

## Previous Week's Scripture Readings: Is. 51-55

### Summary

The gospel is good news because it is an invitation to not only be caught up in wonder, but to be transformed – not by your zeal for the Lord but by His zeal towards you. Real peace will never come by our ever-increasing attempts to attain it. Instead it comes by the zealous commitment of our God. Ahaz is a sad, but striking example of someone trusting in human zeal. This descendant of David lacked the trust in the Lord, which typified David's life. His zealous self-effort reached unthinkable lows when he sacrificed his own son in an effort to curry the favor of idolatrous gods. Someone so far from His heart would never fulfill God's promise of a righteous kingdom bringing restoration. Over and against this is the promise of a child who would be born, a son who would be given. In both human vulnerability and divine power Jesus, the Prince of Peace brought a kingdom that will never stop. His zeal and power is the guarantee of that righteous rule being realized in our lives and in all things. And that's the gospel!

### Getting to Know Each Other

1. When has blind zeal led to hilarity in your life? Can you relate to the danger of human zeal giving you tunnel vision? How so?

### Getting Into the Bible

#### Read Is. 9:6-7

*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this."* (Isaiah 9:6–7, ESV)

### Background – See under Application

1. Isaiah spoke this prophecy (Is. 9:6-7) in the midst of a leadership crisis. With that leadership failure in mind, what strikes you as glorious and attractive about the description Isaiah gives of Jesus, the Prince of Peace? Why? What makes the gift of this kind of leader such good news?
2. Isaiah 9:7 says "the zeal of the Lord..." is our hope of endless peace. His fiery passion is the guarantee of shalom being ushered in for those united to Jesus! How do these comments about God's "zeal" encourage you and give you hope?
  - i. Zeal literally means, "glowing fire."
  - ii. "...His love flares up, consumes all that is adverse, and gives to His people the true King..."<sup>1</sup>
  - iii. "Zeal is that 'jealousy' which is a component of all true love and preeminently of the Lord's love. His love will brook no rival and is provoked by disloyalty.... It is equally, however, the power of love

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<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch, F. *Commentary on The Old Testament in Ten Volumes by C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Volume VII*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1969. Pg. 255.

*moving the Lord to make his people's cause his own ... all this zealous determination is that of Yahweh, the exodus-God, whose nature is to save his people and overthrow his foes.”<sup>2</sup>*

- iv. Jesus had such a glowing passion for the will of His father that He was willing to drink down the cup of God's wrath to bring us peace (Matt. 26:39; Is. 53:4-6)

3. How does this famous definition of “Justification” help you have deeper appreciation and understanding of Paul's declaration in Rom. 5:1-5?

### **Read Rom. 5:1-5**

*“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” (Romans 5:1–5, ESV)*

*“Justification is an act of God's free grace unto sinners, in which he pardons all their sins, accepts and accounts their persons righteous in his sight; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them, and received by faith alone.” (Westminster Longer Catechism, #70)*

### **Application**

1. Ahaz may have represented all that goes wrong when we trust in our own zeal, but Hezekiah, his son showed wonderful glimpses of trust in the Lord. When threatened with destruction from the Assyrian armies, here is how he responded. What can you find instructive here?

### **Read Is. 37:14-20**

*<sup>14</sup> Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. <sup>15</sup> And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD: <sup>16</sup> “O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. <sup>17</sup> Incline your ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. <sup>18</sup> Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their lands, <sup>19</sup> and have cast their gods into the fire. For they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. Therefore they were destroyed. <sup>20</sup> So now, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone are the LORD.”*

2. Both authority as well as self-control must be added to zeal to keep it from being too passive or too aggressive. Where is there room for this balance in your own life? How can Jesus, His gospel and His church shepherd you into more of His stable character?

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<sup>2</sup> Motyer, J. Alec. *The Prophecy of Isaiah, An Introduction and Commentary*. Downer's Grove: IVP, 1993. Pg. 104.

Sermon Series: Prince of Peace  
Message: Prince of Peace  
Text: Is. 9:6-7

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### **Taking it Home...**

This section is designed for you to have Scripture readings for up to 5 days/week until the next time your group meets. For each reading we suggest you use this format to invite God to work in and through you by His Word and Spirit...

1. Read the day's Scripture, asking the Holy Spirit what He wants to show you and what action He wants you to take.
2. Take action on what the Lord says in and through His Word.
3. Share it with someone else.
4. Be prepared to share some of the highlights with your group at your next gathering

Reading #1: Luke 1

Reading #2: Luke 2

Reading #3: Luke 3

Reading #4: Matt. 1

Reading #5: Matt. 2