

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 225 – Dimness Through His Hand Stretched Out Still (Isaiah 9:1-21)

1. How does Matthew 4:12-16 fit into the ninth chapter of Isaiah?

The prophecy discussed in **Matthew 4:12-16** is from these verses: *“(1) Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. (2) The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined” (Isaiah 9:1-2).*

- The dimness ties back to the previous chapter (**Isaiah 8:22**).
- Assyria had taken the land (**II Kings 15:29**).
- For real light to come to the people, they had to wait for Jesus to come. **Matthew 4:12-16** says this: *“(12) Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; (13) And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: (14) That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, (15) The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; (16) The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.”*
- Jesus is the light that came (**Luke 2:21-32**, **John 8:12**, **John 12:35-36**, and **Acts 26:23**).

2. Should Israel have expected to remain in bondage or to be set free?

The yoke would be broken and joy return as the nation increased: *“(3) Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. (4) For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian” (Isaiah 9:3-4).*

- Multiplied after captivity (**Nehemiah 9:23** and **Zechariah 10:8**).
- Sadly, increase has not always led His people aright (**Hosea 4:7**).
- They may have sown in tears, but restoration is as a day of harvest (**Psalms 126:5-6**).
- Breaking the yoke represents them being set free from bondage (**Leviticus 26:13** and **Jeremiah 30:8**).

3. When Israel was going to be set free was it going to be done through conventional warfare?

No, with burning and fuel of fire: *“For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire” (Isaiah 9:5).*

- **Psalms 46:9**, **Isaiah 4:4**, **Isaiah 30:33**, **Isaiah 66:15-16**, **Jeremiah 49:2**, **Jeremiah 51:58**, and **Ezekiel 39:8-10**.

4. Who is the child that they should have looked forward to being born?

As we study these two verses we shall see this is Jesus being prophesied about: *“(6) For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (7) Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this” (Isaiah 9:6-7).*

- The birth has significance (**Isaiah 7:14**; cf. **Matthew 1:20-25** and **Luke 2:11**).
- The rule of Christ has significance (**Matthew 28:18** and **Ephesians 1:21-22**).
- His name is significant (**Acts 4:10-12**).
- He is deity (**John 8:56-58, John 10:30-33, John 20:28-31, Acts 20:28, Romans 9:1-5, Colossians 2:8-9, Titus 2:13, Hebrews 1:8-12, I John 3:16, and I John 5:20**).
- Upon the throne of David (**Acts 2:29-30**).
- The kingdom (**Colossians 1:12-13** and **Hebrews 12:28-29**).
- Jesus is the just judge (**John 5:30**).

5. Was the sending of the Syrians and Philistines against Israel enough to satisfy the anger of the Lord?

No: *“(8) The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted [fall; Strong’s # 5307] upon Israel. (9) And all the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart, (10) The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars. (11) Therefore the LORD shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and join his enemies together; (12) The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still” (Isaiah 9:8-12).*

- Instead of repenting, they were punished of God and continued in their pride to think that they could just rebuild. This is the attitude disobedient people often have (**Malachi 1:4**).
- Pride does not lead to repentance (**Proverbs 16:18, Hosea 7:10, and James 4:6-10**).
- Destruction does not satisfy God’s anger (**Isaiah 5:25**). We will discuss why He stayed angry in the next question.

6. Why didn’t God’s anger turn away from His people?

Because they did not repent: *“For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the LORD of hosts” (Isaiah 9:13).*

- Some suffer and refuse to change (**Jeremiah 5:3**).
- Repentance turns away God’s anger (**Jeremiah 4:8** and **Jonah 3:9-10**).

7. How far had sin spread amongst God's people?

Everyone, including leaders, widows, etc.: *"(14) Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day. (15) The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail. (16) For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed. (17) Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows: for every one is an hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh folly. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still" (Isaiah 9:14-17).*

- The old and honorable [head] had failed (**Isaiah 5:13**).
- The prophets [tail] had failed (**Jeremiah 5:31** and **Jeremiah 23:14-15**).
- Leaders failed which caused followers to fail (**Isaiah 3:12**; cf. **Matthew 15:14**).
- What God was going to send against them was without mercy for any (**Jeremiah 6:21-25**).
- Again, His anger is still not turned away after this.

8. When the Lord used His people as fuel to the fire and turned them against each other, did that cause His anger to turn away?

No: *"(18) For wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke. (19) Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire: no man shall spare his brother. (20) And he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied: they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm: (21) Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: and they together shall be against Judah. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still" (Isaiah 9:18-21).*

- God's fury is poured out like fire (**Nahum 1:6**).
- The people in whom God pours out His fury are like stubble (**Malachi 4:1**).
- Family turned against each other (**Micah 7:6**).
- Such famine (**Isaiah 51:19**) that their hunger would turn to eating their own flesh (**Jeremiah 19:9**).
- God's own people turned against each other (**II Chronicles 28:6-8**).
- Yet, repentance is the only thing that will satisfy God's anger (**Jeremiah 18:8**).