

# Our Trustworthy King: Wonderful Counselor

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[0:00] And if you all would open up your Bibles to the book of Isaiah, which is in the Old Testament, basically if you open up your Bible halfway, you probably are in the Psalms, just go right a little bit, and you'll stumble across Isaiah.

I'm not a professional singer, so with what I'm about to do, be warned. And join in. It's the most wonderful time of the year, with the kids jingle belling and everyone telling you be of good cheer. It's the what? It's the most wonderful time of the year. I've been listening to 95.7 and 93.9 in my car. I go back and forth listening to these classic Christmas songs. It's the most wonderful time of the year is a classic.

And I tend to agree. Christmas time is one of the most wonderful times of the year. Now, you may be sitting in your seat and you're thinking, well, I take issue with that.

[1:19] I think maybe Good Friday, Easter's way up there in terms of the most wonderful times of the year. You're a point well taken. Let me ask you this. What makes Christmas time so wonderful?

Is it the jingle bells? Is it the lights? Is it the eggnog?

Is it the Christmas cookies? All those gifts. Maybe it's the time off. Gathering with your family. Those classic movies.

It is a small W wonderful time of year. But it's not the wonder of this time of year.

The first Christmas ushered in the most wonderful time of all. Because when Jesus was born, God's light of salvation began to shine in our darkness.

[2:24] That is what makes Christmas so wonderful. This morning, we're going to go back to Isaiah chapter 9.

We're going to take a break out of the book of Revelation where we've been at for the last few months. And I want to help you see the hope-giving significance of those first seven verses of Isaiah 9.

It's what Danielle just read so beautifully. The first thing I want you to see in this sermon is that all of us, all of us have been thrust into thick darkness.

That's our gloom. But understanding our gloom, God is going to turn our gloom into glory. God is shining his great light into the darkness today.

And his great light is the person of Jesus Christ. We're going to move from our gloom to our brilliant hope.

[3:28] Jesus. And when we get to that latter section of the sermon, we're going to be walking through Isaiah 9, 1 through 7. I'm going to highlight one particular brilliant dimension of King Jesus.

It's in the form of a title, Wonderful Counselor. The birth of Jesus Christ is God starting to shine his saving light into the deep darkness of our sin and his judgment.

So with that, let's turn to the book of Isaiah. We have all been thrust into deep darkness.

Our gloom. If you're in the book of Isaiah 9, chapter 9 right now. Chapter 9, verse 1, we read, But there will be no gloom. Wait, there was gloom?

There will be no gloom for her who is in anguish. Wait, anguish? Look at verse 2. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

[4:35] Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. What? What is this darkness that Isaiah is talking about?

Because if you look back to chapter 8, verse 22, the last verse of chapter 8, we read this. And they will look to the earth, but behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish, and they will be

thrust into thick darkness.

What is this darkness? Well, one way to say it is if you look at chapter 8, verse 17, we hear Isaiah say, I will wait for the Lord who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob.

That's the darkness. God hiding his face. And when God's face is not shining, there is darkness on a people.

Now, I want to remind you that Isaiah was written to a particular people at a particular time in a particular place. It was actually written in the 8th century before Christ.

[5:55] And the section that we're looking at this morning was probably happened in the 730s, somewhere in there. And just to remind you that the nation of Israel used to be one people, a united kingdom.

And then David ruled and Solomon ruled and then one of Solomon's sons, Rehoboam, he did something really stupid in the kingdom split in two. There was a northern kingdom and then there was a southern kingdom, Judah, whose capital was Jerusalem.

And on the throne of Jerusalem sat a king of David. And what is happening at this time in Isaiah is that the king of the northern kingdom, Ephraim, was a guy named Pekah.

And the king of the southern kingdom was a guy named Ahaz. And the world power of that day, of that time, was Assyria. And Assyria was seeking to spread and to expand their reign and to bring power to themselves.

And they were brutal. So here's what was happening. Assyria was knocking on the door of the northern kingdom. And so King Pekah, he established a coalition with another king, the king of Syria, a guy named Rezin.

[7:16] And they formed a coalition against Assyria. And what they decided to do was to try to wage war on Judah in order to bring them into the coalition to increase their force of protection against Assyria.

So are you following all this? So King Ahaz in the 730s is faced with a decision. He's fearful of the Syrian Ephraim coalition coming and invading him.

And he's even more afraid of having to join forces and fight against the Assyrian horde. What's Ahaz going to do?

And into that situation speaks the prophet of God. Isaiah chapter 7 verse 14.

To Ahaz. This king who is afraid. God speaks this word. I am going to give you a sign Ahaz.

[8:30] Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel. You see what God was speaking to Ahaz to encourage his heart to trust in the God.

He's saying to Ahaz, Ahaz, I have a plan for the fullness of time that centers on a coming son who will be called Emmanuel, God with us.

Because he is Emmanuel. He is God with us. And so what we see God doing through Isaiah is calling Ahaz this fearful king.

Not to fear Pika. Not to fear Rezin. Not to fear Tiglath-Pileazar, the king of Assyria. But to fear God by trusting in him and trusting in his word. Lord, that's not the darkness.

It's what Ahaz does next that causes God to hide his face. What did this Davidic king do? What did this one sitting on David's throne do?

[9:44] 2 Kings 16 tells us. Ahaz plunders the temple of the living God and takes silver and gold. And he approaches Tiglath-Pileazar, the king of the Assyrians.

And he asks Assyria to rescue Judah from the attacking Syrians and Ephraimites, that coalition. He spurns God's word.

He chooses not to trust God. Not to trust Emmanuel. But to trust in a human king to deliver him.

And so he's going to try to grab the tail of that tiger Assyria.

And when he grabs that tail of that tiger Assyria, he's going to get Assyria. So Isaiah goes on to say in chapters 7 and 8, what will happen to Judah for rejecting God and running to a human deliverer? Not only will Syria and the northern kingdom of Ephraim be carried off by Assyria, and they were in 734 and 722 respectively. It happened.

[10:55] But Assyria will overwhelm Judah like a flood. Judah will be overrun by Assyrians. And therein lies the darkness.

God hiding his face, handing his people over to a foreign suffering rule. And mind you, this wasn't just Ahab.

This was many of the people of Judah who had refused to trust God's counsel. And as a result, quote unquote, Emmanuel's land will be overrun.

8-8. It's the darkness. But God be praised. He preserves a remnant in Judah at this time of faithful disciples who wait for the Lord despite God hiding his face.

They will hope in him. 8-16 and 17. There remains those in Judah who still are hoping in Yahweh and trusting in his word regarding this coming Emmanuel who will one day establish a new kingdom on David's throne.

[12:14] That's the darkness. And the cause of the darkness is Judah's disobedience. If you look at 8-22, we read, And they will look to the earth, but behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish, and they will be thrust into thick darkness.

This darkness is a darkness of sin and of judgment. These folks will be miserable. They were miserable. And if you want to see something striking, look at verse 21 of chapter 8.

They will pass through the land greatly distressed and hungry. And when they are hungry, they will be enraged and will speak contemptuously against their king and their God.

They are cursing God for their darkness. He has warned them. He has provided a way out. Trust in Emmanuel, he has said to his people.

But they resisted him, ran after a foreign deliverer. They are in their darkness, and now they're blaming God. It's amazing what we're capable of, isn't it?

[13:30] This darkness is a darkness of sinful unbelief, of rejecting God and his word. And all of us were born into this dark rebellion of soul, choosing to trust ourselves and pretty much anything else but the one true God who calls us to submit to his reign.

In the New Testament, Colossians 1, this darkness is described as a domain of darkness in which all people need to be delivered from.

Sin, death, captivity to the devil, that's the domain of darkness. Sin, death, captivity to the devil, that's the one who's been murdered from. And maybe you came into this building this morning with some kind of, in some state of unbelief, in some state of hopelessness, because you know you are consciously choosing not to trust God and his word.

You feel like these people in Judah were failing, like in the 8th century. You feel distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish. You feel thrust into thick darkness because you have been thrust into thick darkness.

And this darkness has been a reality of the human experience ever since Adam and Eve first chose not to trust God, not to trust his word in the garden, and they were thrust out of the garden.

[15:04] God hid his face from them. We have been living in a world that has been thrust into darkness by rejecting the one true God.

But God always has a glorious plan. God always has a glorious plan. This is our gloom.

This is the darkness of Isaiah's day and the darkness of our day. Countless thousands of Kenosha are living in darkness as I say these words.

And the cause is unbelief. Rejection of God. And it's this darkness that is the very background of Isaiah 9, 1 through 7.

You got to get the background, the darkness, in order to understand the brilliance of the light. So we've looked at our gloom.

[16:06] The darkness we've been thrust into. And now let's look at our hope. God shining his bright light into the darkness.

And mind you, Isaiah wrote these words 700 years plus before the first cry of Jesus was heard. So let's look now at Isaiah 9, 1 through 7.

And Isaiah 9, 1 through 7 can be broken into two areas, two sections. 1 through 3, Isaiah prophesies of what God will do. And there's three things you need to see.

And then Isaiah 9, 4 through 7, the explanation of what God will do. How God will do that. So let's now turn to what God will do.

First thing is chapter 9, verse 1. He will turn our gloom into glory. But, but, God's going to do something.

[17:14] There will be no gloom for her who is in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and 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. There is a former time and a latter time of which Isaiah speaks. The former time is the time he's living in.

And the latter time is a future time, the time of Emmanuel. And this former time which he's speaking of, writing about.

This land has been brought into contempt. They're under God's judgment. They are in darkness. And they're in darkness for their disobedience.

But in the latter time, an unspecified future. God will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

[18:16] Literally, Galilee of the Gentiles. Now, when you read verse 1. And you read the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. And then you read about this other lands.

The land that's the way of the sea. The land beyond the Jordan. Galilee of the nations. One might think that Isaiah is speaking about a whole bunch of different lands. But the reality is, he's only talking about one area.

He's got one location in mind. It's the same location. What he's describing as the land of Zebulun and Naphtali. It's the same area of land described as the way of the sea.

The land beyond the Jordan. Galilee of the nations. It's the same area. The difference is, in the former times, it's under gloom. But in the latter times, it's seeing God's glory.

There's a difference. There's a difference. And what accounts for the difference is that land of Galilee. Of the Gentiles.

[19:25] Something's going to happen in Galilee that's going to turn gloom into glory. About 700 years later.

There's going to be a carpenter who moves into Galilee. Galilee. Nazareth. And his oldest son is named Jesus. Galilee of the nations.

What we learn here is that Isaiah is looking forward to this time of Emmanuel. And he's saying that there's going to do a glorious work in which God is going to begin to reach the Gentiles.

Do you remember where Jesus began his ministry? He began his ministry in Galilee. God is going to do a new work, according to Isaiah.

The first one is he's going to turn gloom into glory. And the second work we see in verse 2. 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.

[20:38] The second work is he's going to shine light into darkness. What is he talking about? Remember in 817 we talked about the darkness is the result of God hiding his face.

Judgment. The darkness of sin. Disobedience. Well, it goes to say that if darkness is God's hiding his face, then this light shining is God revealing his face.

Showing his favor. Grace shining in the darkness. The apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 4.6 says, For God who said, let light shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

The light shining in the darkness is the person of Jesus Christ. Now, if you came into this building this morning and you are feeling thrust into deep darkness, what you need to understand is that this light that will shine into the darkness that Isaiah is speaking of, that will happen 700 years from when he writes, it's already shining.

Because we're looking back on that same light shining, the birth of Jesus, we're 2,000 years after the fact. The light of Jesus is shining today in the darkness.

[22:26] But there's another work. We see this in verse 3. 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.

In the latter time, Isaiah prophesies that God will turn anguish into rejoicing.

Gloom to glory. Light in the darkness. Anguish to rejoicing. And notice who's doing it.

Verse 3. You have multiplied the nation. You have increased its joy. This is God at work. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

This is God working. And what you need to see here is the joy. We move from the anguish of being in darkness to the joy of being in the light.

[23:26] And Isaiah likens it to a joy at harvest. Bounty. Abundance. Abundance. He likens it to the gladness of a victory over an enemy.

When you divide the spoil. An abundance of land. Victories over enemies. Those were classic signs of God's blessing on his people. Joy.

Gloom to glory. Joy. The face of God shining. Resulting in a transformation of anguish into rejoicing. That's the work that God is going to do.

Starting in Galilee. This is all prophesied 700 years before the birth of Jesus.

Now the question becomes, if this is what God is going to do, how is he going to do it? How is he going to light up the place? How is he going to transform this place?

[24:38] And that's now where I want to help you to see how God will turn gloom to glory. Shine light into darkness.

And turn anguish into rejoicing. In verses 4 through 7, we have three explanations of why this is going to happen. They're all queued up by the word for.

Look at verse 4. For the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you, God, have broken as on the day of Midian. You know what it's a picture of?

Deliverance from captivity. This yoke of his burden is slavery. The staff of his shoulder.

Getting smacked. The rod of his oppressor, of his taskmaster. This is Exodus talk. Of deliverance. God is saying that I'm going to turn your gloom to glory.

[25:40] I'm going to cause my face to shine upon you. I'm going to turn your anguish into joy when I deliver you. And it's going to be on the day of Midian.

That's a reference to Judges 6 and 7. Remember Gideon? He got 22,000 guys. He's going to battle against this big army of Midianites and Amalekites. And God says, no, no, no, too big.

And he winnows it down to 300 dudes. And you know why God winnowed it down to 300 dudes? To defeat an army that was beyond count.

So that God got the glory. God is going to do a work of deliverance, Isaiah says. That's going to turn gloom to glory.

His face is going to shine. It's going to turn anguish into rejoicing. Because God's going to do a deliverance in which he alone gets the glory. What a deliverance he brought.

[26:44] What he's speaking of in the future, we look back on as a work already accomplished by Jesus. Jesus. The greatest underdog who won the greatest deliverance through his blood.

There is another reason. It's not just a coming deliverance that has already come.

But there's a coming victory. Look at verse 5. Another 4. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult, and every garment rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for the fire.

He's talking about victory in battle. Boot, tramping warrior, battle tumult, garment rolled in blood. Stuff.

Stuff's the product of war. It's going to be burned as fuel for the fire. There's going to be a victory in which the victors burn all the stuff of their enemies.

[27:46] A victory that brings peace. That brings shalom. Fullness. The ceasing of war. Beating swords into plowshares.

Beating spears into pruning hooks. What Isaiah is speaking of is a prophecy of a future victory that will bring about a peace resulting in a deliverance that brings joy to an anguished heart because God's face is shining.

It transforms gloom into glory. And it's all going to start in this place called Galilee. Victory. Victory. Victory. Victory.

Triumph. Triumph. And we know that Emmanuel's triumph was at the cross. which brings us to the last four.

Verse six. Four. To us. To us. A child is born. To us a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder.

[28:57] And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor. Mighty God. Everlasting Father. Prince of Peace. 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.

This coming deliverance. This coming victory. Is going to come from a coming king. He describes him as a child.

Notice. This is God at work. Who is the one from whom this child is going to be born? God. Who is this one? This son who is given? God has given this son.

This is God at work. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. The us. For to us a child is born.

[29:59] To us a son is given. Are all those with tender heart. Who are willing to receive Emmanuel as king. Trusting in his word. Obeying him.

This child. Who is in Isaiah's mind coming. He will win a victory. That brings about a deliverance. Resulting in a great gladness.

Because God's face is shining. Turning gloom into glory. Because something has to do with Galilee. This is Emmanuel.

For to us a child is born. To us a son is given. This is a human. He's born. And he is male.

Child born. Son given. But this same child. Is the Isaiah 714 child. Emmanuel.

[30:58] God with us. God incarnate. This coming king. This coming king. Is fully God. And fully man. God incarnate.

Emmanuel. And notice. Not only is he Emmanuel. He will be entrusted with governance. Verse 6. And the government shall be upon his shoulder. Do you know the last time you read the word shoulder? It was in verse 4. For the yoke of his burden and the staff. For his shoulder had been broken.

The government. Which Emmanuel brings. That will be on his shoulder. Will bring peace to your shoulder. Emmanuel. Emmanuel.

Entrusted with governments. And he's entitled. Look at the four titles. Wonderful Counselor. Mighty God. Everlasting Father. Prince of Peace. These are kingly titles.

[32:01] There's no one like this. I'm going to come back to that first title. Wonderful Counselor. In just a second. I just want you to see this section though all together. It's entitled.

And he's enthroned on David's throne. Look at verse 7. Of the increase of his government and of peace. There will be no end. On the throne of David. Fulfilling 2 Samuel 7.

Where God promises to David. There will be one who sits on his throne. Forever. Forever. Forever. And this forever kingdom.

This everlasting kingdom. Is an expanding governance. Verse 7. Of the increase of his government and of peace. His reign of justice and righteousness.

Brings shalom. Peace with God. Peace with yourself. Peace with other people in your life. And one day peace with all of creation. Peace with God. That's what Emmanuel will do.

[33:01] That's what Emmanuel is doing. And this is empowered by the Lord of hosts. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

That Lord of hosts title. That's God's warrior title. He's going to accomplish this. According to his zeal. And that word zeal. Oh it comes really close to the word.

Jealousy. God. Is. Zealous. For his people. He loves.

Us. He wants to grace. Us. In that love. And drives his power. To bring about. This Emmanuel.

Who will establish. A forever kingdom of peace. Which will bring about a victory. That brings about deliverance. That brings about a joy. Out of anguish. Because God's face is shining.

[34:01] In terms gloom into glory. The child. The child. Is king.

The Messiah king. And this child. Who Isaiah saw was coming. He has come. He has come.

Two thousand years ago. He came. To establish his reign. King. And now let's just. Pause for a second. To consider one of these four titles.

Wonderful counselor. It's a kingly title. So when you hear the word counselor. You may be thinking. You're a therapist. And there's some similarities. Of truth speaking.

But you have to understand. This wonderful counselor. He's the king. He counsels his people. He directs them. He leads them into truth. By speaking truth. He is.

[35:01] The kingly counselor. And his counsel. Is wonderful. Wonderful counselor. It's talking about the nature. Of his counsel.

That word wonderful. It verges. It gets real close. To what we would call miraculous. Miraculous counsel. So don't think.

That this wonderful counselor. Is like a notch up. From your. Your high school guidance counselor. This counselor. Is Emmanuel.

Counselor. God speaking. Leading his people. Categorically different.

Jesus. When he was teaching on earth. His teaching affected people. Regularly.

[35:59] With astonishment. With wonder. If you looked at Matthew chapter 7. Sermon on the mount. We've got a bunch of sisters. In the church.

Studying the sermon on the mount. Right now. And when you get to. Verses 28 and 29. And Jesus has just. Kind of. Reclaimed. All of God. This misplaced. Teaching.

That God's people were teaching. And he says. This is what God truly means. The people there were astonished. They've never heard anybody. Preach like this before.

Teach like this before. Because this is the wonderful. Counselor speaking. This is Emmanuel.

Matthew 13. Parables. They're astonished. Matthew 22.

Jesus rebukes. The Sadducees. He just turns the tables on him. People there were just flabbergasted. At what he did. They were amazed. Wonderful teaching.

[36:56] Wonderful teaching. In Matthew chapter 4. Matthew actually quotes the passage that we're in. Isaiah chapter 9.

And if you want to turn with me there. Matthew chapter 4. Verses 14. 15. 16. Jesus. Is beginning. His ministry.

And Matthew says. This was to fulfill what the prophet Isaiah. Had spoken. The land of Zebulun. And the land of Naphtali. The way of the sea. Beyond the Jordan. Galilee of the Gentiles. The people dwelling in darkness.

Have seen a great light. And for those. Dwelling in the region. And shadow of death. Deep darkness. On them. A light. Has dawned. Do you see the point? Jesus was born.

Emmanuel has come. And when he begins his ministry. Matthew says. The light is dawning. The light is shining. Of the wonderful counselor.

[37:55] And if you look at verse 17. Look. At what he begins with. In. His public ministry. Words of the wonderful counselor.

King Emmanuel. He says. Repent. For the kingdom of heaven. Is at hand. My kingdom. Has come. Trust.

In me. The birth of Jesus Christ. This wonderful counselor. It lights up.

Our darkness. We've looked at our gloom. We've looked at the light that is shining. What Isaiah prophesied 700 years ago.

Of this coming king. Is happening. He has come. Jesus. That promised. Emmanuel. King.

[38:56] The wonderful counselor. He's at work. He's at work. Today. So let me call you to respond. In one of three ways. Three musts.

First. In light of. Jesus. The wonderful counselor. The long anticipated one. You must. You must. Bow yourself. Down.

Before him. You must. Recognize him. As the king. So this Christmas. Ask yourself.

Have I taken. To heart. All that the wonderful counselor. King Jesus. Has spoken to me. In that reliable. Book. The Bible.

Have I taken it. To heart. Have you heard. These words. Repent. For the kingdom. Of heaven. Is near. Come under my reign. Jesus is saying. And have you.

[39:52] Bowed yourself. Down. To him. That's the right. Posture. Before. Emmanuel. And with that. You experience.

His victory. Experience. His deliverance. You experience. The joy. You experience. His face. Shining. You experience. The glory. Come.

Submit yourself. Today. To the king. The second must. If you have submitted yourself. To the king. Bowed yourself.

Down. Before him. Second. You must lift up. Your voice. To him. You must. Rejoice. You must rejoice.

With great gladness. Rejoice. Rejoice. Emmanuel. Joy. To the world. The lord. The king. Has come. Lift up your voice.

[40:55] Christmas carols. Become worship songs. When you realize. Who this king is. The third must. You must get the good news.

Out about him. You got to get the word out. Let me quote you someone. This. News about king Jesus.

Is good news. Of great joy. For all the people. That's the Luke 2 angel. This is good news. This is gospel news. That brings great joy.

Because God. In Christ. Transforms gloom. Into glory. He is God's face. Shining on us. It might not seem like much.

But I showed you earlier. That little invitation. To the Christmas Eve service. Get the word out. About Emmanuel.

[41:58] Hand that to someone. Who's in darkness. God is more than able. To cause. Cause. His light. Of the glory of God. In the face of Jesus.

To shine. In that person's darkness. And when that happens. There's going to be. A growing number of people. In this room. Who are rejoicing.

Who are experiencing. That shining face. Whose gloom. Has turned to glory. So in light of all. Of who Jesus is. Christmas is not just. The most wonderful time. Of the year. This first Christmas. It ushered in.

The most wonderful time. Of all. The most wonderful time. The most wonderful time. Of all. The saving reign. Of Jesus Christ. Our Emmanuel. God.

[42:55] Thank you so much. For this book. Written. 2700 years ago. That speaks. Of our. Today. King.

We gladly. Bow down. Before you. We gladly. Lift up our voices. To you. And we gladly. Get the word out. This good news. Of great joy. For all.

The people. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[43:50] Amen. Amen.