

# Readings

## Scripture

<sup>1</sup>But there will be no gloom for her who was 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. <sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>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.

- Isaiah 9:1-7 (English Standard Version)

## Reflection

Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "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, on them a light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

- Matthew 4:12-17 (English Standard Version)

Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?

- Exodus 15:11 (English Standard Version)

# Sermon Outline

**Wonderful Counselor**  
Isaiah 9:1-7

*And His Name Shall be Called*  
Brad Anderson

*God leads his people into the "How can this be?" moments of life to reveal what "the zeal of the Lord" will accomplish... (Isaiah 9:6-7; Luke 1:26-33)*

## What will the zeal of the Lord accomplish?

**It will bring a shining light...** (Isaiah 9:1-2)

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**It will bring a liberating freedom...** (Isaiah 9:3-5)

- From our sin... (Isaiah 9:4)
  - Into complete peace... (Isaiah 9:5)
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**It will bring a sprawling rule...** (Isaiah 9:6-7)

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## Reflection Questions *(taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)*

- When were you most in need of, or grateful for, a flashlight? When have you gotten up early to greet the sunrise? What "dawn" are you anticipating on this year's calendar?
- From Isaiah 8:19-22, what do you think Isaiah meant by the "darkness" in which the people walk (Isaiah 9:2)?
- What suffering had Zebulun and Naphtali (in Israel) experienced? (Look at 2 Kings 15:29-31)
- How does Isaiah describe the effects of the dawning light in verses 3-5? What will be the light? How is he defined in verses 6-7?
- What expectations would this arouse in you if you had first heard Isaiah pronounce it? What type of son or ruler would you expect to arise? How would his future rule and counsel compare with past alliances and plans (see Isaiah 8:7-8 to help shape your answer)? How would this make you feel?
- Where in Isaiah 9:1-7 do you observe the following principles?
  - God brings about the results of his promises.
  - God includes his people in his plan of redemption.
  - God is establishing a kingdom that has no end to its increase, or peace.
  - God redeems his people out of their sin, salvation belongs to the Lord.
- What is the purpose of God's reign in your life? What does it mean that there will be no end to the "increase and peace" of his reign?
- How has Jesus shattered some of the "yokes that burden" you? What is one yoke that you desire to have him shatter now?