

Week 1 - Isaiah 9:6

Well here we go on this journey starting with the announcement of Christ's birth! I will be memorizing in the NIV version even though I typically read and study the NASV version. We are memorizing as a family and that is the family version of choice at the Thomas household so I decided to go with it! I am amazed at how many families are doing this together. How awesome is that! So... you may want to get your family to join in if they haven't already. It is certainly not too late and it is a great way to bring you all together in God's Word. It will also give you something wonderful to do when you are sitting in the holiday traffic this month! (another great reason to keep a Bible in your car too! ☺)

Isaiah 9:6

Isaiah is a book rich with messages of the coming Messiah, but it is also a book holding strong messages of judgment for God's people. God is just and He must punish sin but Isaiah is also the voice of hope as God shares His mercy and compassion for His people through the words of Isaiah. In this book, before we even reach chapter 9, God has already made mention of a coming hope for His lost and desperately sin sick children. In Isaiah 7:14 Isaiah announces that a virgin will conceive and bear a son who will be called Immanuel. When we reach Isaiah 9:6, the details of the announcement become much more clear, much more personal! The announcement is that this child born of a virgin, Immanuel who is coming, is coming for us. Hope will come in the form of a person, a child, and He will come for us, for all of the sin sick people of the world.

I think some of the most beautiful words of this passage are "**to us**". Don't you love it when someone brings you a present? We often say, "for me?" and are blessed that someone remembered us. God has given **us** the greatest present ever! Isaiah was a God loving man, intent on pleasing the Lord and yet he often had to deliver a message of judgment to God's people. In contrast, Isaiah 9:6 is a message of hope. I can hear the tenderness in Isaiah's voice as he says, "For **to us** a child is born, **to us** a son is given." This child would be God Himself! Isaiah was speaking to the people of Judah, God's chosen people, but we know from the New Testament that we too are included in that gift list. Do you know that the gift is for you? Jesus has been given to you as a gift. Stop and consider if you have fully received this gift.

The verse goes on to say "the government will be on his shoulders". I believe we can view that in two ways. One is that Jesus has all authority. Matthew 28:18 is just one verse that tells us that. I also believe this phrase has great personal implications for us. In our relationship with God we each one bear the weight of not heeding God's governing authority in our life. Our sins are on our shoulders. However Jesus was given as a gift to us so and He will take on the weight of our sin. What a great gift!

This great gift will be for us a Wonderful Counselor, a Mighty God, an Everlasting Father and a Prince of Peace. As I have received the gift of Jesus, He has been all these things and more for me. This season I am especially thankful that He is a Mighty God. The older I get the more I am aware of how incapable I am and how much I need our Mighty God to rescue me, to direct me, to redeem situations in my life, to give me wisdom, to fight battles and to be mighty over my future, my dreams and my hopes. What a wonderful gift is Jesus!

Stop and consider today that He was given for you.

Stop and consider today that the government is on His shoulders.

Stop and consider today what part of His nature is especially a blessing in your life at this time. Why?

Now thank him for His indescribable gift, given to you!

Blessings,

Sharon Thomas