

In the early phase of his ministry, Jesus blessed the same lands that had once experienced the darkest judgments. The Lord seems to have been reflecting on a specific portion of Isaiah's prophecy by shining blessings on the inhabitants of northern Israel, and providing the people with a picture of the glories of the kingdom.

Isaiah 2:1-5

- a picture of the kingdom, teaching of all nations
- Isaiah painfully faces the present reality of his people (Isaiah 7:1-2)
- How do we know Jesus was thinking about this section of Isaiah?

Matthew 4:12-16

- Jesus did this to fulfill prophecy
- Is this a random fulfillment of prophecy?
- Some people make the Bible irrelevant
- It is an invitation to consider the context

Isaiah 9:1-2 RV

- Israel never drove out the Canaanites
- Syrians in the days of Gideon, David, Baasha, Ahab, Elisha, Tiglath-pileser III
- Jesus came to reverse all that

Isaiah 8:21

- Inhabitants of Judah hungry, curse God

Matthew 4:10

- Jesus hungry, but blesses God in his affliction

Isaiah 9:8-12

- Judgment to the land of Israel in the north
- 'For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still' 9:12 9:17 9:21 10:4

Matthew 4:23

- Blessings for Israel in the north
- Judgment is displaced by preaching and healing

Isaiah 9:15-16,18-21

- No spiritual leadership among Israel
- Brother warred against brother, Manasseh against Ephraim and Ephraim against Manasseh

Matthew 4:18-22

- Jesus chooses spiritual leaders for the people
- Jesus brings brothers together in a region that was plagued by fraternal conflict

Isaiah 9:12

- Syria, who was once allied to Israel against Judah, would turn against the northern kingdom of Israel

Matthew 4:23-25

- Jesus brings together men and women from Syria, Israel, Judah, and beyond

Matthew 5:1-2

- a picture of the kingdom, teaching of all nations
- How do we know Jesus was thinking about this section of Isaiah?
- It was the blueprint for his life, it was his guidebook

Isaiah 9:6

- WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR (Matthew 7:28-29)
- MIGHTY GOD, AIL GIBBOR (Matthew 4:1-11)
- EVERLASTING FATHER, FATHER OF ETERNITY (Matthew 4:21-22)
- PRINCE OF PEACE (Matthew 5:9; Ephesians 2:14-18)

Introduction

That's where it all starts. It all begins with teaching. The apostle Paul says, and we readily concur, that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. We know that faith comes from an intelligent understanding and appreciation of the things of God. The spirit of God is not an experience outside of the word, it is the word, and the word gives faith. That's why the nations come up to Jerusalem. That's why we're here today. In a way, it broke Isaiah's heart to receive such a vision. He saw all nations coming up to Jerusalem to ask about the God of Jacob – what an amazing thing, the nations of the world coming up to learn about the God of Jacob – and getting excited about it! But it broke Isaiah's heart, not because the vision wasn't sufficient for him to get excited about the kingdom – he wanted the kingdom more than anything. Isaiah's heart was broken because his own people couldn't appreciate it. They didn't need the kingdom. They were already in it, as far as they were concerned. But the days were fast approaching when nations would ascend the hills of Judah to come up to Jerusalem, and it wouldn't be for learning. It would be for war.

What a sad contrast to the wonderful prophecy we just read a few chapters before. Here in chapter 7 Israel and Syria come up to war against Jerusalem, and back in chapter 2 it says that they will learn war no more! In the days of Jotham, king Ahaz's father, this alliance of Syria and Israel began to come against Judah. 2 Chronicles 28 records that in Ahaz's day the confederacy nearly took the city of Jerusalem – slaughtering 120,000 people and taking 200,000 captive. Around this time – whether before or after this great battle I'm not sure – Isaiah came with a message to Ahaz to trust in Yahweh. Ahaz couldn't bring himself to, even when God offered to give him a sign for assurance.

Conclusion

We end where we started – Jesus teaching the nations in a high mountain, with all people flowing unto him. It's a picture of the kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount. The quotation of Isaiah makes us consider the context.

It's not random, is it? It is a deliberate reference to the whole history of Israel. The Bible is not riddled with mistakes as some are beginning to contend. This book has the answers for our individual problems, it is the guidebook for our families, and it is the only prescription for the health of our ecclesias and our whole community. We must never tire of counsel.

We gather here at the start of this Bible School to remember our Lord, who was immersed in His Father's Word. We are astonished at his wisdom, but even more in awe of the humility he holds it in. As we examine ourselves and confess how far short we fall, let us resolve – right here and right now, to walk in the light of the Lord.