

## Notes

### The Light of the Messianic King (9:1–10:4)

- Isaiah 9 begins with a most hopeful word: *“Nevertheless.”* This hope is connected to the promised Child (7:14), and Isaiah 9:6 expands on this promise. From Isaiah’s perspective, the first & second comings of Christ appear together. The Child born in Bethlehem is the King who will one day rule the world in righteousness.
- Isaiah 9:1–10:4 reveals 2 truths:
  - God’s Mercy (9:1–7) — the coming of a King who brings light & joy.
  - God’s Justice (9:8–10:4) — pride and rebellion bring judgment.The God who saves also judges sin.

#### 1. The Messiah Brings Light and Joy (9:1–7)

- The region of Galilee, especially Zebulun and Naphtali, was among the first to suffer under the Assyrian invasion (2 Kings 15:29). Yet Isaiah prophesies: *“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.”* This prophecy points to the coming Messiah, Jesus - the Light of the world - who would bring spiritual illumination and redemption (John 1:4–5; 8:12). Nazareth and Capernaum later became centres of Jesus’ teaching and miracles (Matt 4:12–17). Even today Christ shines His light into the darkest places and the darkest hearts. As believers, we are called to reflect His light in areas of spiritual darkness (Matt 5:14–16).
- Where light appears, joy follows. Isaiah compares this joy to:
  - The joy of harvest — abundance after labour.
  - The joy of victory in battle — celebration after deliverance.Both images describe overwhelming celebration and joy (Matt 9:14–15).
- Why such joy? Because oppression is broken. Isaiah describes three symbols of bondage: the yoke of burden, the staff of the shoulder, and the rod of oppression. God promises to break them *“as in the day of Midian,”* referring to Gideon’s stunning victory over the Midianites (Judg 6–8), where God delivered Israel through His power. Ultimately this points to a greater deliverance - from sin and Satan. Jesus invites the weary: *“Come unto me... and I will give you rest”* (Matt 11:28).
- At the centre of the prophecy is the promise: *“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...”* The mystery of the incarnation:
  - A Child Is Born. Jesus was truly human (7:14; Luke 2:11). He entered the world as a helpless infant and experienced hunger, fatigue, sorrow &

temptation (Phil 2:7; Heb 4:15). God did not save us from a distance; He entered our human frailty.

- A Son Is Given. This emphasizes the divine nature of the Messiah, the Son given by God to the world (John 3:16; Gal 4:4).

Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. Only one who is truly human could represent us. Only one who is truly God could offer a sacrifice of infinite worth. Salvation rests upon this union—fully God and fully man in one Person (1 Tim 2:5).

- This Child came to reign as King. At His first coming, His kingdom was announced. At His second coming, it will be established in visible glory. Isaiah gives four titles of the Messiah:
  - Wonderful Counsellor. Literally “a wonder of a counsellor.” His wisdom is beyond human understanding (Judg 13:18). All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found in Christ (Col 2:3).
  - Mighty God. Jesus is fully God - the divine warrior and powerful Saviour. Our salvation rests on divine power, not human effort.
  - Everlasting Father. Literally, “Father of Eternity.” This describes the Messiah’s eternal nature and His fatherly care for His people.
  - Prince of Peace. Through Christ we have peace with God (Rom 5:1). His future kingdom will bring peace to the whole creation (11:6–9).
- Isaiah promises: *“Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.”* This fulfils God’s covenant with David (2 Sam 7:12–16). Christ rules spiritually now, but His visible kingdom will come when He returns. He will reign over an eternal kingdom.
- Isaiah concludes: *“The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”* God Himself guarantees the fulfilment of this promise. God’s promises are fulfilled not because people deserve them, but because God is faithful to His covenant.

## 2. God’s Judgment on Persistent Sin (9:8–10:4)

- If mercy is rejected, judgment follows. 4 times Isaiah repeats this warning: *“For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still”* (9:12,17,21;10:4). Because the people refused to repent & return to God, His hand of judgment remained stretched out.
- The focus is on the northern kingdom of Israel, particularly Ephraim (the dominant tribe) and Samaria (the capital). The warning of imminent judgment was public: *“And all the people shall know...”* (v9). Instead of

repenting, Israel responded with arrogance: *“The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones...”* (cf Ps 127:1). Their attitude was essentially: *“Whatever God tears down we will rebuild bigger and stronger.”* Because of this pride, God raised up enemies - the Syrians, Philistines and Assyrians - to attack Israel. Ultimately the Assyrians would destroy the northern kingdom in 722 BC. Behind these events stood the LORD Himself. Each judgment was meant to awaken the people and bring them to repentance. Yet they refused to listen.

- V13 exposes the root problem: *“For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them...”* Despite repeated discipline, Israel refused to return to the LORD. The real problem was spiritual stubbornness. Isaiah declares that God will cut off both the “head and tail” from Israel in a single day.
  - The Head - corrupt leaders who promoted idolatry and injustice.
  - The Tail - false prophets who told people what they wanted to hear.When leaders abandon truth, the entire nation suffers, including the most vulnerable.
- Isaiah describes the devastating social consequences of persistent sin.
  - Sin spreads like wildfire: *“Wickedness burneth as the fire.”* Sin is never harmless; it spreads and destroys (Prov 6:27–28).
  - Society begins to destroy itself. *“No man shall spare his brother...”* Natural affection disappears. Violence increases, compassion fades, and tribes turn against each other.
- The prophet pronounces woe upon unjust rulers who exploited the poor, widows, and orphans through oppressive laws (10:1–4). Isaiah asks three penetrating questions: “What will you do when God judges? Who will help you then? Where will your wealth go?” Those who used their power for selfish gain would eventually discover that their injustice would become their ruin. Those who refuse to bow before God will one day bow in defeat. Having rejected God’s authority, Israel would be forced to submit to their conquerors - the Assyrians. Because sin remained, God’s judgment continued.
- The Messiah brings light, joy, and peace. But pride and rebellion bring judgment. We can bow now before the Prince of Peace, or one day bow under judgment. Christ alone is our hope. The Light has come.