



Good Shepherd
Sermon-Based Study Guide

Isaiah 8.19-9.7 | November 30, 2025

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I. Introduction to this Study

This Sunday the Season of Advent begins. We turn again to the events surrounding the birth of Jesus, and this week we will look at the Prophet Isaiah's words of hope and promise in chapter 9, especially after learning about the darkness God's people were experiencing at the hands of the Assyrians – and their own life and faith choices! (Chapter 8)

The miracle and mystery of the incarnation - God taking on human flesh, coming into this world as a baby, and living among us. Amazingly, the promise of God's Anointed One entering the world first came hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus. A man named Isaiah was given the ability to hear and proclaim God's messages. As he learns of God's intentions, he records a wonderful song of promise, of hope and light, and of the reign of God's Anointed over all things.

Let's experience how Jesus, the Light of the World, will shine in the darkest corners of this world and even in those areas of our lives and/or our family's lives - that need to encounter His saving love and peace.

II. Connecting with One Another

Longing. Hoping. Lamenting. Trusting. Resting. This past year has been a mixture of the hard and the beautiful for many of us. We are longing for our Savior. We can rest in the knowledge that He loves us and is with us during these difficult times. Share with one another what these words bring to your heart and mind...

On a lighter note, when were you most in need of, or grateful for a flashlight?

III. Study the Text

Read Isaiah 8.11-22 (In worship we will begin reading from v.19...)

- It describes the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah and their response to the threat posed by the invading Assyrian Empire [Isa8.1-10] (c. 740-715 BC).
- How have the people reacted to this threat? To whom have they turned to learn of the future (verse 19)? How have they responded toward God (see verse 21)? What is their



spiritual state (verse 22)?

How do you respond when you're threatened?
To whom – or what – do you turn to?

Read Isaiah 9.1-7

- The tone shifts as chapter 9 begins. Zebulun and Naphtali were areas in Israel (the Northern Kingdom) that had been decimated by the invading Assyrians in 734-732. The suffering, death, and devastation were most severe in these areas. See *2nd Kings 15.29*. And yet, what promise is given?
- As you read *Isaiah 9.1-7* notice the ways in which the promised One is described. What central promise is issued in this passage?
- In the past, God “humbled” these two lands (verse 1). The Hebrew means to be “brought low” or “brought into contempt.”
What purpose does humbling serve in the life of a believer? When has God humbled you?
- What role does light play in verse 2? How does it continue with the themes of verse 1?
- To whom does the “You” of verses 3-4 refer? In contrast to the gloomy darkness that shrouded Israel and Judah, there will be a day when there will be light. How would this promise impact the people facing the imminent threat from Assyria?

IV. Prayer

Spend time in prayer together:

- For those in need in our community – those with physical needs, emotional needs, and spiritual needs – that they might find their needs fulfilled in the home of and by the family of God.
- For those near and dear to us who find the holiday season to be difficult due to the loss of a loved one, financial distress, health problems, or other reasons.
- Ask God to use our Advent/Christmas gatherings, and the upcoming Christmas Worship Celebration and the Hope for the Holidays worship gathering, to point clearly to His Son Jesus, that throughout this season, we might invite all people to grow into a Christ centered life in His family!

V. Digging Deeper

- Read & reflect: *Isaiah 9.1-7* (again) - The part of the world highlighted in 9.1 is one of the world's most troubled spots today. Pause and pray for the different peoples who live in these areas today.
- When was the kingdom in 9.7 established? In what ways is the coming kingdom of justice and righteousness good news for the poor, the needy, and the oppressed? How can we be involved in its coming?
- How does the New Testament interpret what this prophecy means (see *Matthew 4.12-17*; *Luke 1.32*; *John 8.12*)?

