“Unto Us a Child is Born: The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts”

Isaiah 9:1-7

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 1/3/21)

Here’s a multiple-choice question for you:

The year 2020 will be remembered as:

1. Scary b) difficult c) the darkest year in recent memory d) all of the above

I know you are tempted to say d), but don’t! It’s a trick question! The question does not allow for any other view. It’s a distorted reality. When you are so focused on a), b), c), or d), you find it hard to embrace the reality of all that God has given us. And He’s given us PLENTY!

Faith does not require God’s people to ignore this present darkness and distress, but it does cause us to say “nevertheless”. (Q1) Our King will wage war for His chosen people, motivated by His love for us. He will bring peace to His people, through restored fellowship with Himself. This King will treasure His people forever. He rules for His glory and your benefit. These glorious truths should inform the way you live your life each and every day.

Notice at the end of 9:7 where it says, “The zeal of the Lord of Hosts **WILL** accomplish this.” His promises are as good as done. Some are already done, and some are not yet done, but they will happen. Isaiah 9 describes Jesus’ first and second coming in the same passage. Jesus has begun the work of gathering God’s people to Himself and reclaiming God’s world for Himself. Child of God, your best days are ahead of you! (Q2) Read 9:7 again, noticing the word “government”. Is Jesus reigning in your heart, or are you self-governed? (Q3) Notice that word “zeal”. God’s zeal for the glory of His Son guarantees Him a kingdom and a people forever. His zeal will culminate in a new heaven and a new earth reigned by one king- Jesus! Is Jesus your King?

What is the nature of this “already and not yet” kingdom? In it there is peace with God. In this kingdom, His power is released for your benefit and His glory. He is zealous for you. He is jealous for you. He gave His own Son to save you from the greatest enemies: sin and self. Child of God, remember that the war has already been won on your behalf. You don’t have to earn God’s favor- He’s done all the heavy lifting for you! He took your Hell so that you can live a heavenly life. Death has no claim on you. Death has been conquered in Jesus Christ. You know full well that you are a “work in progress” (see Phil. 1:6). The good news is that Christ’s worthiness covers your unworthiness. You are secure in Him. How do you know? “The zeal of the Lord will perform this.”

Here’s some more good news about your security: The wisdom of God has ordained all the things He allows you to go through. He has infinite wisdom. I am not wise enough to choose the circumstances that lead to my sanctification, but God is! (see Rom. 8:28-29) The King’s people will never cease discovering the wonders of God and the depths of His love for them. None of us has arrived yet. There is always more to know. There is always more love to experience. There is always more governance of my life to give over to Him. Jesus is zealous to rule every aspect of our lives for His glory and our benefit.

The earthly reign of Christ mentioned in 9:7 is the fulfillment of His promise to David. We’re not told when this is going to happen, but we know a new heaven and a new earth are on the way. This earthly kingdom will reflect God’s nature and His character. His kingdom people will also live out these attributes. (Q4) How shall we then live in the meantime? Shall we just “hold on” as this old world decays around us? NO! We should live in obedience to the King, proclaiming His gospel. We should be loyal to the King, advocating for what is just and right. (Q5) The King’s people should trust in Him, not in what is around them, not in themselves, and not in leaders and alliances.

Here’s another multiple-choice question for you:

The year 2021 for God’s people will be one in which they:

1. Live loyally for their King b) Advocate for what is right and just c) Trust wholly in their King d) All of the above

What is **your** response? (Q6)

**QUESTIONS:**

1. “This world may be sick and evil, but nevertheless I will…” How will you finish that sentence this year?
2. Yes, I know your body doesn’t work right and your memory is failing, but I still contend that your best days are ahead of you! Explain.
3. Who is on the throne of your heart? Always? Explain.
4. Describe as many aspects of God’s nature and character as you can. (I’ll get you started: look at Isa. 9:6 and Rom. 1:20.)
5. What falls into the category of “just and right”? Pastor Steve mentioned helping the unborn, fighting for the oppressed, and mentoring troubled youth. Can you think of more? What can you do this year to advocate for the needy of our world?
6. Do you have a **plan** to be in God’s Word every day this year? Might I suggest reading a chapter/day in the New Testament, and then asking yourself these questions: 1) What were the key verses? 2) What did this passage mean to me? 3) How can I apply it today?

“Standing on the Promises of Christ My King” (Russell Kelso Carter)

Standing on the promises of Christ my King,

Through eternal ages let His praises ring,

Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,

Standing on the promises of God.

Standing, standing,

Standing on the promises of God my Savior;

Standing, standing,

I’m standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises that cannot fail,

When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,

By the living Word of God I shall prevail,

Standing on the promises of God.