

# When Light Dawned

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Thank you very much for that. I don't know what you were thinking as you were listening, but I began to think and feel and sense that it was almost like an introduction to Jesus.

And I thought, I need to go up after this. But wouldn't it be wonderful if it was Jesus who was coming up after that, and it was just, yeah, let's welcome Jesus.

And I thought, they get me instead. But I hope that as we go into Isaiah 9 that I can present Jesus, because that song was a wonderful way to draw us in, to look at our lords, to look at our king, and to glory in him.

So if you have a Bible, please turn to Isaiah chapter 9. And there should be Bibles in the pews. You might have a Bible there. It'll be up on the screen, and I'll be reading it out.

And we're going to spend long, not going to spend long on this at all. And I'm sure you're very familiar with Isaiah 9.

[ 1 : 1 3 ] I'm sure you're very familiar with these words from that song there. You might be interested to know that Isaiah 9.6 is never quoted in the New Testament.

You'd think it would be one of the most obvious places in the Bible, one of the most obvious quotes, but it's never mentioned in the New Testament. However, Matthew does mention the start of Isaiah 9, and he's not unaware of the rest.

And quite often, the authors of the Bible will do that. They will begin a text, and it's meant to lead you into the whole thing. And in fact, throughout Jesus' life, it was just covered with references to Isaiah.

So let me read Isaiah 9, 1 to 7. 1 to 7. 1 to 7. But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish.

In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun, the land of Naphtali. But in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

[ 2 : 2 4 ] The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.

You have multiplied the nation. You have increased its joy. They rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

For the yoke of his burden and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor you have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot on the trampling warrior in battle to mount, and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders.

And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

[ 3 : 3 1 ] Amen. Of the increase of his government and of peace, there will be no end on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. Amen. God, we pray that you would speak to us through your word and we bless you for it.

There's a time through the night when it is just dark. A time when there's no difference between one hour and the next hour.

At this point of the year, we wake up and it is as dark as it was when we went to bed. We've all experienced this.

Time through the night when it's from one hour to the next, no change. It is just dark. But then something happens, something that we have all experienced today, and that is a point in the morning called dawn.

[ 4 : 55 ] The definition of the word dawn is the first appearance of light in the sky. Suddenly, after all that darkness, there is a slight change in the dark sky.

There's a subtle glow. We saw it this morning, a wee bit of red between the clouds. light begins to grow.

Light begins to spill over the horizon, and it brings clarity to all the dark shadows in the landscape. Things we couldn't see before, we now see with increasing clarity.

And yet, dawn is not the whole event. It is simply the beginning. light will increase and increase and keep on increasing until the sun is fully visible and shining for all to see.

Now, what Isaiah is saying in the 8th century before Christ is that there will be an interruption to the darkness. Although it might seem just as dark from one moment to the next, a light is going to dawn on the land.

[ 6 : 14 ] a great light. And from that moment, the light will only increase until it banishes the darkness altogether. The Apostle John puts it this way, although it may not feel like it, the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.

Soon there will be no darkness at all, only light. And so, when Matthew is writing an account of the birth of a boy born in Bethlehem 700 years after Isaiah, he quotes Isaiah to explain who this child Jesus is.

He has already listed this genealogy of Jesus to show that he is from the line of Judah and the descendant of King David. He's already referenced Isaiah 7 to explain this extraordinary birth of Jesus to the Virgin Mary, his mother.

He's already mentioned Micah to explain that Jesus was born in Bethlehem just like the Messiah would. And then he quotes Isaiah chapter 9.

This little bit at the start about a great light appearing to those in the darkness. And Matthew says that the arrival of Jesus is the dawning of the great light in Isaiah.

[ 7 : 43 ] Now, it might not seem like it, but the moment and since the moment that Jesus arrived on earth, his light has been increasing ever since.

For 2,000 years, his light has only been increasing, not diminishing. How can I be sure of this fact? Because sitting before me are living evidence of his increasing light, right here today, you and me.

We are living evidence of this fact, that his light has been increasing throughout the world ever since. And the evidence is plain for all to see. No single person has affected the globe so much as Jesus of Nazareth.

earth. He is the light of the world. And look at the extent of his light across the earth. C.S. Lewis said this, he said, I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen.

Not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else. Is that not true? The light has shone in your heart.

[ 8 : 59 ] that because of Jesus we see clearly everything else? If this light has also dawned in your heart, has it not made sense of all the shadows and darkness in the world?

Has it not allowed you to see much clearer than you did before? And just as the light has been increasing throughout the world ever since his arrival, and we might not feel it today in Scotland, but if you just do a little bit of research across the world, his light has been increasing across the world since his arrival.

His teachings, his ways, his influence affecting humanity to the ends of the earth. And just as it has done that, if his light has shone in your heart, let me encourage you that his light will only increase in your life until it has illuminated every dark spot in your heart.

His light is only going to increase until the day he appears in full glory. Nothing can diminish it, and nothing can stop him. Do you not long for that day?

The Bible calls this our blessed hope, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

[ 10 : 26 ] And because of prophecies like Isaiah 9, people were anticipating the dawn and arrival of a great light, a king from the line of David. And wherever you believe, we cannot change what happened in history, that a child was born who was not only a light in Galilee, but his entire life fulfilled a vast amount of Isaiah, not to mention the rest of the Old Testament.

So much so, and I've seen this happen, that in reading portions of Isaiah to Hebrews, to Jewish people, many of them think that you're reading from the New Testament because it so uncannily represents Jesus' life, and they don't realize it's from the Old Testament.

Isaiah 53, how could it not be talking about Jesus? Nothing can change what has happened in history, the historical life of Jesus.

Isaiah 7, 14, his name will be called Emmanuel, which is a Hebrew, it's Hebrew, and it means God with us.

Isaiah 9, 6, his name will be called Peleios, El Gabor, Aviad, Sar Shalom. The wonderful counselor, the mighty God, everlasting father, the prince of peace.

[ 11 : 55 ] And you might think to yourself, well, Jesus was never called Emmanuel, Jesus was never called Peleios, he was never called El Gabor, Aviad, or Sar Shalom.

Isaiah 12, 2, you can turn to it just now, but you probably don't have the Hebrew, maybe Janice does, maybe David, don't know. But let me tell you what it is in Hebrew, Isaiah 12, 2.

It says this in Hebrew, right? In English, it says, behold, God is my salvation. In Hebrew, it says, Hina el Yeshua, Yeshua, T.

That literally was Jesus' name, Yeshua. Isaiah 12, 2, Hina el Yeshua. There you have it.

Does that sound familiar? God is my salvation. Hina el Yeshua. Yeshua, Jesus, is our salvation. Jesus is just a transliteration of a Hebrew name into different languages with different sounding letters.

[ 13 : 12 ] I lived for a year in Spain and was called Carlos from my boss the whole time because he just couldn't say my name. But history has been set and those who were there to witness it have recorded that a child has been born and a son was given.

The other week I took my boys to their school Christmas dinner, not dinner, disco, school Christmas disco. And it was Ezra's first ever school disco. So I stayed to see how he got on, to see that he got on okay.

And I watched him go into the hall and I watched him go among other pupils. And for a while he was dancing away on his own. And I thought about how much I love him.

I was watching him. Of all the children that were in that disco hall, that's my son. I love him. Levi too, of course, don't get me wrong, but he's in primary three, he's an old pro at these events now.

He was off with a couple of friends. But Ezra, Ezra, there he was, dancing like no one was watching, happy in himself, my son.

[ 14 : 29 ] Out of all these people, my son. And I stood there and I watched him and I thought to myself, I wonder how other people will treat him. Will anyone notice my son?

Will anyone want to be his friend? Will anyone want to play with my dear son? Anyone want to dance with him or be with him?

How will these other people treat my son? a wee girl came up and took his hand and started dancing. I was like, you are in my favor. Don't break his heart.

But I stood there and as I was watching that, seriously, I thought about Jesus coming into the world. God's beloved son in whom he is well pleased.

and I thought about how God would watch to see whether people would receive his son or not. How are people going to treat the beloved son of God? Will people receive the wonderful counselor?

[ 15 : 39 ] Will they even notice the mighty God? Will they see in this child the everlasting father? Will they accept the prince of peace?

No greater light has ever dawned on earth as the son of God. Yet how was he received? No greater person has ever walked among men.

Yet how was he treated? Unto us a child is born. How did we treat him? We do not deserve him.

What shame I have when I think about the times that I used to mock the beloved son of God. How horrible I have been to God's one and only son.

I should not be standing here today. Yet despite that, a son was given. His light is greater than the sum of all our darkness.

[ 16 : 43 ] That is how he can do that. We don't deserve it. None of us deserve it. How have we treated this magnificent light that dawned on the earth? And yet, his light is greater than the sum of our darkness.

His mercy greater than the sum of all our sins. His life was offered, Isaiah 53, to cover our sin.

The same child who was born of a virgin is the son who was given on Calvary. the same shoulders that bear the government are the same shoulders that carried a cross and bore the sins of the world.

And if you want any kind of remedy for this darkest time of the year, Isaiah 9 tells us that this child born is the light that came in to this point of deepest darkness.

And so I want to just leave you with this thought, okay? Whatever it means to you, however you reflect on it, what do you find increasing in your life?

[ 17 : 55 ] There are many things that seem to increase, especially as we head into the depth of winter. The cold increases, the snow, the bad weather increases, the darkness increases, our energy bills increase, the price of energy increases, advertising increases.

sales increase, debt increases, pressure increases for people to get more and more things for people who don't need them. Depression increases, loneliness increases, darkness increases.

increase. What else do you find increasing? Because I think God's word challenges our present experience with a truth.

And that truth is that a great light has already dawned, and that light is going to increase. Despite what it looks like out there, despite what it feels like in here, his light is going to increase, not the darkness.

darkness. His peace is going to increase, not the conflict. Not only are all these things going to increase, look at verse 7.

[ 19 : 10 ] Look at verse 7, if you will, with me. These things are going to increase. Verse 7 says, of the increase, of the increase of his government and of peace, there will be no end.

It's an unending increase. It's never going to dip down. Although it might not seem like it, since the moment God's Son came into the world, he has been bringing an ever-increasing joy, an ever-increasing peace to countless lives.

And what we have just now, is just a foretaste of his everlasting kingdom. His light and his joy and his government and his peace are in no ways diminishing.

Even if the darkness seems somehow darker, even if you don't feel it or sense it, we have every reason to trust in him. Every reason. Because there is absolutely no undoing the historical events that Jesus already fulfilled.

So many points of Isaiah. Will he not complete what he set out to do? And so, as I said earlier, dawn is not the whole event.

[ 20 : 24 ] Dawn is just the beginning. And while the dawn began at his birth, we are living within the event of this ever-increasing light.

And so, what joy there is in this light that dawned. What promise we have in this child who was born. what peace there is because a son was given.

What hope we have in his ever-increasing kingdom. And it is all because of this person who is wonderful, mighty, everlasting, Prince of Peace.

He is our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Christ. And despite the things that we feel, the challenges we face, the struggles we trundle through each day, his light is increasing.

His peace is increasing. His joy is increasing. And one day it will envelop all of the things that we fear, all of the things that bring us down.

[ 21 : 32 ] one day we will be basked in his glorious light. And what a day that will be. So, folks, have hope at this time of year because of the great light that dawned on the earth.

Let me pray. Our Heavenly Father, each day the enemy would lie to us that his light is diminishing, that the light of your Son who dawned on the earth is diminishing, but that is not true.

It is increasing and of its increase there is no end. And so, please, would you give us hope, strength, faith, and comfort in your words to know that you always do what you say you will do.

And you have already given a Son. Help us to look to Christ and find in Him all our hope of light and joy and peace everlasting.

In Jesus' name, Amen.