



Part 1: Finding Hope

December 3 & 4, 2016

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Isaiah 8:6-8

"Because this people has rejected
the gently flowing waters of Shiloah
and rejoices over Rezin
and the son of Remaliah,
therefore the Lord is about to bring against them
the mighty floodwaters of the Euphrates—
the king of Assyria with all his pomp.
It will overflow all its channels,
run over all its banks
and sweep on into Judah, swirling over it,
passing through it and reaching up to the neck.
Its outspread wings will cover the breadth of your land,
Immanuel!"

In the time of the prophet Isaiah (700 years before Jesus):

The nation was divided

The nation was not trusting God

The nation had lost hope

The job of a prophet:

Speak for God

Warn people of God's judgment

Tell people what they don't want to hear

Remind people of God's promises

Isaiah 8:21-22

Distressed and hungry, they will roam through the land; when they are famished, they will become enraged and, looking upward, will curse their king and their God. Then they will look toward the earth and see only distress and darkness and fearful gloom, and they will be thrust into utter darkness.

The darkness was heavy, but the weight of hope tipped the scale

Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—

The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned. – Isaiah 9:1-2

Isaiah = The Salvation of Jehovah

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign:
The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son,
and will call him Immanuel.
– Isaiah 7:14

We find hope in...

The promise of deliverance (Isaiah 9:1)

The gift of a Savior (Isaiah 7:14)

The intimate reality of “God with us” (Isaiah 7:14)

Next Steps

Many people experience heaviness or darkness during the holiday season. That's why it's so important for those of us who know Jesus to spread his hope by including others in the Christmas traditions we enjoy. Ask God who he wants you to invite to the Christmas concert or Christmas Eve, and make those invitations in person. Also pray about how you might serve during these special events. Use the form in today's program to respond.

Small Group Questions

- 1) Do you have a favorite song, book, or movie focused on the theme of hope? What is it?
- 2) Jesus said that both **he** and **we** are the light of the world. How can you bring hope to the hopeless and light into the darkness of people you interact with every day?
- 3) Immanuel means *God with us*. How have you experienced that reality?
- 4) A few weeks ago, Grant preached about strategically doing less in order to experience more of God's presence through the holiday season. What have you chosen not to do this season?
- 5) How can we pray for you right now and throughout the week?