

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
August 5, 2016

Isaiah 9:1–10:19. Unto us a Son is Given.

Luke 3:1–38. John the Baptizer.

Job 3:1–16. Job’s death wish.

COMMENTS:

Isaiah 9:1–10:19. In **Isaiah 9:6-7** we have perhaps the grandest prophecy in the Old Testament of the birth of Jesus Christ. After noting the *human origin* in verse 6, “a child will be born,” Isaiah notes the *divine origin* with four names.

1. *Wonderful Counselor* (פֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ, *Pele-Yoeitz*). In some translations a comma is placed between these two words, making them two separate names. The word “wonderful” is in the construct state and should be taken together with “counselor.” There are some words in Hebrew which are used only of God and never of men. One example is *barah* (בָּרָא) meaning “to create.” This is used only of God and what God does; it is never used of what man does. Another word like this is *pele* (פֶּלֶא), rendered here in English as “wonderful.” In English, “wonderful” may be freely used of many things, but in Hebrew it is reserved *exclusively* for that which is divine.
2. *Mighty God* (אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר). This is obviously never used of mere man.
3. *Eternal Father* (אָבִי עֶד). Literally, this is “Father of Eternity.” The Son who is to be born will be the Father of Eternity, meaning that He is the source of eternal life. Clearly this could not refer to any mere human being.
4. *Prince of Peace* (שָׁרֵי-שָׁלוֹם). This is the only one of the four names which can be used of man and God.

Furthermore, anytime any of these names appear in elsewhere in Isaiah, they are used of God, and never of man. In sum, Isaiah 9:6 presents us with a Being who is both God and man. Isaiah 9:7 shows that this Person is the Messiah of Israel who is to sit upon the throne of David. Verse 7 is a reaffirmation and development of the Davidic Covenant. We now have four promises to David and his house: (1) an eternal house or dynasty, (2) an eternal kingdom, (3) an eternal throne, and (4) an eternal son. The Messiah would be a king and be both God and Man and must appear prior to 70 A.D. because of the requirements of the Davidic Covenant and the destruction of the Temple.

Luke 3:1–38. Summary: The events in this section take place about twenty years later. Tiberius Caesar is now emperor, and Herod the Great’s kingdom has been divided into smaller states, called ‘tetrarchies’. John has become a prophet who preaches and baptizes by the River Jordan. He is preparing the hearts and minds of Jewish people to receive their Messiah. He baptizes in the river those who want to be identified with the Messiah. John, also, warns of a great judgment about to befall Israel. He depicts God’s own people having become like a diseased and fruitless tree—fit only to be cut down. John also describes God’s people [Jews] as snakes trying to escape from a stubble fire. He demands that they change their ways! It is no longer enough to claim Jewish descent, because God will judge people by their actual deeds—not by their race or what they believe. John’s address to the people is deliberately harsh so as to awaken them to a sense of the realities of the situation. From my perspective as a teaching pastor, it is always interesting to note the different reactions to very strong exhortations—to the same message: Some believers are convicted and renew their efforts in the spiritual life and are appreciative of the challenge, while other believers harden their hearts and get angry at the pastor/messenger, mock him, and complain about not being fed “an encouraging message”—something to make them feel good about their Laodecian lukewarm life. John, here, demands that they change their entire life: *Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance (3:8)*. Talk is cheap. To be sure, John is a spiritual giant—one of the all-time greats, like Elijah, according to Jesus the greatest of all born (Matt. 11:11); but John dismisses any idea that he is the Messiah. The coming Christ will be infinitely greater, dealing not with muddy Jordan water, but with Holy Spirit. John will be his lowliest servant—there is no place for arrogance in the spiritual life. Finally, John confronts the king, Herod Antipas, about his affair with his sister-in-law, Herodias. The couple are committing adultery, having both deserted their partners—John, once again, calls it like it is. Herod responds by arresting John and having him imprisoned in the fortress of Machaeras, on the east coast of the Dead Sea.

Job 3:1–16. Anguish and pain in life that have no known purposes can lead one to wish he was never born. It is vital that every believer understands that much of his suffering is a direct result of living in a cursed world that groans, and this should motivate him to long for the next life with the Lord. It is the hope in the next life that enables us to live above the circumstances of this life: Romans 8:22 *For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?* Given the cursedness we are all under, we should refrain from thinking that our difficulties are a result of Satan’s activity and the angelic conflict, as was the case with Job. Most of us suffer from cursed health problems that we inherit from our family in a broken world, as well as suffering from *us* making imprudent choices in the area of our health, finances, how we treat others, and what we are living for. But, to get back to Job, Job is in such pain that he wishes he had never been born. He says that it would have been better to be stillborn or to have died at birth. He desires death like a treasure—to allow him to escape his suffering and be at peace. It is a dreadful torture to have light without sight and life without happiness and freedom. As we will see, Job’s eyes would be opened to the gift of life and God’s concurrent activity in all things, but it is going to take a while for him to work his way out of his dark tunnel.

Romans 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Pastor Don