

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, December 25, 2005

Passage: Isaiah 9:1-7

This lesson will prepare you for the message on December 25th, but will be discussed in your group on January 1st.

Memory Passage: Isaiah 9:6

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Isaiah 9:1-2.** How is the condition of the people described in verse 2? What does the darkness refer to (John 3:19)?
- (b) What is the promise to the people of Israel? How is this prophecy fulfilled (Matthew 4:12-17)?
- (c) How is this one described in John 1:4-13? Who is he?
- (d) Compare this condition of Israel with our former condition described in Ephesians 5:8, 1 Peter 2:9, and 1 John 1:5-7. What was our condition and how has the coming of Jesus changed that?
- (e) Read Isaiah 9:3-5. Make a list of some of the things that this one will do for these people. How are these fulfilled in the coming of Jesus?
- (f) *Family:* Read Isaiah 9:1-2 and John 1:4-13. Talk about darkness – how it feels and why it is usually associated with sin. Why the coming of Jesus is usually connected with “light?” What does it mean for us to be “in the light?” Pray for people this Christmas that many will escape from the darkness and come to Jesus who is the light of the world.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Isaiah 9:6-7.** What is the reason for the distinction between “a child is born” and “a son is given?” In what way is Jesus “given” to us (also see Isaiah 7:14; Luke 2:11)?
- (b) How important were names to the Jewish people? Consider the significance of the names of these people: Jacob (Genesis 25:26); Naomi (Ruth 1:20); Samuel (1 Samuel 1:20); and Barnabas (Acts 4:36).
- (c) What is the significance of the name given to this child (Matthew 1:21; Acts 4:12; Philippians 2:10-11)?
- (d) How is the “government upon his shoulders?” What picture is conveyed from the idea that the government will be “upon his shoulders?” Consider the following passages: Isaiah 40:11 and Luke 15:1-7. What *kind* of a ruler will he be (Micah 5:2-4)?
- (e) How does Jesus describe himself in John 10:10-15? What does he do for his sheep?
- (f) *Family:* Read Isaiah 9:6-7 and Matthew 1:18-25. Talk about the importance of the meaning of names in Israel. Discuss the meaning of your names. What is important about the meaning of the name given to Jesus? What did he do for us? What does he do for us now as a ruler? Thank God for giving us Jesus as a savior.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Isaiah 9:6.** What is the meaning of the phrase “his name shall be called?” Was Jesus ever called these names? What is this prophecy saying about Jesus?
- (b) The first name that describes the person of Jesus is wonderful counselor. Look at **Zechariah 6:12-13**. Who is this person that is being described? What is the significance of the “branch” (Jeremiah 23:5; Isaiah 2:3; 11:1-2; 28:29)?
- (c) What kind of counselor is he described as in Zechariah 6:12-13 and Micah 5:4?

(d) How is God's counsel described in Isaiah 28:29 and Romans 11:33-34? How does *his* counsel compare with men's (1 Corinthians 1:25)? What does this tell us about who we should go to in time of need (James 1:5; Proverbs 2:6-7; Colossians 2:2-3)?

(e) How was the wonder of his wisdom and counsel seen even in his childhood (Luke 2:46-47) and in his life and ministry (Matthew 13:54)?

(f) *Family*: Read Isaiah 9:6 again and 1 Corinthians 1:18-31. Discuss what wisdom really is. How does a person get it? Why does God's wisdom sometimes seem foolish to us? Thank God for His wisdom given to us in His Word.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Isaiah 9:6 again.** What do the names “mighty God” and Everlasting Father” tell us about who this one is?

(b) What evidence do we see that Jesus is the “mighty God” (Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 9:18-26; Luke 8:26-39; Mark 2:3-12, etc.)?

(c) What comfort does it bring us to know that Jesus is the “mighty God” (Philippians 4:13; Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 1:20-23)? What do these passages tell us about the deity of Jesus (Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13; 1 John 5:20)?

(d) What is surprising about calling Jesus the “Everlasting Father?” Why is this term used (John 8:58; Revelation 1:8; Micah 5:2)?

(e) What can Jesus give to us since he is the “everlasting Father” (2 Thessalonians 2:16)?

(f) *Family*: Read Isaiah 9:6-7 again. Talk about how we know that Jesus is God. What does the Bible say about Jesus being God? What are some of the names used for Jesus that should only be used for God? Spend some time thanking Jesus for leaving heaven to come live among us and die as one of us.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Isaiah 9:6-7 again.** Why is Jesus called the Prince of Peace (Ephesians 2:11-16; Romans 5:1)?

(b) What did the angels proclaim about the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:14)?

(c) What did Jesus promise his disciples (John 14:27; 16:33)? What did Jesus say to Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44)? Did this happen?

(d) What *kind of kingdom* is he going to rule over (Isaiah 9:7)? What did Jesus tell Pilate about his kingdom in John 18:33-37?

(e) How did the Jews misunderstand this? How do people misunderstand it today (Romans 14:17)? What did Simeon say about the rule of this child in Luke 2:27-32? Compare Luke 2:32 with Isaiah 9:1-2.

(f) *Family*: Read Isaiah 9:6-7 and Luke 2:1-14. Talk about peace. What is real peace? How can a person have peace with God? What did Jesus do that allows us to have this peace? What kind of peace does Jesus give to us (Philippians 4:6-7)? Pray for someone who needs this peace today.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. Read Luke 2:1-20. What is special about the way God provided for the birth of Jesus? What parts of the Christmas story are especially sad and disappointing? Who came to see the baby? Why did they come? What was their response after they saw Jesus? What did Mary do (verse 19)? What should be our response to the birth of Jesus? Pray for church services tomorrow that Jesus might be honored in our lives and in our worship.

