

ISAIAH

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Isaiah chapter 9 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Tonight's study really begins where chapter 8 left off. Remember what we read, "**And when they say to you, 'Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,' should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. They will pass through it hard-pressed and hungry; and it shall happen, when they are hungry, that they will be enraged and curse their king and their God, and look upward. Then they will look to the earth, and see trouble and darkness, gloom of anguish; and they will be driven into darkness.**" Isaiah 8:19-21.

Because they rejected the light of God in their lives and were seeking guidance from the dead, spiritually and physically dead, God gave them the darkness that they wanted. Dark days were coming upon them for their sin but God's love, His grace, His mercy, His longsuffering, His patience and-so-on are so great that He is going to shine His light upon them once again. That is what we will see this evening as we begin reading in Isaiah chapter 9 beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

ISAIAH 9**VERSES 1-2**

1. Remember the darkness that we just read about and in that darkness there seemed to be no hope. But look at how this verse opens up, “**Nevertheless**” and that is important. In spite of the rejection of God with these northern tribes of Israel God’s light is going to shine down upon them. Do you know what we call that? It is ***GRACE!***

First of all let me deal with the darkness and the judgment that came upon them for rebelling against God. The tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh who were on the eastern side of the Jordan River, outside of the Promise Land, were already taken into captivity. (I Chronicles 5:26). They did not enter the Promise Land and they were outside the protection that the rest of the nation enjoyed. Then the areas of Zebulun and Naphtali were taken into captivity by the Assyrians under the reign of Tiglath-Pileser. (II Kings 15:29).

This area of land was called “***Galilee of the gentiles***” since it was under gentile domination. Things were bad, the spiritual darkness was devastating. Things looked very bleak, you might say it was night, things were black! These are very dark days in the history of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. There was no hope, only darkness!

2. Here is the wonderful thing about our God. As black as things were God is going to pierce that darkness with His light. Turn to Matthew chapter 4 and I will show you what I mean as we see Jesus in His earthly ministry. Starting in verse 12 we read, **“Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: ‘The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.’”** Matthew 4:12-16.

Here are a people who are in spiritual darkness and they are trying to find God. And what does God say in Jeremiah 29:13, **“And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.”** And as they do, as they seek God in this pitch black darkness we see that darkness pierced by the light of God Himself! Have you ever turned on a flashlight in a room that was completely dark, it is bright and that is exactly what we see here!

Years ago we were in some caves in Missouri, Merrimac Caves, and they gather all the people together in this huge room in this cave. And then they turn off the lights and it is pitch black, you can't even see your hand in front of you. But when the guide turned on his little light it is amazing how that lit the room. God broke into the darkness of this time and His light is far brighter than any man-made light but there were those who closed their eyes and there are those who close their eyes today and refuse to see Jesus.

But make no mistake about it, God became flesh and dwelt among them to show them the way out of this spiritual darkness. As Jesus said in John 8:12, **“. . . ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.’”**

In other words the glory of God, the Shekinah glory that was present in the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:34) and in the Temple (II Chronicles 7:1) was now present with them in the presence of Jesus, God Incarnate! Yes they walked in darkness but now they have seen a great light, the glory of God was before them to lead them out of that darkness that they were in!

3. What a great lesson for all of us because the light has come and if we follow after Him we will not walk in darkness for there is no darkness in Him at all, only light! Remember what John told us in I John 1:5-7, **“This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”** You don’t have to walk in darkness but you may choose to do so but that will not lead you to life but to death!

4. I think it is very clear that these first two verses deal with the first coming of Jesus Christ. As we move on I think you will see that the next few verses deal with His Second Coming. Let’s read on and see.

VERSES 3-5

1. I believe that Isaiah is speaking of a day when the Lord comes back and righteousness fills the land. The nations are not joyful right now. Oppression, war, bloodshed are rampant so this must be speaking of a future time not part of His first coming but I believe it is speaking of His Second coming. Just as Gideon had a great victory over Midian in Judges chapter 7, the Lord will bring about a great victory as He puts down those who have rejected Him.

The important thing here is who is doing this, the Lord or are we? Many today feel that we have to build God's Kingdom on this earth, we have to establish order, we have to bring forth this social gospel and how is that working? Not too well as we can see. The thought in this section is "**You**" or the Lord is doing all these things as verse 3 shows us.

Our Lord is not only going to defeat all the evil that is out there but in the end, that final conflict He will win. He is the victor and we are the recipients of that victory, never forget that because there are many today who are trying to establish the Lord's Kingdom like I have said and that will never work! It is the Lord who will do this and I am thankful for that because when He does this work it will be final and everlasting!

2. As we read this we are looking back at the finished work of Christ. But keep in mind that they were looking forward to the coming Messiah. Thus, who is this person who will pierce the darkness and establish His Kingdom on the earth? Who is this person who will renew that which was destroyed by sin? Let's read on and see!

VERSES 6-7

1. Like I have said, we have the privilege of looking at the Scriptures with hindsight for the most part, except for Jesus' Second Coming. But for the Jews, they did not see the two comings of the Messiah. And many times His First and Second Coming were placed side-by-side.

You see, there was a mystery between Christ's First and Second Coming, we call it the Church Age. Paul speaks of this in Ephesians 3:1-6, when he said, "**For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles; if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel.**" (Also, Ephesians 3:8-9, 5:32, Colossians 1:26-27).

The Church Age was a mystery to the Old Testament saints and was a mystery until the apostles and Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, reveals it to us. God uniting Jews and Gentiles into one body, the body of Christ!

2. Keep in mind that the Jews struggled with this idea of the Messiah who was a suffering servant and one who was to rule from the throne of David. It was difficult for them to see this. And like we have seen so far, in verses 1-2 we see the First Coming of Jesus spoken of and we also see this in the beginning of verse 6, **“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.”** Then in verses 3-5 and the later part of verse 6 and verse 7 we see His Second Coming being spoken of, the Millennial Reign of Christ when He will rule the nations from Jerusalem. And notice who will do this? **“The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this”** and not man!

3. Let me also say this. In verse 6 we see Isaiah tell us, **“For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given . . .”** This is speaking of the Incarnation, God becoming flesh and dwelling among us. He is fully God and fully man and here is something that many miss or they don’t think of.

The Word, Jesus now remains a man eternally. He did not relinquish His humanity on His ascension but He is now a man in a resurrection body as we will one day have. Notice what Paul said in I Timothy 2:5, **“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.”** Fully God and fully man!

Also, in Revelation 5:6-7 we are told, **“And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.”**

In His glorified body it seems that Jesus still bears the marks of the crucifixion. In other words, when we receive our glorified bodies they will be perfect. All the disease and sickness of these bodies of flesh will be done away with. That means that Jesus is the only person in heaven who is handicapped or disfigured.

In John 20:26-28 we are told, **“And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, ‘Peace to you!’ Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.’ And Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God!’”** Thus, in His resurrection body, His glorified body, He still bears the marks of the crucifixion.

Lastly, after His death and resurrection we are told of two men who were on the road to Emmaus and they were distraught about what happened to Jesus, that He was put to death, crucified. And Jesus begins walking with these men who were discouraged because their Lord was just crucified. Now keep in mind that as they walked with this man they did not know who it was, they did not recognize it was Jesus. In fact, as they are walking Jesus gives them a Bible study showing how Jesus is the Messiah spoken of in the Scriptures from Genesis through Malachi.

Then, in Luke 24:30-32 we are told, **“Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, ‘Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?’”** Could it be that as He broke the bread they saw the nail prints in his wrists and they then knew it was the Lord? I believe so!

So Jesus remains fully God and fully man in His glorified body. God became flesh, dwelt among us; unto us a Child is born!

4. Now we have a list of names that the Messiah will be called, not literal names but aspects of His character. As you read these you will see that they are describing who He is and what He has come to do!

- **WONDERFUL** - He is extraordinary, marvelous, astonishing. No one or nothing can compare to Him.
- **COUNSELOR** - We need no one else to go to with our problems because He is the only one that can truly help. The world does not have the answers but Jesus does. The world has methods Jesus has the answer!
- **MIGHTY GOD** – This babe in a manger is the second person of the Trinity, He is God! Now I do realize that some groups, like the Jehovah Witnesses, like to make a big deal out of this because it says that Jesus is just a “**mighty God**” and not “**Almighty God.**” If anyone feels that way you have a bigger problem.

You see, in Isaiah 10:21 we are told, “**The remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, To the Mighty God.**” Did you catch that? God the Father is called “**Mighty God**” and I will guarantee you that they don’t say that He is a lesser God but they love to do that with Jesus. Folk’s, there is no difference!

As Spurgeon wrote, “If Christ were not the Son of God, his death, so far from being a satisfaction for sin, was a death most richly and righteously deserved. The Sanhedrin before which He was tried was the recognized and authorized legislature of the country. He was brought before that Sanhedrin, charged with blasphemy, and it was upon that charge that they condemned him to die, because he made himself the Son of God.”

- **EVERLASTING FATHER** – I think when people read that they struggle some because Jesus is called “the Son” in the Scriptures. But understand that this phrase can be better translated “Father of eternity.” In other words, He is the source of eternity and what He did on the cross of Calvary gives us eternal life.

- **PRINCE OF PEACE** – He is the One who makes peace between God and man, He alone can do this! And as much as man loves to speak of peace, there will be no earthly peace until the *prince of peace*, Jesus comes. But until that time, you can have the peace *of* God when you make peace *with* God through His Son Jesus Christ. And this is how it must be. First peace *with* God: Romans 5:1, Colossians 1:20. Then the peace *of* God will fill your heart: Philippians 4:7.

5. And notice what verse 7 says, **“Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. . . .”** Keep in mind that the reign of the Messiah will not last merely 1,000 years, though the millennium is a special aspect of His reign. There will be no end to the reign of the Messiah and He will rule for all eternity. The zeal of the LORD will do this! That is what is ahead but until then we need to focus on the Lord, walk in His ways and shine the light of Christ to a world that is in darkness. But His return is getting closer!

6. Listen to how Calvin summed this up for us. He wrote, “Whenever, in short, it appears to us that everything is in a ruinous condition, let us recall to our remembrance that Christ is called Wonderful, because he has inconceivable methods of assisting us, and because his power is far beyond what we are able to conceive. When we need counsel, let us remember that he is the Counselor. When we need strength, let us remember that he is Mighty and Strong. When new terrors spring up suddenly every instant, and when many deaths threaten us from various quarters, let us rely on that eternity of which he is with good reason called the Father, and by the same comfort let us learn to soothe all temporal distresses. When we are inwardly tossed by various tempests, and when Satan attempts to disturb our consciences, let us remember that Christ is The Prince of Peace, and that it is easy for him quickly to allay all our uneasy feelings. This will these titles confirm us more and more in the faith of Christ, and fortify us against Satan and against hell itself.”

VERSES 8-12

1. We have seen God’s grace and mercy and notice the response of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. They are filled with pride and arrogance. Keep in mind that Assyria already defeated Syria and now they were coming against Israel, devastating the land of Zebulun and Naphtali. And what happened to them would happen to the rest of the nation.

These armies would come in and they will destroy the land which would demoralize the people, and yet, Israel refused to repent before God. In their arrogance they are saying that they will rebuild stronger and better what the enemy has torn down. They still didn’t get it! They were not going to escape this judgment.

Think about this. As judgment came upon them notice what they are saying. “Yes some bricks may be broken and crumble to the ground but we will rebuild with bigger stones. Yes some trees were destroyed but we will plant even bigger trees. Don’t worry, we are fine, we are strong, nothing is going to stop us!”

I find that interesting that creation is willing to try and fight against God. Think about this for a minute. When that terrible tsunami hit Asia in December of 2004 those waves destroyed much land and many people. That tsunami was triggered by an earthquake equal in power to about a million atomic bombs! Now as impressive as that might be, what then is our Creator capable of doing? Much more than that tsunami! Pride and arrogance blinded their eyes to what was coming!

One writer put it like this, “Instead of humbling themselves before the face of God on account of the many calamities that had already descended on them, they still entertained a lighthearted optimism regarding the future. This optimism manifested itself in the slogans that were current in that day and apparently on everybody’s lips.” (Bultema).

2. Look at our own nation and the arrogance that fills it. We think we are in control, we think we are some kind of powerhouse but without God we are nothing and we are finding that out. A nation that is filled with pride, with arrogance, that is willfully ignorant of God will manifest the actions of that, immorality will run rampant and we see that today. God has given us over to these things and when destruction comes, we say “Yes some bricks may be broken and crumble to the ground but we will rebuild with bigger stones. Yes some trees were destroyed but we will plant even bigger trees. Don’t worry, we are fine, we are strong, nothing is going to stop us!” It didn’t work for Israel and it will not work with us. We need to repent and return to the Lord as a people and a nation or judgment is coming!

3. The idea here is that God has struck at them in judgment and He is not done because they refuse to repent. We see the phrase, “**For His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still.**” some 3 times in this section, verses 12, 17, and 21 and then we also see this in Isaiah 10:4. Pride is bringing them down and God will bring any nation or people down who in pride are fighting against Him!

VERSES 13-17

1. What I want you to notice in these sections of judgment is that each of these end with the refusal of Israel to turn to the Lord, they refused to get right even in the midst of the judgment that was upon them. That is a hard heart and that is pride and both will bring you down. Notice what we are told in Proverbs 3:11-12, **“My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor detest His correction; For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights.”** The idea is not only accepting God’s chastening, not fighting against it, but to also return to Him, learn your lesson! That is something that they refused to do and they paid for it! Here me out on this. When God strikes you the biggest mistake you can make is to turn away from Him instead of turning toward Him!

2. Here we see judgment coming upon the leadership in Israel, both political and spiritual. And as hard as it is to see leaders who are leading a nation in the wrong direction, it is even worse when the spiritual leaders are doing the same thing, teaching lies and leading people not to God but to Hell. And as much as I hate to admit it, there are a lot of them out there today on both sides and their numbers seem to be growing. And like Israel, I wonder if our judgment is not that far away because of our leadership in this country!

3. Once again we see this thought here that as God has poured out His judgment upon them they refused to turn and thus, He is not done with them yet!

VERSES 18-21

1. God is speaking of a wildfire of judgment but what is keeping this wildfire burning? There must be some kind of fuel, right? You bet there is. It was their wickedness that was fueling the fire of God's judgment upon them. If the wickedness was removed, if they turned back to God then the fuel for this fire of judgment would have been removed and the fire would have gone out. But they refused to stop their wicked ways, they refused to turn back to God and this fire consumed them, in fact, we are told that "**. . . The land is burned up, And the people shall be as fuel for the fire . . .**"

And history shows us that these things transpired against the Northern Kingdom of Israel when the Assyrians came through. Things were very bad, the famine so horrible that Josephus tells us that they ate their own children and their own placentas. Isaiah tells us they even resorted to eating their own flesh to survive. And even in all this they still refused to repent of their sin and turn to God.

2. Notice how the chapter ends, "**. . . For all this His anger is not turned away, But His hand is stretched out still.**" Isaiah 9:21. Here is that chorus you might say once again. Their sin was still there to be judged and because of that God's judgment was going to continue to be poured out upon them. Their wickedness fueled those fires and they kept feeding the fire of God's wrath with more of their wickedness!

3. As we move into chapter 10 we will see one more of these judgments being spoken upon the Northern Kingdom of Israel because they refused to repent before God.

ISAIAH 10**VERSES 1-4**

1. Isn't it amazing how evil people can be! We saw wicked leaders in the political arena. We saw wicked leaders in the religious arena. And now we see wicked leaders in the judicial arena as people are taking advantage of others, justice was being perverted. Those who were misfortunate were being taken advantage of and we see that happen today.

Why is that? Because the heart of man is wicked and when man places self on the throne of his heart instead of God we see the works of the flesh manifested in his life instead of the fruit of the spirit, which is love.

And as they perpetrate this injustice upon people God is going to judge them, they are not going to be able to escape the wrath of God no matter how hard they try. And in their destruction who are they going to leave all their earthly possessions to? There won't be anyone left! You can't run, you can't hide from God, and all He really wants you to do is to turn to him, but as we have seen they refused to turn!

2. They were self-sufficient, they took care of themselves and they did not bow to anyone. Because they refused to bow before the Lord they will bow to the Assyrians as captives. This is the fourth and last time we see this expression but the idea once again is that because they refused to repent God's "**. . . anger is not turned away, But His hand is stretched out still.**" There was still sin to judge and God wasn't ready to stop His work of judgment.

3. Again people may get angry at God for doing this but God was trying to draw them back to Him. And remember that this judgment comes on the heels of what Isaiah said about the Messiah, His birth and His reign! But they did not care, it did not change their hearts and thus, judgment came upon them.

4. As we move on we will see God speaking of the instrument of His judgment, the Assyrians.

VERSES 5-7

1. God used this wicked unsaved nation to judge His people, the Assyrians, just as He will use the Babylonians to judge the Southern Kingdom of Judah down the road. Make no mistake about it; God is able to use godless worldly powers to discipline his godless covenant people. In fact, human oppressors don't even have to be aware of God to be useful for his purifying purpose as with the case of the Assyrians!

Interestingly enough God calls His people "**ungodly**" and yet the Assyrians were worse, how can that be? Because with the information that they had about God, what God was going to use them for, there came great responsibility and they took it too lightly and walked away from God and God judged the Northern Kingdom of Israel for that!

2. I guess you can say that Assyria was on a mission from God. They were doing the LORD'S will, running His errands when they came against Syria, Israel, and Judah. God gave them permission! Now even though Assyria was used by God to chasten His people, they went too far and wanted to crush and destroy them. That was not God's intention and God is going to hold the Assyrians accountable for their actions.

The thing I want you to keep in mind is that Assyria didn't care about the will or glory of God; they wanted to destroy the nations and take the spoil of their victories. Listen to how prideful they were as they are totally unaware that they were being used by God! Listen to these words of Adad-Nirari II who ruled from 911 to 891 B. C. and you will see their arrogance. This is what he wrote about himself,

In these days, when at the command of the great gods my lordly sovereignty has manifested itself, going forth to plunder the goods of the lands, I am royal, I am lordly, I am mighty, I am honored, I am exalted, I am glorified, I am powerful, I am all powerful, I am brilliant, I am lion-brave, I am manly, I am supreme, I am noble.

- ARAB, 1:110

You know what I say about that? You are **DEAD** and thus, you are not a god but just a man. Do you know what he died of? It was an "I" problem, too much self, too much pride and in the end he was brought down. What a warning for people today who strut around like they are a god but they are not! Think about it, how can human power overrule God? It can't!

3. Notice the pride of the Assyrians as we read on.

VERSES 8-11

1. Here we see the Assyrians boasting about their power, boasting about their strength. They are basically saying that no nation would be able to stand up to them, all would fall to them. The problem is they took out the true and living God from the equation. What they did is look at their past accomplishments and felt no one could stop them.

The conquests that Assyria had made are as follows: Calno - 738 B. C., Carchemish on the Euphrates - 717 B. C. , Hamath on the Orontes - 720 B. C., Arpad - 740 & 720 B. C., Samaria - 721 B. C., Damascus - 732 B. C.).

Now you have to remember the mentality in those days went like this. If you defeated another nation then your gods were more powerful than their gods. And Assyria is boasting in the nations that they have conquered already, how strong their gods were and yet they were defeated. Thus, Samaria, the capitol of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and Judah in the south, would not stand a chance against them. As Samaria fell, so too would Jerusalem, or so they thought! God put a stop to their advancement before the Southern Kingdom was destroyed by them.

VERSES 12-14

1. Yes God used the Assyrians for judgment against his own people but because of their pride, because the Assyrians went too far, God is going to now judge them. Pride, arrogance is very destructive.

There was another King by the name of Nebuchadnezzar. He was the King of Babylon and he too had a similar problem. He too was boasting about his great kingdom, how he had built it, Daniel even warned him of the coming judgment if he continued down that path, but he did not listen. God did give him a year of grace, but then, as he boasted once more, while the words were still in his mouth, judgment came upon him.

For 7 seasons madness struck this King. He grazed in the field, ate grass, and obviously lost his kingdom *UNTIL* he recognized the true and living God. It was then and only then that his sanity returned and his kingdom was restored. God does hold us accountable to give Him glory, and when we boast in what we have done we take that glory from Him.

Julius Caesar had this heart of pride when he said of his military conquests: *Veni, vidi, vici* (“I came, I saw, I conquered”). Charles V had a better heart when he said of his military conquests, *Veni, vidi, sed Christus vicit* (“I came, I saw, but Christ conquered”). In all we do we need to give glory to God because apart from Him we can do nothing!

2. Yes no nation was able to stand up to the Assyrians. The illustration in verse 14 is that of a bird who is scared away from her nest leaving her eggs behind. The point is that the Assyrians had scared the people so badly that they flew away, in a sense, leaving the spoil for them to take.

No nation could stand against them. No man was a threat to their power. But they forgot one thing and it is a big thing, they forgot about God, the creator of heaven and earth. You see, God says . . .

VERSES 15-19

1. Here is the problem of man, we think too highly of ourselves. Think about it, does the instrument receive the honor or glory? Does the instrument say, “I have done this!”? Not at all and yet isn’t that what we do. We can’t do anything apart from God. You see, it is the one using the instrument that gets the glory. You don’t see the paint brush of an artist get praised and go on talk shows. But the artist that used that instrument to paint that beautiful picture is the one that does.

Let me say this and I think it is very important. The image you have of God will determine the image you have of yourself. A. W. Tozer wrote,

What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. . . . The gravest question before the Church is always God Himself, and the most portentous [important] fact about any man is not what he at a given time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like. We tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God.

- A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, p. 9

You can't have a correct image of yourself until you first have a correct image of God. That is the only way we can truly see ourselves as sinners and totally dependent upon God. If we don't have that correct perspective of God we are going to see ourselves more highly than we should!

2. Let me also say this. One of the fastest ways to be taken out of any ministry and placed on the shelf by God is to allow yourself to become prideful, boastful in what you are doing. You are just the instrument by which God uses and He gets the glory, He gets the praise. Be humble before Him for He desires to use us!

3. For the Assyrians, God is going to bring them down, He is going to cut them down, He will burn them down and this judgment would come upon them very quickly. When the Assyrians surrounded Jerusalem, in 701 B. C. we saw that in one night the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. And then, by 609 B. C. the nation of Assyria fell to the Babylonians. God means what He says and says what He means whether we agree with it or not. And make no mistake about it, it will come to pass whether we agree with it or not!

VERSES 20-23

1. Keep in mind that the Southern Kingdom of Judah had made an alliance with the Assyrians to protect them from the Syrians and Israel but now the Assyrians have turned against them. The Lord warned them not to trust the Assyrians, but they did not listen, they thought they knew what they were doing and in the end they found out how wrong they were! God wanted Judah to trust in Him to deliver them from the hands of the Syrians and Israel but Ahaz; the King of Judah did not take God's advice and trusted in the Assyrians like I have said.

And look at the grace and mercy of God for He tells them that a remnant will escape and they will return to God. Make no mistake about it; God always has His faithful remnant just as He did here. And even in the midst of the judgment they *deserved* because of them trusting in the Assyrians instead of the Living God, God wants to comfort His people and bring them hope. That is the God we serve!

VERSES 24-27

1. Look at what God is doing here. He is telling them that just because you see the Assyrian army marching down upon you, don't be afraid because He is going to strike them down! God is encouraging His people during a difficult time.

Yes the Assyrians will prosper for a time, but in the end they will be destroyed, and a remnant of His people will remain. And God compares what will happen to Assyria to what happened to the Midianites.

In Judges chapters 6 and 7 we see the Midianites come and take the crops that were being harvested by the Jews. It was a judgment from God for their turning from Him. And for a time they oppressed the Jews until they turned back to God, and God raised up Gideon, who, by the power of God, defeated the Midianites and cut off the heads of 2 of their princes, Oreb and Zeeb.

Also, just as the Egyptians oppressed the Jews for a time, God brought a deliverer by the name of Moses, who brought his people out of bondage. In other words, they have read of what God did in the past, and it should give them confidence during the present situation they are in.

2. I am always amazed at Christians who look at what is going on in our nation, who look at what is going on in this world and they are fearful, they are worried, they are nervous, why? I think it is because we at times don't trust God as He is speaking to us. What do I mean by God speaking to us? His Word, it should bring comfort and peace to our lives knowing who He is and His promises to us.

Paul put it like this in Romans 15:4, “**For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.**” Paul is saying to us that we need to learn from their example, the men and women of the Old Testament, to follow after them, learn the lessons they learned!

I am amazed at the number of pastors who don't teach out of the Old Testament and the number of Christians that don't read the Old Testament and yet, Paul says that in them you will find the examples of these men and women to encourage you and the end result as you go through the Scriptures is that you will have *PATIENCE, COMFORT* which then gives to you *HOPE!* And that truly goes for the Word of God from Genesis through Revelation; God's Word speaks to us and encourages us in the darkest of times!

3. Here in verse 27 we see the Lord tell the Southern Kingdom not to worry because the heavy yoke that the Assyrians placed upon them will be removed. I think that is pretty clear, but what or who is that “**anointing oil**” that God is speaking of?

I believe it is a reference to the Holy Spirit working in the life of Hezekiah and the people of Judah. Remember the story; the Assyrians had surrounded the city of Jerusalem. And Sennacherib, King of Assyria sent his representative, the Rabshakeh, who taunts and threatens the people of Jerusalem to give up, not to listen to their King, no other nation could escape their power and neither will the Southern Kingdom of Judah!

And the reality was that the Assyrians were a very wicked people, they were very cruel. And if you surrendered to them you would not be punished as much as if you tried to fight against them. Thus, as Hezekiah sees and hears what is going on he brings his requests before God in prayer, and that night the angel of the Lord comes and kills 185,000 Assyrians soldiers, sending the rest home in defeat as I have said.

Their threat quickly vanished, not because of the military might of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, but because they rested in the strength of the Lord and Hezekiah brought his requests before God who answered his hearts cry.

VERSES 28-34

1. Make no mistake about it, the Assyrians were marching from the north to the south and they were capturing cities and the people by their strength. And as big and mighty as they saw themselves, this mighty tree was going to be cut to the ground, they will eventually be destroyed and taken into captivity by the Babylonians.

2. As we close tonight let me kind of set the stage for what we will be looking at as we move into chapter 11 of Isaiah. Look at the heavy yoke that has been placed upon people today, the oppressive nature of things and we are looking for a king to come and set us free.

And ultimately that oppression will reach its peak when the world ushers in the Antichrist as their king during the Tribulation Period. The Church is taken home prior to the start of the Tribulation Period but in the midst of this hopeless and dark time, there is hope! As those seven years come to an end what is birthed from this period of time is the Kingdom Age! We will see that next time as we move into Isaiah chapter 11. Out of all that destruction will come a beautiful and righteous time as our King of kings and Lord of Lords rules and reigns from Jerusalem!