:20). Lastly, He is called the “Prince of Peace”, whose kingdom of peace will be without end, and thus God’s promise to David concerning an everlasting dynasty is fulfilled in Jesus Christ (9:7; 2 Sam. 7:16). He will bring universal peace, having all authority over the world which rests “upon His shoulder” — a picture of the Good Shepherd’s loving care for His sheep (9:6; Matt. 28:18; Luke 15:5).

Today every person who believes in Jesus and is justified through faith in Him can have His wonderful peace (Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:13-18; Col. 3:15; 2 Thess. 3:16).

Prayer

Thank You, Almighty God, that You gave Your only begotten Son. Thank You also that through the Virgin Mary, a child was born. All glory to You for the God-man, our Lord Jesus, who is Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Help us to fully enter into all His provision for us.