



Lesson 176

Isaiah's Visions of the Messiah – Part 1

Story Elements

- **Text:** Isaiah 9:1-7; 11:1-10; 52:13-53:12
- **Setting:** ca. 739 B.C. in Jerusalem
- **Main Characters:** God and Isaiah
- **Plot:** Isaiah receives several prophetic visions that describe the coming Messiah.
- **Key word(s):** “_____” is a word that appears in two of the visions (9:7; 53:5) and is a major theme of the vision recorded in chapter 11. The Messiah’s mission was to bring peace by defeating sin.
- **Climax: *Isaiah 53:3*** *He is despised and rejected of men; A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: And we hid as it were our faces from him; He was despised, and we esteemed him not.* Though not technically a climax, since these three visions are not a linear narrative, nevertheless this verse creates an anticipation of a conclusion that is a surprise to the reader. (namely, the redemptive mission of the Messiah).

Immanuel (Isaiah 7:1-16)

1. (vv 1-2) During the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah, Rezin (king of Syria) and Pekah (king of northern Israel) banded together to invade Judah. Ahaz and all of Judah trembled with fear.
 - a. (vv 3-9) But God sent Isaiah with his son Shear-jashub to intercept King Ahaz and comfort him with God’s promises of deliverance. Coupled with encouragement was the exhortation to have faith, *If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be _____*, v 9.
 - b. (vv 10-12) As a further act of mercy, God offered to give Ahaz a miraculous sign to prove that deliverance from the Syrian confederacy would indeed happen. But the wicked Ahaz feigned humility and refused (in faithlessness) to ask for a sign.

APPLICATION → Ahaz’s refusal to ask for a sign when offered may sound like humility, but it wasn’t. “Ahaz’s true reason for declining was his resolve not to do God’s will, but to negotiate with Assyria, and persevere in his idolatry (2 Ki 16:7, 8, 3, 4, 10). Men often excuse their distrust in God, and trust in their own devices, by *professed* reverence for God.”¹ Matthew Henry adds, “Nothing is more grievous to the God of heaven than to be _____.”²

2. (v 13) Isaiah rebuked the king for his hypocrisy which made God weary.
 - a. (v 14) Since Ahaz would not ask a sign, a sign would be given to him: *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, And shall call his name _____*.

NOTE → This sign, spoken first to Ahaz, was fulfilled in Christ. The word virgin could not have been referring to any yet-to-be-married woman, because there is nothing “sign-worthy” in such an event. JFB notes, “Language is selected such as, while *partially* applicable to the immediate event, receives its *fullest*, most appropriate, and exhaustive accomplishment in _____ events. The New Testament application of such prophecies is not a strained “accommodation”; rather the temporary fulfilment of an adaptation of the far-reaching prophecy to the present passing event, which foreshadows typically the great central end of prophecy, Jesus Christ (Rev 19:10).”³

¹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, vol. 1 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 437.

² Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 1092.

³ Jamieson.

- b. (v 15) *Butter and honey shall he eat, That he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.* Or, “...when he shall know to refuse evil and choose good.” Interpretations and translations vary greatly on this difficult verse, but the gist is that God is promising Ahaz that in the space of a few years normalcy and _____ will return to Judah. The kingdoms that threaten Judah during Ahaz’s reign will be too weak to be a threat.

The Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:1-7)

3. (vv 1-2) The words of this passage speak comfort to northern Israel, described as Zebulon, Naphtali, and Galilee. They bore the brunt of the Assyrian invasion, and most Hebrews who lived there were taken away into captivity.
- a. *They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined,* God’s promise of future blessings was fulfilled during the life of Christ, whose earthly ministry focused in _____. (cf. Matt. 4:12-16)

APPLICATION → Matthew Henry notes, “In the worst of times God’s people have a _____ to comfort themselves with, something to allay and balance their troubles; they are persecuted, but not forsaken (2 Co. 4:9), sorrowful yet always rejoicing, 2 Co. 6:10.”⁴

- b. (vv 3-5) The light that will dispel the darkness will also be a sword to _____ the enemy. In this passage, Isaiah describes the Messiah as conquering the army of evil.
4. (vv 7-8) This conquering Messiah will come first as a child born *unto* (or for) his people. Isaiah prophecies of the person of Christ:
- a. *the government shall be upon his shoulder* – Christ will have ultimate _____ over all.
- b. *his name shall be called...*
- i. *Wonderful* – Could anything cause more wonder than that a child should also be _____?
 - ii. *Counsellor* – this child will grow to be the source of _____ and the standard of truth. (1 Cor. 1:30)
 - iii. *The mighty God* – with his infinite wisdom is also infinite _____.
 - iv. *The Everlasting Father* – this child born unto us is at one with the Father and so shares his title.
 - v. *The Prince of Peace* – the great design of the Messiah is to make peace between God and Man, and therefore, to bring peace fully and finally and forever.

Answer Key: Key word(s): “peace” • 1. a. established; →distrusted • 2. a. Immanuel; b. prosperity; • 3. a. Galilee; →nevertheless; b. destroy • 4. a. authority; b. i. God; ii. wisdom; iii. power;

⁴ Henry, 1095.