

WE HAVE SEEN A GREAT LIGHT

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined. You have multiplied the nation and increased its joy; They rejoice before You according to the joy of harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

For You have broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. For every warrior's sandal from the noisy battle, and garments rolled in blood, will be used for burning and fuel of fire. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder.

And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

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. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

The first part of that passage of Scripture for us today, should hopefully remind us of other passages of Scripture that are quite similar. "In the beginning was the Word [that's Jesus], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John [John the Baptist]. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:1-13)

In similar wording, the Apostle Peter speaks of the contrast between the darkness and the light saying, "Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect,

precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy." (1 Peter 2:6-10)

That great light that has come forth to this earth from our Lord, God, and Savior-as God intends to be our Lord, God, and Savior-and has given the revelation of the truth that is in Christ Jesus. As Jesus Himself tells us in John 3:16-17, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

God has given us the precious gift of salvation in Christ Jesus, to all who believe on Him and His Word and receive Him. Christ Jesus was the manifestation of God, our Creator, in the flesh, to come to this earth, to die on a cross for our sins, taking our sins to the grave (of which that is where they are supposed to stay), and rose from the grave on the third day, conquering death and the devil and has paved the way for us too, to overcome the sting of death, and then have eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord!

But what an incredible miracle it is, that God made it even possible to have Jesus, His only begotten Son, to be born of a virgin, Mary, and to to be raised up into adulthood, that He would begin preaching the message that John the Baptist was preaching, just prior to Jesus' own ministry, to "repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (Matthew 3:2, Matthew 4:17)

Going back all the way to the garden of Eden, God had begun to reveal to mankind that He had a solution to the problem of the sin on this earth. After Adam and Eve partook in the forbidden fruit, after Eve had been deceived by Satan, when he told Eve, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Not only was Adam and Eve kicked out of the Garden of Eden, and told that they would have to toil and suffer in this world but that they would indeed die, as God said, "For dust you are, and to dust you shall return." And as we know even today, that having the knowledge of good and evil isn't as great as what Satan made it out to be. Seeing all

the evil in the world and all around us is not a blessing to us in the least!

Yet God also spoke a curse against Satan, the serpent who had deceived Eve into eating the forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. **Genesis 3:14-15**, " So the Lord God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." Satan may have thought that He had won the first round against God Almighty, as we are all destined now to die on this earth, as we are all born into the sin nature and as we are told that all have sinned against God, but we now know of the victory that we have through Christ Jesus! "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (**Romans 6:23**) "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (**Romans 3:23**)

The Apostle Paul tells us in **1 Corinthians 15:56-58**, "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." That's where we get the song "Victory in Jesus"! Paul then continues with this, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

We have seen a great light, spiritually speaking. The light of Christ Jesus that testifies to us from God's Word and from others who have believed on Christ and received Him, as each of God's children encourage, love, and bless one another in Christ, and also through the Holy Spirit that comforts, guides, and helps us in overcoming the evil and corruption of this world.

Our message for tomorrow will delve a little more into the great miracle of how Jesus came to this world through the seed of Eve, and then also to the great miracle of how we are even here today, hearing of the good news, the gospel of Jesus Christ, in God's perfect time, as He continues to call us into His eternal kingdom, by believing on Christ Jesus and then receiving Him, that is, receiving His Spirit, the Holy Spirit, that begins working in us His Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. (**1 Corinthians 1:30**) That is, by the revelation that comes from the Holy Spirit, He gives us wisdom to accept the free gift of God, His Righteousness, in Christ Jesus, and then He sets us apart to live in His Holiness, as we begin to live in our Redemption that is in Christ Jesus!

As God, our Creator, and the sustainer of all things, wants us to recognize is that He intends to be our Lord, God, and Savior and that He wants us to know Him, trust Him, and to honor Him. He is, "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." He is Wonderful, as He is perfect in all His Ways (**2 Samuel 22:31**) and Works (**Deuteronomy 32:4**). He is our Counselor as Jesus told His disciples, that the Holy Spirit "will guide you into all truth." (**John 16:13**) He indeed alone is THE Mighty God. As He spoke through Isaiah the prophet, "Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,'" (**Isaiah 46:9-11**) Praise the Lord for that which He declared from the beginning has been revealed to us that, as the Apostle Peter confessed, in being asked by Jesus who he thought He was, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (**Matthew 16:16**) He is also our Everlasting Father who declared in **Revelation 1:8**, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Also, He is our Prince of Peace. While the whole world rages and seeks its own, we can rest in the peace of God in Christ Jesus our Lord! That won't take away the grief, sadness, sorrow, and tears, but we are promised by Christ Jesus that He will right the wrong, He has a great many blessings in store to those who endure and overcome and continue in sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ. We celebrate His birth on December 25, although it is not much disputed, by even Biblical scholars, that December 25th was not Jesus' birthday. Nevertheless, even though it was likely started as a pagan holiday, God promises His people, "that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." God can bring good out of a pagan holiday, to where we can rejoice that Christ Jesus was born and has died on a cross for our sins and has raised from the grave and sits at the right hand of the Father, and we rejoice that He dwells in the hearts of all those who have believed on Him and received Him.

Even though it likely looked hopeless to Adam and Eve when they were kicked out of the Garden of Eden, even though it may have looked hopeless for us in the depth of despair, or maybe it still seems hopeless to you, there is One who came to save the lost, He can give healing and deliverance and His name is Jesus, who is the Christ the Son of God, who is "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Praise His mighty name! Something for us to look forward to, "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. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." That is good news indeed! Amen.