

GOT PEACE?

Do you wonder, what would it take to bring real peace to the world? Even to just your corner? Surely people 2,000 years ago in the hinterlands of Israel wondered. Their world was in even greater turmoil than yours. And they were supposed to be God's chosen people.

But it must have seemed God had chosen to forget about them. His promises of hope seemed so distant. It had been hundreds of years since God spoke through His prophets. But Isaiah 9:1-7 delineates five great truths about the Lord's promised Deliverer, the light of the world.

1- A GREAT LIGHT. God's people fell into darkness. They neglected the light of Scripture, sowed to their selfishness, and reaped the bitter consequences. Over hundreds of years their enemies had swooped down from the north and removed their freedoms. But the prophet says in the latter time God would make glorious the way of Galilee, the land beyond the Jordan.

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone." God chose to send His Savior through simple God-fearing people in Galilee, a young virgin named Mary, and her betrothed husband-to-be Joseph. This would be the great turning point of human history, long promised and long awaited.

2- A GREAT CHILD. Isaiah proclaimed, *"for to us a child is born, to us a son is given"* (hearkening to the promise of Isaiah 7:14 about the sign of the virgin conceiving and bearing a son). He was projecting the fulfillment, seven hundred years later, of God's promised Savior.

It's all recorded in the Gospels. In Luke 1:26-56 an angel of the Lord told the virgin Mary, *"you will conceive in your womb and bear a son; the Holy Spirit will come upon you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God."* Mary responded, *"let it be to me according to Your word; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; His mercy is for those who fear Him."*

3- A GREAT NAME. The greatness of this Child is revealed in the names He would be given. Isaiah declared, *"His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* These terms hearken to royal titles of a great king, and well they should, for this Child will be the Son of God come to earth with the rule and reign of God.

"Wonderful Counselor" speaks of His mighty works according to the wisdom of God's Word, fulfilled in the authoritative teaching of Jesus Christ. *"Mighty God"* points to the divine power by which the Christ is incarnated and works miracles to authenticate His message. *"Everlasting Father"* speaks of His divine eternity as the Son of God. *"Prince of Peace"* also points to His role as Son of Man, the mighty deliverer of His people from the darkness of sin.

4- A GREAT PEACE. The names endowed upon this great Child reveal His holy purpose: *"The government shall be upon His shoulder,"* says Isaiah, *"and of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness, from this time forth and forevermore."*

Lest there be any question about this divine promise, Isaiah declares, *"the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will do this."* God Himself, the Lord of heaven and earth, will ensure that these prophecies are fulfilled, in and through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God come in the flesh.

5- A GREAT SAVIOR. The angel echoed the promises of Isaiah in his words to Mary: *"you shall call His name Jesus"* (which means Jehovah is salvation). And *"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High."* In her response, Mary worshiped *"God my Savior."*

Luke 2:1-21 records further affirmation of God's plan. The time was fulfilled and Mary gave birth to Jesus. The glory of the Lord shone, and an angel of the Lord proclaimed, *"behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."* Savior speaks of His holy purpose, Christ points to His promised title as the Anointed One of God, and Lord affirms His divine nature.

6- GOT PEACE? The angel said, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!"* The Bible explains that peace with God comes only through believing in Jesus Christ, receiving Him as Savior and Lord. He is the only way for real peace! ☐