

Further Digging - Advent 2016

Isaiah 9:1-7

God gave his people this vision of future deliverance during a time of national moral disintegration, deep fear, and warning of impending disaster. You may want to read it several times on different days, meditating on what it means that Jesus has come and is coming again.

PART 1: Read Isaiah 9:1-7 alongside New Testament passages that show some of the ways in which Jesus fulfills the long-awaited promises. After reading, take time to respond to what these promises and their fulfillment in Jesus mean to our world and to you and your family.

Imagine hearing Jesus reading these hundreds-year old verses as he walked on earth. Imagine being in the crowd as he spoke this prophecy and claimed to fulfill it. *see Matthew 4:12-17*

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.” *see John 8:12*

“You have multiplied the nation” *see Ephesians 2:11-22*

“You have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.” (Note that Midian is a reference to God’s rescue through Gideon in the book of Judges) *see Luke 7:18-23, Hebrews 2:14-15*

“For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire” *see Luke 2:8-14*

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given” *see John 1:14, 3:16-17*

“The government shall be upon his shoulder” *see Jeremiah 23:5-6, Ephesians 1:16-22, Matthew 28:18-20*

Do some of these promises speak to you with special significance right now?

PART 2: How does the Lord speak to you through each of the four names of our Redeemer given in Isaiah 9? What do these names of our Savior mean to our world and to you and your family?

“Wonderful Counselor” – The word counselor can mean an advisor and also someone who plans and carries out a wise course of action, used to describe a king. *see 1 Corinthians 1:30, Colossians 2:3*

“Mighty God” – emphasizes his divine power as a warrior. *see 1 Corinthians 15:24–26, Hebrews 1:8*

“Everlasting Father” – an enduring, compassionate provider and protector. *see Hebrews 2:13–14*

“Prince of Peace” – Shalom: well-being and wholeness to individuals and all of society. *see Luke 2:14, Romans 5:1–2, 2 Corinthians 5:19*

PART 3: Exploring our reactions to his name.

God gives us his Name, and also gives us names and titles that help us grasp his multiple attributes. Many different words can help us better understand and worship the One True God. For example, Jehovah Raah means The LORD my Shepherd, a name of God familiar to us through Psalm 23.

Make a list of all the names or titles of God that you can think of. (If you are artistic, feel free to creatively depict these!)

Which of these names draw you in? Which feel more difficult for you to embrace? Why might this be? Bring your reactions to his name to him in prayer.

What are some of your earliest associations with God’s name?

How might the Lord be inviting you to exalt in his name in new ways at this point in your life, and in this season of Advent and Christmas?

*Call on him, thank him, and celebrate:
We honor his name by resting in the goodness of his grace.*