



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

"Unto Us A Child Is Born"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Passages (TLV): *Isaiah 8:21-9:6; Matt. 1:21-23; Lk. 1:26-27; Luke 2:8-20; Judges 6-7; Mic. 5:1; John 1:14, 3:16-18; Phil. 1:18*

The season of Christmas fills the air with words that declare the truth of Messiah's coming. Even in stores and on the radio, the world is singing about "*God and sinners reconciled*," about a King who has come, about hope breaking into weary hearts. Like Paul in Philippians, we can rejoice that Messiah is being proclaimed—whatever the motives—because what matters most is **that** He is being declared. "*The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us*." Yeshua was born, and that alone is worth rejoicing over.

Isaiah reminds us that before the Light came, there was *utter darkness*—distress, fearful gloom, and anguish. Yet woven through all of Scripture is this unshakable truth: **God's final word is not judgment, but restoration.** Into the darkness of human sin and wandering, God Himself steps in. This season is not about when He came, but that He came—because He so loved the world, because He so loved us.

1. THE LIGHT COMES IN UTTER DARKNESS

The people in Isaiah's day had chosen their own way, trusting alliances and human strength instead of the Lord. The result was darkness—anguish and despair. Yet right there, Isaiah declares hope: "*The people walking in darkness will see a great light. Upon those dwelling in the land of the shadow of death, light will shine.*" (Isa. 9:1). They didn't create the light. They didn't earn it. God, in His mercy, sent it.

Galilee—the place first humbled by judgment—would become the place honored by God. It was there that the angel came to Miriam, and there that Yeshua would begin His ministry. The message is clear: when darkness is deepest, God's light breaks in. The *Or Gadol*—the Great Light—comes not because we deserve it, but because God refuses to leave His people in the dark.

2. IN HIS LIGHT, JOY REPLACES FEAR

Isaiah goes on: "*You will multiply the nation. You will increase the joy.*" (Isa. 9:2). The fears that haunted Israel—barrenness, hunger, defeat—are overturned. Growth replaces dwindling. Abundance replaces lack. Victory replaces oppression. Where fear once ruled, joy now overflows.

This is echoed in the fields of Bethlehem when terrified shepherds hear the angel's words: "*Do not be afraid! For behold, I proclaim Good News to you, which will be great joy to all the people.*" (Lk. 2:10). In the dark, fear thrives. But when God's light shines, clarity comes. We can see again. We can trust again. The Light doesn't just show us where to walk—it reminds us **who** walks with us.

3. AN UNEXPECTED SOURCE OF FREEDOM AND JOY

The joy comes because God breaks the yoke of oppression—“*as in the day of Midian.*” (Isa. 9:3). Like Gideon’s impossible victory, deliverance comes not through human strength, but through God alone. Weakness becomes the stage for His power. Self-reliance is exposed as weakness; dependence on the Lord becomes true strength.

Isaiah says the boots of war and garments of blood will be burned. This victory won’t come through more violence or greater force. God isn’t sending another warrior king. The freedom and joy of His people will come in a way no one expects. God Himself will act. And He will do it without the weapons we think we need.

4. UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN

“*For to us a child is born, a son will be given to us.*” (Isa. 9:5). This is the shock of the passage: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace—comes not in thunder or fire, but as a baby. God with us, entering the world in the most human way.

This Child is no ordinary king. His names declare His divine nature. His reign will never end. And yet He comes wrapped in cloth, lying in a manger. Many missed Him because they were looking for the wrong thing. They wanted power without humility, glory without a cross. But God chose the way of a Child—so no one could boast, and everyone could come.

CONCLUSION

Why did God do all this? Isaiah answers: “*The zeal of Adonai-Tzva’ot will accomplish this.*” (Isa. 9:6). His zeal is His passionate, jealous love—the love of a husband who refuses to give up on an unfaithful bride. Though we wandered, though we loved others, God pursued. Not with indifference, but with burning love. Yeshua was born to die. Born to carry our sins. Born to be our once-for-all atonement. “*You shall call His name Yeshua, for He will save His people from their sins.*” (Matt. 1:21). He came because God so loved the world. The Light has come to chase away darkness, to restore, to make all things new.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What does it mean to you that God’s final word is restoration, not judgment?
2. Where do you most need the Light of Messiah to shine in your life right now?
3. How have fear and anxiety tried to shape your decisions, and how can joy replace them?
4. Why is it significant that God chose to come as a Child rather than as a conquering king?
5. How does knowing God’s *zeal* and passionate love change the way you respond to Him?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Adonai, we praise You for sending the Light into our darkness. Thank You that when we were lost in fear and gloom, You did not abandon us, but came to us in Messiah Yeshua. Let His light chase away every shadow in our hearts. Teach us to trust You where we have relied on ourselves. Draw us home with Your passionate love, and make us people who walk in Your joy and reflect Your light to a weary world. We receive Your gift with gratitude and surrender, in the name of Yeshua. Amen.