

INITIATION INTO ISAIAH

by

J. Vernon McGee, Th.D., LL.D.

Copyright @ 1960

CHAPTER NINE

THEME:

The prophecy of the coming Child to sit on David's throne, and the dark days which attended His First Coming and will precede His Second Coming.

REMARKS:

This chapter is one with which Christians, generally, are familiar because of the prophecy concerning the coming Child, who is Christ. Handel's use of this chapter in "*The Messiah*" has added to the familiarity of the church to this particular passage. Nevertheless, there is no passage more enigmatic or misunderstood than this particular passage. Even the translation in verse one is not established. Actually, contrary meanings are suggested. Verse one reads "**... and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea. beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.**"

- As to the first meaning, it would refer to the invasion of the Assyrians (II Kings 15:29).
- As to the second meaning, it would refer to the Coming of Christ the first time.

Galilee was the despised area and a place where Gentiles had congregated. The Lord Jesus passed by Jerusalem, the snobbish religious center of the day, and made His headquarters in the despised periphery of the kingdom.

"Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying. The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up" (Matthew 4:12-16).

You will note that Matthew omitted the mooted clause. Otherwise, we would have the Holy Spirit's own interpretation of the passage. Perhaps the double meaning is intended by the Spirit. Both are surely true. The familiar section of verses 6 and 7 may not refer to the first coming of Christ primarily, but to the second coming of Christ (See COMMENT on verses 6 and 7).

OUTLINE:

- 1. The HOPE OF ISRAEL is in The Divine Child in Both His First and Second Comings.**
Verses 1-7
- 2. The HELP OF ISRAEL is in the LORD of Hosts in Both Their Present Trouble and the Coming Great Tribulation.** Verses 8-21

COMMENT:

Verse 1—Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

Zebulun and Naphtali were located in the north, with Naphtali along the west bank of the Sea of Galilee and Zebulun adjoining Naphtali on the west. Nazareth was in Zebulun, and Capernaum (Jesus' headquarters) was in Naphtali.

Verse 2—The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

It is obvious that the people in despised Galilee, who were in the darkness of paganism and religious tradition, did see a great light, even Jesus Christ the Light of the world.

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (John 8:12).

This was fulfilled at the first coming of Christ.

Verse 3—Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

Many Bible teachers feel that there is a parenthesis of a period of time between verse 2 and verse 3 (F.C. Jennings and H.A. Ironside). Verse 2 refers to the first coming of Christ, whereas verse 3 looks beyond to the second coming of Christ. There is already a parenthesis of approximately 2000 years. In this interval God is calling out the Church which was unknown to Isaiah.

“Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith” (Romans 16:25-26).

God has increased the joy as this looks forward to the second coming of Christ and kingdom blessings.

Verse 4—For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

Verse 5—For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.

These verses complete the thought of verse 3 and look beyond the immediate to the Great Tribulation.

Verse 6—For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Verse 7—Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts wilt perform this.

This is as complete a prophecy of Jesus Christ as the 53rd chapter.

The reference here is to the second coming primarily, as the 53rd is to the first coming. These verses continue the thought of verses 3-5, and they look forward to the second coming of Christ. The question arises of how “**a child is born**” at His second coming. First of all, let us clearly state that He was not born “**unto us**,” the nation Israel, at His first coming.

“**He came unto his own, and his own received him not**” (John 1:11), he was born at Bethlehem the first time, but this is not the reference here. The other portion was not fulfilled to them, neither verses 3-5 nor verse 7. Christ will be born to the nation Israel at His second coming. Perhaps it may be better to state it this way: They will be born as a nation at once. This is made perfectly clear in the last chapter of Isaiah.

“**Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children**” (Isaiah 66:7-8).

Israel is to be delivered of a man child in the future, not by His birth but by their birth. This will be the new birth of the nation Israel when He comes. Verses 6 and 7 refer to the second coming of Christ, but there is no serious objection to interpret it for God’s children today, for it teaches His virgin birth; (e.g., the child is born-humanity; the Son is given—Son of God. (See Micah 5:2).

“**... the government shall be upon his shoulder.**” The shoulder speaks of strength. The government of this world will be placed on His strong shoulders at His second coming.

“WONDERFUL”—This is not an adjective. This is His name! “**And the angel of the Lord said unto him. Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?**” (Judges 13:18)

“Secret” here is the same word as “Wonderful.” “**None knoweth the Son but the Father.**”

“**And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh**” (Revelation 19:21), he is wonderful in every way!

“COUNSELLOR”—He never sought counsel of man, nor did He ask for their advice. “**For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?**” (Romans 11:34). God has no counsellor, he is the One to whom we must go, he is made unto us “**wisdom.**”

“THE MIGHTY GOD”—“*El Gibbohr.*” He is the one to whom “**all power is given.**” He is the omnipotent God. Even that little baby on Mary’s bosom was helpless there, but He held the universe together.

“THE EVERLASTING FATHER”—“*Avi-ad*” Father of eternity. It simply means that He is the creator of all things, even time, the ages, and the far off purpose of all things.

“All things were made by him: and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3).

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him” (Colossians 1:16).

“Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds” (Hebrews 1:2).

The reference in Hebrews of “**worlds**” is the same as “*ages*” and that is the thought in this title.

“THE PRINCE OF PEACE”—“*Sar-Shalohim.*” There can be no peace on this earth until He is reigning, his government is not static. There is increase and growth, he will occupy the throne of David. This is a literal throne which He will occupy at His Coming. Justice is dominant in His rule. God’s zeal, not man’s zany plans, will accomplish this.

Verse 8—**The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel.**

Verse 9—**And all the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart,**

Verse 10—**The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars.**

Verse 11—Therefore the LORD shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and join his enemies together;

Verse 12—The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

Verse 13—For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the LORD of hosts.

Verse 14—Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day.

Verse 15—The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.

Verse 16—For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.

Verse 17—Therefore, the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows; for every one is an hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh folly. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

Verse 18—For wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke.

Verse 19—Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire: no man shall spare his brother.

Verse 20—And he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm:

Verse 21— Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: and they together shall be against Judah. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

These verses cover the then local situation and were partial fulfilled in the then immediate future, but they look to the time the Great Tribulation for a full and final fulfillment. God will continue to punish this nation until they turn to Christ.

~ end of chapter 9 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
