

"Promises . . . Promises"
Isaiah 9:1-10:34
Dennis Watson

There are three main sections to his portion of Isaiah. First there is the incredible promise about and description of the coming Messiah. This is exciting prophecy. This is encouraging stuff. This leaves us with a gladness for God's sovereign and unimaginable love that has resulted in His desire to become like us.

In the second part, God deals with human pride and arrogance. First God condemns pride and arrogance when it is seen in every aspect of life of His own chosen people in Israel. The God condemns it when it is seen in the Assyrians, who were also chosen to be an instrument of judgment for Israel.

This is my outline:

PART 1 – A PROMISE ABOUT THE COMING MESSIAH
PART 2 – THE RESULTS OF PRIDE AND ARROGANCE FOR ISRAEL
PART 3 – THE RESULTS OF PRIDE AND ARROGANCE FOR ASSYRIA

As a teacher I had to make a choice. After this lecture, I asked myself what do I want you to go home thinking about? I decided that I would teach the second and third sections first and the first section last.

PART 2 – THE RESULTS OF PRIDE AND ARROGANCE FOR ISRAEL:

You know life can be pretty simple. Psalm 37:3: Trust in the Lord and do good... Then we might ask, "What is good? What does that mean?" God does not leave this for us to define because we have Micah 6:8: He has shown you O man, what is good, and what the Lord requires of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.

What is the opposite of "walking humbly with your God"? LIVING A LIFE OF PRIDE AND ARROGANCE.

I could not help but think of gay pride. I suppose every diverse group, large or small it seems, has its pride building marketing efforts made somewhere. They are trying to build self-esteem. But I kept thinking about gay pride because it is just so clearly against God's demands. A few weeks back in our Isaiah study we read the following verses, and even at that time the picture that came to mind was "gay pride."

Isaiah 3:8: "...their speech and their actions are against the Lord, to rebel against His glorious presence. The expression of their face bears witness against them.

And they display their sin like Sodom; they do not conceal it. Woe to them! For they have brought evil on themselves."

We are familiar with what the Bible has to say about pride:
Proverbs 16:18 – Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling.

As you go through a concordance on the word "pride," I discovered a couple of things:

1. The word pride was used 47 times in Scripture and each time it was used in a negative manner. It was not something commended by God.
2. All too often the word was used as a description of a national people and was a reason God was bringing judgment:

Jeremiah 13:9 – "Just so I will destroy the pride of Judah..."

Jeremiah 48:29 – "We have heard of the pride of Moab..."

Daniel 4:37 – "He is able to humble those who walk in pride..." says Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

Zechariah 9:6 – "I will cut off the pride of the Philistines..."

Right here in Isaiah –

Isaiah 10:12 – "The arrogant hear of the king of Assyria..."

Isaiah 9:8,9 – "The Lord sends a message against Jacob, and it falls on Israel. And all the people know it, that is, Ephraim and the inhabitants of Symaria, asserting in pride and arrogance of heart."

A vicious circle:

- 1) They are arrogant and prideful, 2) Their attitude results in actions which destroy what should be a blessing for them, 3) God judges.

Four times in this section it is stated: "In spite of all this His anger does not turn away, and His hand is still stretched out." Four areas are given where pride and arrogance has resulted in error that results in judgment.

1. Ability to discern God's Will (vs. 10-12)

Here is what we should learn from all this: Don't be proud. Don't be arrogant. If you are saying, "I will do this, or I will do that." We are in error.

James 4:13 – "Come now you who say, 'Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.' Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord will, we shall live and also do this or that.' But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin."

2. In leadership (vs. 14-17)

Pride and arrogance will make a disaster of leadership.

3. In family matters (vs. 18-21)

Pride and arrogance will make a disaster of family relationships.

4. In justice (vs. 10:1-4)

Pride and arrogance will make a disaster of the administration of justice.

Both you and I are concerned for our country. We are a proud nation and the general consensus is that pride is good and necessary. And in one area pride is okay.

Jeremiah 9:23,24 – Thus says the Lord, “Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not the rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, the he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the Lord.

Psalm 34:1,2 – I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall be continually in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord, the humble shall hear it and rejoice.

PART 3 – THE RESULTS OF PRIDE AND ARROGANCE FOR ASSYRIA:

Even Assyria is proud. We see this in Isaiah 10:5 – 34.

10:6 is a frightening verse because God is showing how He will use Assyria as an instrument of judgment against His people: “I send it (Assyria) against a godless nation and commission it against the people of my fury to capture booty and to seize plunder and to trample them down like mud in the streets.”

But Assyria goes too far. Verse 17 says that Assyria purposed to destroy but then the rest of the chapter is dedicated to a prophecy of something that will not happen until about 701b.c. when the son of Ahaz, Hezekiah is king.

Verse 11 – The Assyria (Sennacherib) says, “Shall I not do to Jerusalem and her images just as I have done to Samaria and her idols.” Sennacherib is a piece of work. He says in vs. 13-15: “By the strength of my hand I have done this, and by my wisdom, because I have understanding. I removed the boundaries of nations; like a mighty one I subdued their kings. As one reaches into a nest, so my hand reached for the wealth of the nations; as men gather abandoned eggs, so I gathered all the countries; not one flapped a wing, or opened its mouth to chirp. Does the axe raise itself above him who

swings it, or the saw boast against him who uses it? As if a rod were to wield him who lifts it up, or a club brandished him who is not wood."

Verses 16 and 17 describe what will happen to Assyria: Wasting disease, kindled fire, the light of Israel will become a fire and his Holy One a flame, and it will burn and devour his thorns and his briars in a single day. (A metaphor for his soldiers.)

Verses 20-23 The remnant will return to the mighty God, but only a remnant. **"A destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness."** How? Because when God is acting in judgment, it is "God exercising righteousness.:

Verse 25 – God will turn His attention in righteous judgment to the Assyrian nation.

What is the lesson? **AVOID PRIDE**

PART 1 – A PROMISE ABOUT THE COMING MESSIAH:

Well, turning from the promise of judgment to the promise of a blessing.

Galilee is where He will grow up and complete much of His ministry. There's a gap between verses 2 and 3. Then we have more information about the nature of this child, this "Emmanuel" born of a virgin.

"For a child will be born to us,

This expresses the humanity of our Lord.

a son will be given to us;

This expresses the divinity of our Lord.

and the government will rest on His shoulders;

This expresses His ultimate sovereignty.

Romans 13:1-7 What is the purpose of government? To preserve not to save.

Daniel 4:25 – What did Nebuchadnezzar learn from Daniel? "...that the Most High is the ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes...Therefore, O king, may my advice by pleasing to you (Daniel speaking): break away now from your sins by doing righteousness, and from your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, in case there may be a prolonging of your prosperity."

And His name will be called

1) Wonderful Counselor, 2) Mighty God, 3) Eternal Father, 4) Prince of Peace.

There are many other names in Scripture for the Messiah.

There will be no end to the **increase** of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it with **justice and righteousness** from then on and forevermore.

The **zeal** of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

The zeal of God is revealed when God makes a promise, He will pull it off. Ezekiel 12:25 – “For I the Lord shall speak, and whatever word I speak will be performed.”

The names and titles of Jesus do not only reveal His nature to us, but each one is a promise.

1. Wonderful Counselor,

Do you need someone to listen to your concerns? He is concerned about every part of you. He knows what is not working. He knows all the events and what impact they had on you. He knows that you have to make a choice.

2. Mighty God,

Do you need a true hero? He's a warrior who never fails or disappoints.

3. Eternal Father,

I want my kids to have a fulfilling life. I will do what I can to make that happen. I will provide, I will protect. I will encourage, I will nag.

Do you need someone to watch over you and make sure that you are accomplishing the most you can accomplish because He wants your life to be an abundant life? He is an eternal Father. One that will never abandon you.

4. Prince of Peace.

Is there anyone who provides peace like Jesus? His peace is the kind of peace that goes deep into your soul and ends fear and clamor found there. His peace affects you outwardly so that you act differently when those difficult times come.

This is who Jesus is: **God With Us.**