

St. Matthew A.M.E. Church  
Bible Study  
Monday, December 1, 2008

Advent Study  
Isaiah 9:1-7

The prophet Isaiah was a contemporary of the prophets Amos, Hosea and Micah and began his ministry in 740B.C. His name means “the Lord saves.” He is called the “Messianic prophet” because he more than any of the other prophets, prophesized about a coming Messiah. Hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, the prophet Isaiah declared His coming.

One of the best known, if not the best known of his prophecies is found in the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book that bears his name. In these verses Isaiah speaks of a coming Deliverer who will lead the nation of Israel into joy and prosperity which it had been lacking for years. His coming will fulfill the promises to Abraham and David about the prosperous kingdom that had been foretold and for which the people had been waiting. A child will be born who will grow up to be the Deliverer.

Isaiah prophesies that a time will come when gloom and darkness will be a thing of the past. This is in reference to what he describes in chapter 8 when Israel is invaded by the Assyrians which will bring distress and oppression on the nation. The “people who sit in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land the light will shine on them.” (verse 2) He makes reference to the Zebulun and Naphtali. Isaiah uses these two tribal names (twelve tribes of Israel) to represent the Northern Kingdom of Israel. It is in this area of Israel that Jesus upbringing and early ministry occurred. Today Zebulun and Naphtali are called Galilee. In verse 3 the word “you” refers to God the Father who will lead the people from spiritual darkness into light by sending “the Child”, the Messiah. The light (Messiah) will increase their joy.

Isaiah records five things about the coming Messiah. (verses 6-7)

1. He was to be born a **Child**. This Child, a **Son**, was to be born into the nation of Israel (to us) as one of the covenant people.
2. He will rule over God’s people (Micah 5:2) and the world (Zechariah 14:9) “The government will be upon His shoulders.”
3. He will have four descriptive names that will reveal His character.
  - a. He will be the nation’s **Wonderful Counselor**. The people will gladly listen to Him as the authoritative one and many people will be anxious to hear the Messiah teach God’s ways.
  - b. He is also **the Mighty God**. Isaiah understood that the Messiah was also God Himself. Jesus said “I and the Father are one”, “He who has seen Me, has seen the Father.” (John 14:9, 10)

- c. The Messiah will also be called the **Everlasting Father**. Many people are puzzled by this title because the Messiah, God's Son, is distinguished in the Trinity from God the Father. The explanation for this is that God is One, but He reveals Himself in three persons. In addition **Everlasting Father** is used to describe the Messiah's relationship to time, not His relationship to other members of the Trinity. He is said to be **Everlasting**, just as **God the Father** is called **the Ancient of Days**. Finally it refers to the promise made to David (2 Samuel 7:16) about the "foreverness" of the kingdom which would come through David's line.
  - d. He will also be called **the Prince of Peace**. The Messiah will bring in and maintain the time of millennial peace when the nation will be properly related to the Lord. Isaiah 9:6 is the first of his 25 references to peace.
4. The Messiah seated on David's throne (Luke 1:32-33) will have an eternal rule of peace and justice. His rule will have no end; it will go on forever. (Daniel 7:14, 27, Micah 4:7; Luke 1:33, Rev. 11:15)
  5. This will all be accomplished by **the zeal of the Lord Almighty**. The coming of the kingdom depends on God, not Israel. The Messiah will rule because God promised it and will **zealously** see that the kingdom comes. Without His sovereign intervention there will be no kingdom for Israel.

Isaiah assumed that the messianic Child, Jesus Christ, would establish His reign in one Advent, that when the child grew up He would rule in triumph. Like the other prophets, Isaiah was not aware of the time gap between the Messiah's two Advents. (1 Peter 1:10-12)