

Q: What do think about when the Messiah is given the title of Father?

Seeing Jesus as Father seems odd. But this is a connection between Jesus and the redeemed and not one between Jesus and the other members of the Trinity, where his role is *not* that of father. But in relation to believers, Jesus takes on the role of Father. He often refers to us with fatherly language, often calling us children, sons, and daughters. He does refer to us as brothers, but that is often in the context where he is the older, wiser, and pre-eminent brother in relationship to us. He does not make himself equal with us, but serves us as an older brother might serve his siblings on behalf of the Father.

Prince of Peace

Some diplomats are known as people who bring about peace. But their greatest successes do not last. The conflict that lies behind all warfare will not end until someone brings about a deeper kind of peace.

Q: What do you learn about Jesus role as prince of peace from the following verses?

Romans 5:1 _____

John 14:27 _____

Q: As a group, identify some of ways life can be different once you have peace with God through Jesus Christ. What are some of the changes that this produces?

Q: As a group, discuss some of the ways in which peace with God brings peace to other areas of your life.

Q: Any of us can move from peace to annoyance, conflict, anger, or frustration. What might be some things we can do to cause the peace we have with God to continue to nourish other relationships?

Harvest **Reaching Beyond**

Evangelical Free Church

*A Disciplemaking Tool of Harvest Evangelical Free Church
(for personal study and/or growth groups)*

Week of December 10, 2017

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7; Isa 7:14

Week Overview:

Hope Has Come

Sometimes we can make educated guesses that turn out to be right. If you offer a youngster a choice between spinach or chocolate ice cream, the odds are the ice cream will win. When you know the personality of a friend you can guess whether they will opt for a winter getaway in New York City or one in Miami, Florida. You might also be able to guess that a powerhouse athletic program will compete for the national championship in football, wrestling, or basketball.

But our educated guesses can easily be wrong. The outcome of the last Presidential election was not what many political experts predicted. The National Weather Service often fails to predict the number of hurricanes in the upcoming season and how many will impact the United States. Occasionally our mates or children make choices we didn't see coming.

If we really had prophetic abilities, many of us could guarantee riches by foreseeing the performance of stocks on Wall Street or winners of horse races or victors in any kind of professional athletics. If most of us could really anticipate the future in detail, we would probably cash in on that talent.

The prophecies of the Old Testament were not made to make the prophets rich, but to point forward to the unfolding plan of redemption that God was bringing about. It was a way to unveil God's heart for mankind.

Critics sometimes dismiss the prophetic texts of scripture as lucky guesses or as additions that were inserted after the event transpired. Isaiah 9 is a key text that describes the advent of Jesus as the messiah centuries before Christ came to earth. In this chapter, God describes the roles that Jesus will take when he comes.

The prediction speaks of someone who is more than an ordinary human being. He will be the supreme embodiment of qualities that were imperfectly seen in men like David, Solomon, and Moses. His authority will surpass theirs. His kingdom will be greater. His rule more will be more powerful. And his words more life-giving.

The prophecy of the Messiah

Isaiah 9:6-7

⁶ 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.
⁷ 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.

Q: The birth of a child is frequently a time of celebration and thanksgiving. Share details with the group about some births in your family or among acquaintances that were special or meaningful in some way.

Q: Isaiah celebrates the birth of a son. What is implied in verse 6 when it promises “to *us* (this includes the prophet and his audience) a son is given”?

Q: Is the idea of a child ruler generally considered a good thing or a bad thing? See Isaiah 3:4. What do we think of when we normally think of someone very young taking a leadership role?

Q: What would have to be true about the child for it to be a good thing that the responsibilities of governing a people rest on his shoulders?

Q: Look at the following verses and describe what Jesus says about the nature of his ‘government’:

Matthew 28:18 _____

Matthew 11:27 _____

John 5:22 _____

Q: As a group discuss some of the healthy ways Christ-followers should relate to Jesus in his role as supreme ruler.

The best leaders have the ability to speak wisdom into the lives of those around them. When God asked Solomon what he wanted most in order to govern the people, he asked for wisdom (1 Kings 3:9). This pleased God greatly. The person here has the ability to speak to men and women as a counselor who is unsurpassed in wisdom and understanding.

Q: Discuss Jesus claim about himself in Luke 11:31:

Q: What do we tend to think of national leaders who make decisions on their own without consulting the experts who are available to them? How is the one spoken of here different?

Q: What do we learn of the wisdom of Jesus in the following verses?

Luke 2:47 _____

John 7:46 _____

Matthew 7:29 _____

Mark 1:22 _____

1 Corinthians 1:30 _____

Q: Discuss some of the statements Jesus made that impress you because of the wisdom they contain. (You don’t need to cite the verse if you can’t recall it.)
