

## Future Hope Yesha'yahu 9:1-7

In my last post, we learned more about **Y'hudah's** response to **The Prophetic Message** in **Yesha'yahu 8:11-23**. In this post, we learn about **Y'hudah's Future Hope** in **Yesha'yahu 9:1-7**.

Beyond destruction there is hope. In the Messiah's kingdom, the darkness would give way to great light, which was to dawn in Galilee and reach the whole nation, and then the entire world. The Messiah's rule would be marked by the vindication of the oppressed and the end of all oppression. He would bring justice and righteousness forever in a kingdom of peace.

***<sup>1</sup> But there will be no more gloom for those who are now in anguish. In the past the land of Z'vulun and the land of Naftali were regarded lightly; but in the future, he will honor the way to the lake, beyond the Yarden, Galil-of-the-Goyim. <sup>1</sup>***

The tribes of **Z'vulun** and **Naftali** were among those hardest hit by the **Assyrians** in the 733 BCE campaign (see 2 Kings 15:29). At that time, the **Assyrians** reduced the land holdings of the northern kingdom and integrated three new provinces into their empire. These three provinces were called Magiddo (Galilee), Du'ru (the Way of the Sea), and Gal'aza (the land east of the Jordan).

How would this honor come about? Matthew 4:12-17 tells us this is a prophecy concerning **Yeshua**, who began His ministry in Galilee - a region that was dark and despised.

***<sup>2</sup> The people living in darkness have seen a great light; upon those living in the land that lies in the shadow of death, light has dawned.***

The **Assyrian** invasion brought great devastation (*darkness*), but the people still had great reason to hope (*seen a great light*). Though the events were in the future, they are described as if they had already happened.

***<sup>3</sup> You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice in your presence as if rejoicing at harvest time, the way men rejoice when dividing up the spoil. <sup>4</sup> For the yoke that weighed them down, the bar across their shoulders, and their driver's goad you have broken as on the day of Midyan's defeat.***

The type of deliverance the prophecy pictures seemed impossible. After all, **Ashur** was a world power and God's people were weak and crushed. Thus, the oracle alludes to the day of **Midyan**. This refers to the events of Judges 6 and 7 when **Gid'on** with just a handful of troops - but with the power of God - defeated the oppressive **Midyanites** and expelled them from the land.

***<sup>5</sup> For all the boots of soldiers marching and every cloak rolled in blood is destined for burning, fuel for the fire.***

The word for boot occurs only here in the Tanakh but is equivalent to one of the common terms for sandal or shoe. In the **Assyrian** army, many of the infantry went barefoot, but the cavalry was equipped with knee-high soft leather boots held on by long crisscrossed thongs. Officers also were provided with boots. Boots would be among the most common plunder stripped from the slain.

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<sup>1</sup> Verse 9:1 is actually 8:23 in the Jewish Bible.

In **Ashur**, it was familiar rhetoric to speak of land dyed red with the blood of enemies and of the army marching through the blood of their enemies. <sup>2</sup>

***<sup>6</sup> For a child is born to us, a son is given to us; dominion will rest on his shoulders, and he will be given the name Pele-Yo'etz El Gibbor Avi-'Ad Sar-Shalom [Wonder of a Counselor, Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace],***

I confess that every time I read this verse, I get goosebumps as I "hear" Handel's Messiah playing in my mind.

In the ancient Near East, the birth of an heir to the throne was a momentous occasion. Twice earlier in this section of **Yesha'yahu**, the birth of children has been described as having prophetic significance (7:14; 8:1-4). For a third time, the reader learns of a future birth. Some commentators believe the text means that this future royal child will be a purely human descendant of David who will be proclaimed king and lead God's people to a new level of freedom and prosperity.

The only possible interpretation of this passage is Messianic. This child will be given names that signify His character. He will be a sage characterized by extraordinary wisdom (**Wonderful Counselor**). He will have a life that is never-ending (**Eternal Father**). He will bring peace (**Prince of Peace**). But the most extraordinary thing of all that confirms He is merely not to be identified with any human because of His title, **Mighty God**. In the **Brit Hadashah**, **Yeshua** is recognized as the Davidic descendant who fulfilled this great promise (Matthew 1:1,22-23).

***A child is born*** speaks of Yeshua's humanity. ***A Son is given to us*** speaks of His deity. The sign of government on His shoulder would not be the braid of a military general or the insignia of a noted ruler. It would be a wooden cross because **Yeshua** would govern by laying down His life. You can get counsel from a lot of people in a lot of places, but there is only one **Wonderful Counselor** - and with Him, there are neither fees involved or appointments that need to be made (Hebrews 4:16).

***<sup>7</sup> in order to extend the dominion and perpetuate the peace of the throne and kingdom of David, to secure it and sustain it through justice and righteousness henceforth and forever. The zeal of Adonai-Tzva'ot will accomplish this.*** ~ **Yesha'yahu** 9:1-7 (CJB)

When **Yeshua** returns for His church, His kingdom will indeed be established politically and materially. But when He came the first time, His kingdom was not of this world because He was involved with something much more significant than throwing off the yoke of the Roman Empire politically. He was concerned with eternity and the salvation of humanity.

In my next blog, we learn about **Judgment Against Isra'el** in **Yesha'yahu 9:8-21**.

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<sup>2</sup> Bible Background Commentary - The IVP Bible Background Commentary – Old Testament.