

Government Upon His Shoulders

Steve Berger December 10, 2017

Introduction

- Last 100 days in America
 - **Nation on fire**- millions of acres burned, billions in damage, thousands of homes and dozens of lives lost
 - **Nation under fire**- October 1st, worst mass shooting in US history, 58 murdered, over 500 injured in Las Vegas; 1 month later 26 murdered in Texas church; 208 murders from mass shootings in 2017 — worst in a decade
 - **Hurricanes rage**- trillions of gallons water fall, 200 billion in damage, 103 lives lost
 - **Perversion exposed**- in entertainment and politics, more to come; guilt by accusation
 - **Religious freedom**- tried in Supreme Court: what will be honored more — religious freedom or sexual preference?
 - **Jerusalem officially affirmed by USA** — affirmation hated, violence ensued, lives lost

Fact — troubling, turbulent, tumultuous times.

Question — What do we say to all this? How do we respond? Where do we look?

Answer — Take you back into biblical history when another trying time was happening, to get the answer to our questions.

Background

- 725 BC, Ahaz King of Judah, kingdom divided 200 years
- king and people had forsaken God
- king misplaced trust, embraced Assyrian enemy for deliverance
- people consulting witches and mediums for spiritual direction
- everyone looking for hope in wrong places

Fact — the immediate situation was bad — Isaiah 8 ends with:

Isaiah 8:21-22

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.

Application — hard-pressed and hungry, enraged, cursing, looking up, looking down, just trouble and darkness, gloom of anguish, driven to darkness...

Noteworthy — the clearest promises of the coming Messiah happen when the times are the darkest! The Spirit made the prophets know that the coming of God in human flesh is the lone star of the world's night, the only hope for our sinful brokenness.

- in **mankind's fall** in Genesis —the prophecy of Seed of woman to destroy serpent comes!
- in **Egypt's slavery** — Passover a perfect lamb is sacrificed pointing to the Lamb of God who would deliver us from the bondage and sin of the world

- with **Ezekiel's spiritual shepherds**, God's flock was scattered, lost, abused, hungry, and sick — then comes the Word that God would send The Shepherd to deliver, feed, secure, and bless them

“Thus, in each case, when things were at their worst, the Lord Jesus was the one well of consolation in a desert of sorrows. In the worst times we are to preach Christ, and to look to Christ.

In Jesus there is a remedy for the direst of diseases, and rescue from the darkest of despairs.”¹

Charles H. Spurgeon

So- in a moment of darkness and despair, the Spirit speaks to Isaiah and catapults him from his **dreadful present** to a **miraculous, supernatural future event...**

Isaiah 9:1

Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, as when at first He lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward more heavily oppressed her, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, in **Galilee of the Gentiles**.

Application — this darkness and gloom isn't going to last forever, this too shall pass, something unbelievable is going to happen in Zebulun and Naphtali, as unlikely as that sounds, in Galilee of the Gentiles... Z and N were nothing, first invaded regularly, filled Gentiles...

“That first land to be invaded by the enemy was made the headquarters of the army of salvation.

Our Lord made His home in the darkest parts. He looked about and saw no country so ignorant,

no country so sorrowful, as Galilee of the Gentiles,

and therefore He went there, and lifted it up to heaven by priceless privileges!”²

Joseph Exell

Isaiah 9:2

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.

Application —

Matthew 4:12-16

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.”

Isaiah 9:3

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.

Application — significance and joy and treasures will be poured out upon the people!

¹ Joseph A. Exell, *Biblical Illustrator, Volume 3* (Delmarva Publications, Inc., Oct 21, 2015)

² *ibid*

Isaiah 9:4

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.

Application — this light will break burdens and rods of oppression... as in the day of Midian...

Egypt/Gideon, unlikely, outnumbered, impossible, BUT GOD!!!

Isaiah 9:5

For every warrior's sandal from the noisy battle, and garments rolled in blood, will be used for burning and fuel of fire.

Application — what came to harm you, and was defeated, will become a blessing — what was meant for evil, God will turn it to good; all things will work together for your good!

Summary — in the worst of times Isaiah sees into the future when something, *Someone* is going to enter human history and change everything for those who will love and trust Him... **HOPE!**

God Shines Brightest in the Darkest Places

Isaiah 9:6

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.

- **UNTO US-** for us, for our benefit, blessing, hope, healing, salvation!
- **Child is born-** one of us for us, NOT heavenly messenger, NOT angelic host, a child born like us, into our world to experience everything we do like we do, in order to sympathize with our weaknesses and allow bold access... **Hebrews 4:15-16.**
- **Son is given-** the most valued is given in order to demonstrate the depth of His love for us... **John 3:16.**
 - **Rom 8:32**
He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?
- **Government on His shoulders-** “Increase of His government, there will be no end”... “I have set My King upon My holy hill of Zion”... “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me”... “Every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father”... vote and pray responsibly for government then trust Him who’s shoulders the government rests upon.
- **Name shall be called Wonderful-** everything about Him produces wonder, Who He is, Child, Son, Ruler, Counselor, God, Father, Prince, what He does, how He does it, who He does it to, why He does it. Wonderfully miraculous in every way!

- **Counselor**- He advises, consults and guides those who seek Him... **Colossians 2:3** in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge... He shares!
- **Mighty God**- warrior, champion, giant, Almighty God in flesh, **John 1:1,14**.
- **Everlasting Father**- He is everlasting as He relates to time, He is Everlasting Father as He relates to His children. There is never a time when He isn't a Good, Good Father, loving, tender, kind, providing, present, interested etc.
- **Prince of Peace**- He comes to bring peace into our hearts, even in the darkest times... "Peace on earth, good will toward men"... "Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"
 - **Colossians 3:15**
And **let** the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. (**let it**, called, be thankful).

Fact — all five Names are like canons of truth simultaneously exploding with hope for everyone who will hear and believe! Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace!

Listen — we have it better than Isaiah, he looked to Who **would** come, we look to Him Who **has** come AND **is coming again**. We can experience every spiritual blessing Jesus provides **right now**, AND, look with hope for what we'll have when He returns!

Now- troubles, turmoil, turbulence- yes- but **triumph for us** — for unto us... **look to Him!**

Isaiah 9:7

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Discussion Questions

1. How do the troubles in Isaiah's time compare to the troubles in our time?
2. Read the quote from Charles Spurgeon. Have you found this to be true in your life?
3. How does reading Isaiah 9:6 in its biblical context change its meaning for you personally?
4. How does knowing that the "government is on his shoulders," affect how you interact with daily news and politics?
5. Which of the five Names speak to you the most and why?