

A CHILD WILL BE BORN TO US

Isaiah 9:1-7

Introduction

There has not been any event in the history of the world that was so extensively predicted and as the birth of the Messiah. And yet when it happened, it was missed by the very ones who were looking for it.

As far back as the Garden of Eden, immediately after the man's fall into sin, God made a promise – Gen. 3:14-15 – read it. In those verses there are several promises:

- the promise of a Saviour
- the promise of the virgin birth – the seed of the woman
- The promise of God's ultimate victory over Satan

Other prophecies regarding the coming Messiah:

- From the descendants of Abraham - Gen 12:3 – "I will bless those who bless you (Abraham), and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."
- From the line of Jacob - Gen 28:10-14 – "Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. There above it stood the LORD, and he said: 'I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.'"
- From the tribe of Judah - Gen 49:10 – "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his."
- From the family of David - Isa 11:1 – "A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit." Isa 11:10 – "In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious."

- Born in Bethlehem – Micah 5:2 – "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

These are only a few of the prophecies, but they give us a picture of that fits only one man – Jesus of Nazareth, born of a woman, in Bethlehem. Gal 4:4 – "But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law,"

All of these promises and many more are fulfilled perfectly in the person of Jesus Christ.

Having looked at the broad picture, let us focus in for a few moments at one particular passage of prophecy – Isaiah 9:2,6-7.

The Promise of the Messiah v. 6

A child is born – this was no ordinary child, and certainly no ordinary birth – surrounded by miracles.

A Son is given – God so loved the world ... He gave His one and only Son.

Note the different terms – born (a child), given (the Son)

The promise is that of Gen. 3:15 – the seed of the woman, a child who would crush Satan's head – he would destroy the works of Satan. But the promise is also that of a Son given – the Son of God – Immanuel, God with us.

The Person of the Messiah vv. 6-7

In vv. 6-7 we have a description of this child in the names he was given. Names were important descriptions of the nature and character of people – often a person's name was changed to reflect a specific meaning.

The Messiah, God's Anointed One was given many names. Here we have a few of those names that tell us something of who this child was to be – the One God had promised.

Wonderful – carries the idea of miraculous – extraordinary – to make great – exalted above the ordinary. Something which produces wonder and amazement.

Counsellor – “one of honourable rank, one who is fitted to stand near princes and kings as their advisor.” – Barnes. Some have linked these two words together – discuss

Mighty God – the Messiah, Jesus Christ is called God – denotes a divine nature. He is the mighty God.

Everlasting Father – “father of eternity” – this is not a reference to persons of the Trinity. It means literally, “the man abiding forever” – a reference to Christ’s eternal nature.

Prince of Peace – he will be a peaceful prince. The purpose of his administration is to restore and to perpetuate peace. His reign will be characterized by peace, in stark contrast to the bloody conquest of so many kingdoms and rulers.

That is the person of the Messiah, seen in the names he is given.

The Prophecy of the Messiah’s Kingdom vv. 2,6,7

Two words that are used here – government (twice), kingdom. Clearly this promised Messiah is to rule – it is also indicated that he will have an eternal kingdom.

There is a twofold aspect to this kingdom.

- earthly kingdom – the millennium
- spiritual kingdom – within you. Luke 17:21 – “...nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you.” He wants to rule in your heart and life.

But what are the characteristics of His kingdom? What is life like when we are under the rule of Jesus Christ? There are three characteristics in this passage.

1. Light – v. 2

The people were in darkness – far from the light of spiritual truth and reality. Yet in the midst of the darkness the prophet sees a light dawning – it is the coming of the Messiah.

John 1:4-9 – “In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The

light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.”
His kingdom is characterized by light.

2. Peace – v. 6, 7

Jesus’ rule in our hearts is characterized by peace. This is obviously something that is needed in our world today.

John 14:27 – “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

Acts 10:36 – “You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.”

Col 3:15 – “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.” Where Jesus rules, there is peace. Even though the world all around us may be in turmoil, there is peace because He rules within the heart. And inner peace is really what people need and are looking for so desperately.

3. Righteousness (justice) – v. 7

The Messiah’s kingdom will be established in righteousness and will be destined to extend justice and righteousness forever. We often complain about the lack of justice in our society today. But what Christ wants of us is to rule in us with justice and righteousness. Micah 6:8 – “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

The Messiah’s kingdom is characterized by light, peace and righteousness.

Romans 14:17 – “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,”

Conclusion

Review the prophecy – read Isaiah 9:2,6,7 again.

As we begin this Christmas season let us see this as a promise, not only to Israel, but to us. Jesus came into the world to bring hope. The prophets foretold his coming to bring hope to those who were waiting so desperately for their Messiah.

John 1:10-12 – “He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”

He still promises to enter in and rule in the hearts of those who will receive Him – to bring light into dark hearts, peace to the unruly, and righteousness to the sinful.

Are you prepared to let the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God come in and rule in your heart today? If you do, you will find this to be the best Christmas ever.