

Osaka International Church

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Title: The Source of Peace

Scripture: Isaiah 9:1-7

Key Verse: John 16:33

I. Introduction

Good morning! One of the realities of life is that the human heart is not very stable. If you are like me, then you can be going along in the day feeling pretty good and then - crash! Suddenly, something happens and that happy feeling is gone and you are upset and frustrated. It doesn't take a big thing, even a small thing - a rude word from a coworker, a blaring car horn, or the embarrassment of a silly mistake can knock us off balance and send us into the pits. And when we get upset, it often hurts the people around us as well.

Take a look at this photo. Just a few minutes earlier, this building in Adapazari, Turkey, looked strong and stable. Now it is falling over and smashing into the building next to it. In this case, an earthquake caused the collapse. But for us, very often it doesn't take a big earthquake to knock us off balance. If we do not have a solid foundation of peace in our heart, even small things can cause us to lose our stability. When this happens in a home, family relationships are damaged. When it happens between nations, it can lead to war. No wonder the world longs for peace and stability. But lasting peace has to be built on a strong foundation.



Where can we find a lasting and stable foundation for peace? That is our question for this morning. Let's begin with a look at Isaiah 9:1-7.

II. Scripture Isaiah 9:1-7

[1] Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan [2] The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. [3] You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. [4] For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. [5] Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. [6] For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. [7] Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

III. Exposition

These seven verses of Messianic prophecy were written 700 years before Jesus was born, but they are filled with insights into the identity and mission of Jesus the Messiah. Isaiah 9:1 is a promise of salvation from darkness and gloom. **(Isaiah 9:1) "Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan—."** At the time when Isaiah spoke these words, there was great distress in Israel because the Assyrians had invaded and many people had been taken into captivity. It was a time of fear and gloom. But Isaiah looked ahead to the future and spoke of a time when salvation would come. Zebulun and Naphatali, two regions in northern Israel had been humbled by the invading Assyrians. But one day they will be honored, the prophet promises.

Comparison of these two maps of Israel shows that the area known as Zebulun and Naphatali in Isaiah's time is the same area which includes the towns of Nazareth and Capernaum. Nazareth is where Jesus grew up. And Capernaum was the home base for Jesus when He was ministering. What an honor for these lands, to be home to Jesus, the Christ! In Isaiah's time there was gloom and darkness, but when Jesus came, light and life appeared.



Isaiah 9:2 continues saying, **“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.”** Have you ever felt like your heart was filled with gloom? Has the path of your life been hidden by darkness? Perhaps you are now going through a difficult time of trial or testing, but don't give up. Don't give up and don't be discouraged. If you open your heart to Jesus, then He will come into your heart, and light and life will sweep away the darkness.



Isaiah's words look forward prophetically to **John 8:12**, where Jesus declared, **“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”** Whatever you may be struggling with, don't give up. At the right time, the light of Jesus will shine forth if you place your trust in Him.



The words of Isaiah 9:3-5 speak of the coming of times of joy and of release from fear and struggle. The yoke is shattered, and the weapons and uniforms of war are consumed by fire, because they are no longer needed after the great victory has been won. What is the yoke that enslaves mankind? It is the yoke of sin and death. But Jesus shatters the yoke and sets us free. Jesus provided for this salvation by giving His life as a ransom for ours on the cross in payment for our sins. As John the Baptist said long ago, **(John 1:29b)**, **“Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”**



Isaiah 9:6 speaks clearly of the coming of the Messiah, Jesus, **“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”**

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,” in just a few words Isaiah paints a picture of a child who is born as a human baby, yet who is given from heaven. The Messiah is both human and divine, sent from God and born of Mary. And this child, the Lord Jesus, is born to have authority, He will govern His people, **“And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”** Here are four titles for the Messiah that speak of Jesus: He is the **“Wonderful Counselor,”** a Great King who rules with perfect wisdom. He is **“Mighty God,”** God Himself come in the flesh. He is **“the Everlasting Father,”** - words that speak of His eternal nature and of His identity as the Creator of all things. And, finally, the Lord Jesus is the, **“Prince of Peace”**.

Where can we find a lasting and stable foundation for peace? This last title, **“Prince of Peace,”** points to the answer. Jesus is the source of true and lasting peace. Peace between us and our Creator, peace in our hearts, and a growing peace between brothers and sisters as we learn to walk in His ways. **Isaiah 9:7** tells us that Jesus will reign forever, **“Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.”** Every time someone invites Jesus into their heart, they receive peace with God and citizenship in heaven. And as we submit to Him, His government increases. As faith in Christ grows, the His government and His peace also grow, in our hearts and in the world.



2,000 years ago, a young virgin girl named Mary was miraculously made pregnant by the Holy Spirit of God, and she gave birth to Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of Man. Jesus walked among the people, did miracles of many kinds, and taught the people the way of life, how to live in intimate relationship with the Creator God who is our Heavenly Father.



IV. Conclusion

In **John 16:33**, Jesus told His disciples, **“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”** When we struggle with many troubles, we often think that what we need is to be released from our troubles. But Jesus clearly taught that as long as we are in the world we will have trouble. This is the reality of living in a fallen world. Does this mean that peace is impossible? No, it does not mean that at all. In the very same place where Jesus said, **“In this world you will have trouble,”** Jesus also said, **“But take heart! I have overcome the world.”** Jesus has obtained the victory for us; He has opened the way for us to receive eternal salvation.

In this world we will have trouble. But we don't have to let the troubles of this world knock us off balance like a building with a weak foundation that is toppled by an earthquake. If we have a firm foundation of peace in our hearts, then we will be able to stand firm against the storms of this life.



Where can we find such a lasting and stable foundation for our hearts? We can find it in an intimate relationship with Jesus. In Christ we can have peace. True peace is found through placing our whole life in His hands. When we trust in Him completely, then we find peace. A few minutes ago, in the Scripture reading for the third Advent candle, we heard the words of **Ephesians 2:14**, where Paul wrote, **“He himself is our peace.”** There it is. Jesus Himself is our peace. As a clever person once put it: **“No Jesus, No Peace;” “Know Jesus, Know Peace.”** Jesus Himself is our peace, and without Him, true and lasting peace is impossible.

There is one more week left before Christmas. This week, take time to draw near to the Lord Jesus in your heart, and He will draw near to you. And in Him, you can find true and lasting peace. Welcome Jesus into your heart and into your life every day, and find peace.

V. Closing Prayer