



# SESSION

# 1

## ISAIAH'S PROPHECY

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**WHEN HAVE YOU BEEN SURPRISED TO FIND OUT A "COINCIDENCE" WAS ACTUALLY PLANNED ALL ALONG?**

## THE POINT ➤ THE BIRTH OF JESUS WAS NO MERE CIRCUMSTANCE. IT WAS PLANNED BY GOD.

### ► ISAIAH 7:10-14; 9:6-7; 11:1-5

<sup>10</sup>Then the LORD spoke again to Ahaz: <sup>11</sup>"Ask for a sign from the LORD your God—it can be as deep as Sheol or as high as heaven." <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz replied, "I will not ask. I will not test the LORD." <sup>13</sup>Isaiah said, "Listen, house of David! Is it not enough for you to try the patience of men? Will you also try the patience of my God? <sup>14</sup>Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: See, the virgin will conceive, have a son, and name him Immanuel.

<sup>6</sup>For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>The dominion will be vast, and its prosperity will never end. He will reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish and sustain it

with justice and righteousness from now on and forever. The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this.

<sup>1</sup>Then a shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. <sup>2</sup>The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—a Spirit of wisdom and understanding, a Spirit of counsel and strength, a Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. <sup>3</sup>His delight will be in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, he will not execute justice by what he hears with his ears, <sup>4</sup>but he will judge the poor righteously and execute justice for the oppressed of the land. He will strike the land with a scepter from his mouth, and he will kill the wicked with a command from his lips. <sup>5</sup>Righteousness will be a belt around his hips; faithfulness will be a belt around his waist.



# THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

**FACT:**

DRUMMING IS THE OLDEST MUSICAL ACTIVITY.<sup>1</sup> PEOPLE WOULD HIT JUST ABOUT ANYTHING TO MAKE A SOUND; THEN THEY REALIZED THEY COULD STRETCH ANIMAL SKINS TO CREATE INSTRUMENTS.

*Stomp* is an Off-Broadway show in which the performers create phenomenal percussion beats with all sorts of random items, including brooms, garbage cans, and lighters. The show, on top of the incredible music, also has its fair share of witty humor.

Recently, I took my 10-year-old son, who loves to play the drums, to see the show for his birthday. During one song, the crew was playing an intricate piece with match boxes when, all of a sudden, one performer's matches flew out of his box. The crowd howled with laughter, but my son gasped and asked worriedly, "Did he mean to do that?"

Some "coincidences" are not coincidences at all. They were planned in order to achieve a desired effect. The life and death of Jesus Christ may seem, on the surface, to have been the unanticipated and uncontrollable result of His going against the grain. However, the truth is the life and death of Jesus were no mere afterthoughts of God—He planned them all along! The Old Testament is full of prophecies that point to the coming of Jesus Christ.



## ISAIAH 7:10-14

**1** Why is the virgin birth so important?

**2** What are some ways God invites us to trust Him?



## ISAIAH 9:6-7

**3** Why is it important for believers to understand that Jesus is God?

**4** How have you seen Jesus reveal Himself as wonderful Counselor, mighty God, eternal Father, or Prince of peace?

**5** Which of these names for Jesus is most meaningful to you right now?

## ISAIAH 11:1-5

**6** How do these verses help you understand the birth of Jesus was planned by God and not just a mere coincidence?

**7** How do we see Jesus fulfilling this prophecy in the gospels?

**8** What does this passage reveal about God's ultimate plan?

*All people feel the weight of life's hardships, but nothing compares to the burden Jesus carried in order to redeem and reign over God's people. #BSFLfullpicture*





# LIVE IT OUT

## ► CHRIST

In Isaiah 7:14, we read that Jesus is *Immanuel*—*God with us*. Many people see God as some far off, impersonal God, but this is simply not the case. Though sin separated people—whom God designed to live in relationship with Him—from God, Jesus came to earth in order to be with us and to allow us to be with God.

**9** How have you sensed Jesus' being with you recently?

**10** How do you feel God calling you to be with Him in order to grow in your relationship with Him?

**Write a brief prayer asking God to draw you nearer to Him.**

## ► COMMUNITY

Today, the body of Christ on earth is the church. We are called to be with Him by living in fellowship with our church family.

**11** How are you engaging with Christ through the church? What benefits have you experienced through this?

**12** How would God have you connect more meaningfully with your church in order to grow in your relationship with Him?



## ► CULTURE

Jesus came to earth when we were separated from God, and by His grace, we've been brought near to Him. However, all around us there are people who are still separated from God, and the responsibility to go to them has been passed down to Jesus' followers.

**13** List two friends you know who are separated from God. How will you go to them this week to see them reconciled to God?



# DAILY DEVOTIONS

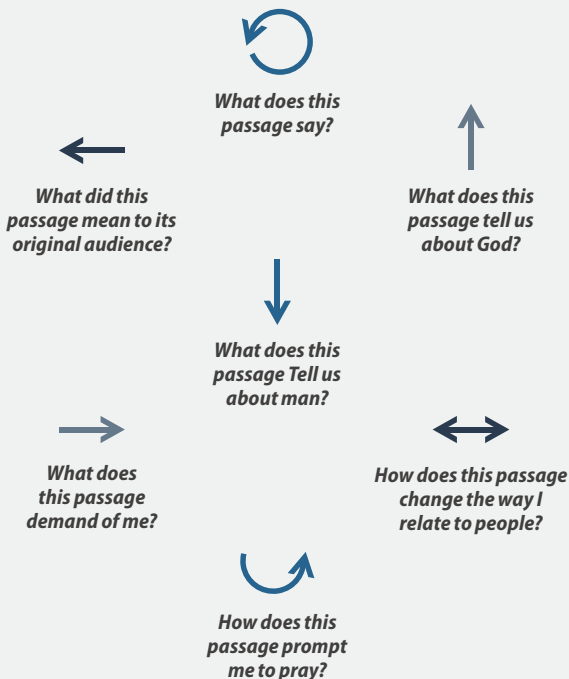


## THE 7 ARROWS OF BIBLE READING

### DAY ONE ISAIAH 9:1

Because of the disobedience of His people, God allowed them to be dragged away from their homes and into captivity in a foreign land. It's difficult to imagine anything worse! Zebulun and Naphtali were tribes in northern Israel. They were the first to be taken captive and were hit especially hard by the Assyrian invaders. The Assyrians established three new provinces in that region, called Magiddu (Galilee), Du'ru (the way of the sea), and Gal'aza (the land east of the Jordan). The disobedience of God's people brought suffering, but God promised they wouldn't be forever lost in their misery and shame. One day, God would restore honor and blessing to His people. We too miss out on blessings when we fail to continually pursue God. However, the promise remains, and He will restore those who repent and turn to Him.

- **How has past disobedience affected your relationship with God?**
- **How have you seen God restore when you've returned to Him?**





## DAY TWO

# ISAIAH 9:2



When the Assyrian army invaded Israel, they brought utter devastation to the land. Perhaps worst of all, because they were taken from their homeland, there was no opportunity to worship God according to the Law's sacrificial system, and they were lost in a deep spiritual darkness. There will be times in our lives when things seem dark. Maybe it's a difficulty at school or in relationships. Maybe we're confused about the future. Or perhaps our connection with God seems cold and dark. Whatever the case, just as God promised, Jesus said "I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

➤ Describe a time you felt lost in darkness.

➤ How has Jesus provided light in your life?

## DAY THREE

# ISAIAH 9:3

God promised Abraham that He would increase his descendants until they were greater in number than the stars and grains of sand (Gen. 22:17). There were times in Israel's history when it appeared this may not happen, and that God's people may be snuffed out. The captivity was one of those times. However, God is faithful to His promises and always protected and preserved His people, even when it seemed hopeless. Every year, when the people brought in a great harvest, they would hold a great celebration, thanking God for providing. Isaiah predicted a time when there would be much celebration, not because of the increase of grain, but because of the fruit—the growing numbers—of God's people. Today, God wants to use us to bring about the fruit of salvation and the harvest of souls. This is truly something to celebrate!

➤ When have you experienced growth that comes from God's work in your life?

➤ How specifically do you think God would have you involve yourself in the increase of His kingdom?

## DAY FOUR ISAIAH 4-5

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During Israel's captivity, Assyria was the most powerful nation on earth, and from an earthly perspective, God's people were weak and helpless. The Assyrians were cruel and treated the captives harshly, and it was unimaginable to see how this would ever change. However, God promised that, when things seem impossible from a human perspective, He is powerful to bring about whatever He desires. The yokes of bondage would be broken. The instruments used to inflict pain would be shattered. God had proven this before using Gideon's small army to defeat a much more powerful enemy, Midian, and the Israelites could trust Him to do it again. At times in our lives, we may be faced with overwhelming situations. However, our Father is sovereign over even our most difficult circumstances.

- **When have you faced an "impossible" situation?**
- **How has God increased your faith by bringing you through those impossible situations?**

## DAY FIVE ISAIAH 9:6-7

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God promised to deliver His people from suffering at the hands of the Assyrians, and He did! However, this is only the beginning. Ultimately, He promised to send a Savior who would rescue His people from the suffering sin causes in our lives. Jesus serves us in real-life ways: He's our Counselor who helps us make right choices, He has real power to help us change, He loves us with an everlasting love, and He brings peace to our lives where there was once conflict. And perhaps the best part—when Jesus returns to establish His reign in the fullest sense, it will never end, and we'll never again experience any sort of suffering.

- **How have you experienced Christ's comfort in your life?**
- **How would you describe the eternal hope you have in Jesus?**