

Dec 5th 2004: Isaiah 8:11-9:2 Darkness to Light

As I was thinking about.....and wondering what major thought God ...take away

**It was the fact that Christmas was the time when God
lit up the darkness with eternal light**

What an incredible change that has brought upon this earth

Isaiah 9:2 says

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death(of darkness) a light has dawned

AT the very beginning of creation...Genesis 1 tells us that the earth was formless & empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And the first thing God did was to say

Let there be Light, and there was light. And God saw that the light was good

Paul...writing in 2 Corinthians 4 tells us that God has done that again in Christ
But this time the light is not the means of physical life.....but eternal life....
And eternal communion and oneness with God

2 Cor 4: 6 says

For God who said, Let light shine out of darkness, made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ

And It's at Christmas we especially remember.....

that prior to shining in the heart of the believer.....**That Light came**....in human form

A light ..not just for the Jews.....but for the whole world...Jews and non→Gentiles

Isaiah 49:6.....

That light of course is Jesus.....and from His birth....His purpose in bringing light
And even being the Light.....is proclaimed

Zechariah.....talking about the ministry of his son.....John.....said in Luke 1:76-79....

Simeon in the Temple ...moved by the Holy Spirit.....took this tiny new born baby

Just about 6 weeks old.....in his arms and said
Luke 2:29-32.....

John says of Jesus in John 1:4-5.....

So what Isaiah predicted in 9:2 → A people walking in darkness have seen a great light
Began when Jesus was born.....

From the beginning the powers of darkness sought to destroy
But the Light could not be overcome
And in His life...death...resurrection....and presence with us....He Shines on

But as well as prophesying that God's Light would one day dawn
Isaiah also gives one reason why his world then... ..needed the Light

Because they were fearful
They saw dreadful things around every corner...and feared everything
8:12 says.....

In Isaiah's day the people were fairly affluent
But their world was changing rapidly

Major Nations like Assyria.....were on the move.....Evil and Destructive
And the people were fearful of losing what they had

The rumours of disaster coming...were all around.....and rather than turning to God
They looked to the mediums...clairvoyants....spiritists.....for guidance
But they have no light from God.....their advice only adds to darkness
And ultimately to the fear

Their end state is ably illustrated by Peterson's paraphrase of v20-22

People who try these other ways get nowhere—a dead end! Frustrated and famished, they try one thing after another. When nothing works out they get angry, cursing first this god and then that one. Looking this way and that, up, down, and sideways—seeing nothing, A blank wall, an empty hole. They end up in the dark with nothing.

But said Isaiah.....the time is coming when there will be no need for people to fearful
No need to stay in that dark place.....for it will be said that
9:2.....

This is what we celebrate.....not just at Christmas....but every time we think of Jesus

That the Light of the world has come
Has shined into our darkness.....and given us the choice

We can either stay in our darkness.....with our fears....wrongs....hopelessness
Or completely trust Him.....Who is both the Light of the World
And the only way to the Father

And once we have made that decision to trust Him.....to open our hearts to Him
Then we must never allow the darkness to take over

It may be dark thoughts of anger...bitterness.....hatred...evil....
Get rid of them in the Name of Jesus

It may be fearful thoughts....of worry...anxiety....concern.....
Cast those cares upon Jesus

It may be uneasy thoughts of self doubt...lack of trust....guilt.....unworthiness

**Jesus said I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows me will
never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.(John 8:12)**

*(Many of you would have had the experience of being down a deep cave on a tour.
At the lowest point the guide turned off all the lights to dramatize how completely
dark and silent it is below the earth's surface.*

*The story is told of a little girl who, being suddenly left in utter darkness was
frightened and began to cry. Immediately was heard the voice of her brother:
Don't cry, Somebody here knows how to turn on the lights.*

*In a most wonderful sense that is the message of the Gospel...of Christmas.....
Because Jesus came, light is available, even when darkness seems overwhelming.)*

