

Bible Readings

Old Testament Readings

2 Samuel 7:12-13

¹² When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Isaiah 9:1-7

⁹ 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 honour Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—

² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness 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 warriors 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 Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the greatness 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.

New Testament Reading

Luke 1:26-33

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

Sermon

The Forever King (2 Samuel 7:12-13; Isaiah 9:1-7 and Luke 1:26-33)

20-Dec-20

We'll be **looking at all 3 readings**, so I encourage you to have your Bibles handy and open at the **1st passage from 2 Samuel 7:12-13**.

Let me **pray** before we begin...

Let's pray...

Intro

Some things don't last forever - like

- Toilet Paper
- Honeymoons
- Holidays
- The Weekend
- Phone battery and batteries in general
- Sleep/Nap
- Money
- Our Youth
- Our bodies
- Life - basically we can't live forever - or can we?

[PowerPoint 1-Forever]

The things that please are temporary

The things that disturb us are temporary

Eternal (things) are the important ones

There are three huge gates that lead into the Cathedral of Milan.

Over one gate there is an inscription in marble under a beautiful flower bouquet that says, "The things that please are temporary."

Over the second gate, there is a cross with this inscription: "The things that disturb us are temporary."

However, over the central gate, there is a big inscription saying, "Eternal are the important ones."

The Forever King Promised (2 Samuel 7:12-13)

In our first reading from 2 Samuel 7:12-13

[If you'd like to turn there now]

[PowerPoint 2-2 Sam 7:12-13]

God's prophet **Nathan**

Speaks to King **David**

Around about **1000 BC**

Nathan tells David

V12 - He **will have a son** and **God** will **establish His Kingdom**

That son of David's is King **Solomon**

V13 - says it will be **Solomon** who **builds God** a **house** for His Holy Name -

And that does happen - **Solomon builds a magnificent temple**

But look at the end of v13 -

God promises He will establish the **throne of David's** son's kingdom forever

Clearly this cannot be the throne of King Solomon as he didn't live forever - and

in fact it can't be any king of Israel as none of them lived forever - and in fact

there isn't even a king in Israel anymore

So, this promise is for a **forever king** of a forever kingdom to come

God always keeps His promises

This promise finds its **fulfilment** in the **birth of Jesus** - God's Son - the forever king - who has always existed from before the creation of the World

For us of course - **we have a choice** as to whether **we believe** God's promises or reject them

The Forever King Described (Isaiah 9:1-7)

In our 2nd reading - from Isaiah 9:1-7

[If you'd like to turn there now]

We have another promise from God - through another prophet

The prophet **Isaiah**

Around 700BC

[PowerPoint 3-Isaiah 9:1-2]

In v1 - God promises the **Northern Region of Israel** - the land of **Zebulun** and **Naphtali** - and the area around the **Sea of Galilee** - better days ahead

In Isaiah's time - this area was most **affected by** the **invasion** from the North - by the **Assyrians**

So v2 - God promises this **region** that is **walking in darkness** will one day **see a great light**

This was fulfilled when Jesus the light of the world **brought people out of the darkness of their sin** and into His glorious light

And of course, **Jesus began** His **ministry** in this region of Israel

In fact, this promise from Isaiah is quoted in **Matthew's Gospel** - Matt 4:14-16

[PowerPoint 3-Isaiah 9:3-4]

V3 - promises that the **nation** will be **enlarged** and their **joy increased**

This is fulfilled in the fact that **Jesus' ministry** was **described** as like **being part of a wedding party** - when people rejoiced at being with the bridegroom, Jesus - that's in Matthew 9:14-15

In v4 - God promises a **victory** - like in **Gideon's great victory** over the Midianites - in Judges 7

A victory that will put an **end** to **people feeling burdened**

[PowerPoint 5-Isaiah 9:5-6]

And v5 describes this victory - like a **war being over** - all the **soldiers' boots** and **battle gear** are rolled up and **chucked in the fire** - peace is restored

Again, this is the victory **Jesus brings**

With Jesus death and resurrection - **there is a complete victory over sin and death**

We can be **part of that victory**

As Romans 8:37 says: **We are more than conquerors** through Jesus who **loves us**

The **remaining versus** of the Isaiah passage - vv6-7 - go on to **describe this Forever King - Jesus**

Firstly, in verse 6 - **we see a son given to us** - Jesus the **Son of God** - He is a **gift from God** - the best gift we could possibly have - better than any Christmas gift under the tree!

Given to us - by God's grace - because God loved us so much - and He wanted to have a relationship with us so much and He wanted us to be free from sin - free from the sin that we can't get rid of ourselves - no matter how hard we try.

Next, we see - still in v6 - that the **government will be on his shoulders**. In the original **Hebrew** language this means that the **rule and dominion of the whole world is on Jesus' shoulders** - He is the one true ruler of the world. **Forget** about **G20's** and **G8's** and the idea of a **world government** - we already have one ruler of the Earth - it's **King Jesus**

And then Isaiah - still in v6 - gives Jesus some really important names

He says Jesus will be called **Wonderful Counsellor** -

Some of you here today **might** have **had counselling** in your life - it may or may not have been helpful - and I'm **not doubting** the **usefulness** of counselling for some people

But Isaiah says **Jesus** is a wonderful **counsellor** -

The **Hebrew** here literally means - a wonder of a counsellor - it's the nearest word in Hebrew to 'supernatural' - so it means Jesus is a supernatural counsellor -

His wisdom is not like **human wisdom** - His wisdom is **way higher** than human wisdom

We only have to read the Gospels - to see how wise Jesus was -

He **outsmarted** the **Pharisees** and the **teachers** and **experts** of the **Law** -

He answered their questions - with His own questions -

He **taught** us to **go the extra mile** - to **turn the other cheek** - to **forgive 70 x 7 times** - to **love your neighbour as yourself** - to **love your enemies** and **pray for those who persecute you** - he taught that there was **no greater love than laying down your life for your friends** - and went ahead and did it - to **prove it!**

The people **marveled at His teaching** -

Why? Because it was **Heavenly teaching** not earthly teaching - He said His **kingdom** was not of this world -

Where do we **find this** **supernatural counselling** of Jesus?

Simple - in His Word -

And supernaturally The **Holy Spirit** - **makes God's Word come alive** and have meaning in our lives?

What a wonderful counsellor Jesus is!

But how often **do we rely on our own wisdom and experience** instead of His?

All the time? Sometimes?

(pause)

The next name Isaiah gives Jesus is - **Mighty God** - Mighty can also mean **strong and brave** here - like any ruler should be - but no ruler or king that **ever lived** can really claim to be God (they **might think they can**) - but here **Jesus is described as God** -

This should **put paid to any claims** by people that **Jesus was just** a good bloke with great teaching - Here **Isaiah states clearly** **Jesus is fully God** - and His **might and strength** does not come as human's would expect by **military power** - but through the **power of His Word** -

God's Word **changes hearts and minds** - it **changed** the persecutor **Saul** to the apostle Paul - it **changed** the **Roman Empire** which persecuted Christians to the Roman Empire that made Christianity its religion of choice!

Jesus the Mighty God - uses **His Word as a double-edged sword** - which penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; and it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Heb 4:12)

The next name Isaiah gives Jesus the name **Everlasting Father**

This gives us the encouragement to know that **Jesus' rule of this Earth** is not temporary - **but permanent** - **everlasting** - **forever and ever** - he's not going to be dethroned or succeeded -

He is the **forever King!**

And the term Father - **speaks of his care and concern for His people**. He cares for His people like any good father would care for his children

And Isaiah also calls Jesus - **the Prince of Peace** -

Prince makes him **royalty** - and **Peace** is the Hebrew word - **Shalom** - which gives the idea of **completeness, wholeness, healthiness, wellbeing and contentment** - It means much more than our English word peace -

And ultimately, we can only have all of this **by being in a right relationship with God** -

Jesus achieves that peace between human beings and God -

That is why Isaiah is able to say in v2 - that the people walking in darkness have seen a great light -

Not only that Isaiah says in v4 - the **people's burdens will be lifted** by Jesus.

That's what Jesus himself said - "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matt 11:28-30)

Here's how the MSG version puts it:

28-30 "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

That's what this Prince of Peace gives us - a way of living freely side by side with Jesus as our guide, our teacher, our example...

Jesus is saying we're not on our own

We can be yoked to Him and **He will pull us through life**

And we can find rest -

Not from the physical problems we've had in 2020 - **bushfires, floods, and storms and COVID**

But rest for our souls -

Peace with God - because our sins are forgiven

And **peace within ourselves** - because we know there's a place for us beyond this Earth

A peace that's bigger than all the **problems of 2020**

And regardless of what's happening in this world right now -

If we have that relationship with Jesus - that brings us out of darkness into the light - that relationship with the one who gives us rest and carries our burdens.

Then **Isaiah says in v3 - we can have joy - real joy** - just like the joy the people of Judah felt when it was harvest time and the crops were harvested! Sometimes - we **Presbyterians are a bit too serious.**

We can be happy and joyful - **we have Jesus**

In the gift of King Jesus - we have **something to really rejoice about!**

Something to get really excited about!

The **greatest gift of all time.**

An event in history that was **so important** that the calendar was changed to number the years from Jesus' birth onwards.

An event that even brought a cease fire in the trenches in the Western front on Christmas Day 1914 - as soldiers from both sides stopped fighting for a day to acknowledge the birth of Jesus!

Yet we walk around today gloomy and distressed like there is no hope

We walk around with long faces - when we have the best news of all time?

Why do we do that?

[PowerPoint 6-Isaiah 9:6-7]

Friends we do have hope...A Rock-Solid hope!

According to verse 7 - King **Jesus' government will govern in peace forever** without any end - **He will reign on His throne forever and ever.**

Friends, this should give us hope of better things to come when we can live with Jesus in His forever kingdom - where there won't be years like 2020 - just everlasting peace with the Prince of Peace

And all this is only possible - Isaiah says at the end of v7 - because of the Lord Almighty's zeal - literally because of God's jealousy for His people - His need to have a proper relationship with His people - drove Him - to send Jesus to fix sin in the world - and bring peace between God and humankind

The Forever King Announced (Luke 1:26-33)

Which brings us to our NT passage

From Luke 1:26-33 - and God begins to fulfil His promise for a forever King

[please turn there now]

We fast forward 700 years from Isaiah's time

[PowerPoint 7-Luke 1:26-28]

An angel appears to a virgin named Mary

And tells her she has been highly favoured by God

[PowerPoint 8-Luke 1:29-33]

The angel tells Mary not to be afraid

Even though she is a virgin - the angel says she will conceive and give birth to a son

He is no ordinary son

V31 - He will be called Jesus - which means "God saves"

Through this baby boy - **God will save people from their sin and from their death**

V32 - He will be *great*

No one has influenced history **more than Jesus**

Charles Spurgeon says this *"Is it not proven that he is great? Conquerors are great, and he is the greatest of them. Deliverers are great, and he is the greatest of them. Liberators are great, and he is the greatest of them. Saviours are great, and he is the greatest of them."*

Still v32 - He will be called the Son of the Most High - **yes, He is Mary's son**
but He is also the Son of God

And v33 - He will fulfil the prophesy from **2 Samuel 7:12-13** - our 1st reading
He will be reign on the throne of His father David - **David is Jesus' ancestor**
through the family lines of both is earthly father - **Joseph** - and His mother - **Mary**

And finally, v33 - **Jesus' kingdom is a forever kingdom**

Conclusion

There's only one conclusion to make of all this

God promised a **forever king of a forever kingdom**

And Jesus IS that **forever king of that forever kingdom**

Everything in life - even life itself - **is temporary.**

But **we can live forever** in that forever kingdom - with Jesus

It's that certain hope of living forever in Heaven - that **gets us through the here and now**

As the hymn says:

Because He lives, I can face tomorrow

Because He lives, all fear is gone

Because I know He holds the future

And life is worth the living, just because He lives

[PowerPoint 9-John 5:24]

Jesus makes His own promise - which **He invites every person to believe...**

In John 5:24 - Jesus says

Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

Do **you** believe this promise?

If you answer No - **you won't live forever**

If you answer Yes - **you will live forever**

Let's pray...