

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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Good King, Bad King, The King

PART

9

TITLE

The Forever King

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:1-7, Luke 1:31-33



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If you are a guest here with us, we're really glad you're here. If you're in the room or at home, we're thrilled that you have joined us. And what you just saw and heard were real stories and texts that were sent from some of you. We have been praying that God would expand our heart for people. That's really the goal. Is that we would see people as Christ sees people. That in the midst of crowds, or in the midst of traffic, in the midst of a mall, when you see all these people, and sometimes when you see all these people, you don't see any people. We've been asking God, would you help us to have a burden for people and to really look at people and to see them as you see them and love and care and bless and pray for them in the hope that we could help people, that we could reach people.

And so when we think about the idea of reaching, our goal... Not say our goal, it's what God gave us to do is to be willing to extend ourself to the point of discomfort if that's necessary. To be able to make disciples, to be able to bless people and help people and reach people, pray for people in the hope that they too would become followers of Christ. So let me just encourage you to excel still more. Let me pray for us. Father in Heaven, we bow before you our maker, and we believe that your word is true. And I ask that you would give us courage and that you would give us honesty in our hearts to be able to absorb what we're about to hear.

I pray that you would pour out your spirit. We ask holy spirit that you would open up our eyes and help us to see the truth of your word, but also the brilliance of Christ that you would draw our attention to Jesus, that you would draw our attention to the strong tower that is above all other towers. And that you would cause us to experience what we see in this text. And that is that joy would replace gloom in anguish. Now, I pray for those that are burdened this morning, that you would lift up their spirit. And God, we ask that you would be gracious to us. I pray for those who are in the room, who have yet to see the brilliance of Christ and their overwhelming need to put their faith and trust in him. And I simply ask that you would be kind to them and to each one of us and incline each of our hearts to be able to see Christ and all of his glory this morning. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen.

If you have a Bible turn with me to Isaiah chapter nine, if you don't, there's lots of Bibles in the chairs near you. And I say this frequently, but if you don't have one at home, your own Bible, take that home as a gift. We really want you to take that as a gift for you to read it. We're in series on the kings. There's 43 Kings of the Old Testament. That's sort of the first part of the Bible. And in those kings, what we find is a tremendous amount of sin and darkness. And when you think about darkness, we all take great comfort in having a light when it's dark outside. True? When it's really dark, it's nice to have a flashlight, or have something for you to be able to see. There's something about darkness that makes sounds and shadows a little bit more terrifying, a little bit more frightening when you don't really know what it is. In fact, sometimes when we learn what...

At one time the light goes on, you go in, you come out and that was daytime and you see what was the shadow and now you see what it was. It's like, oh, it was a limb or a log or, or it was a kid's toy or something. And sometimes we can feel foolish of what we were really, really terrified about when it was dark outside. And what's interesting is the story of the Bible that begins in the beginning of the Bible. It sets a context, it sets a

stage, just like any story would. This is a true story. In the setting of the beginning of the story of the Bible was darkness. It says that darkness covering the surface of the deep. God looked at all that darkness and he says, "No." And so the first recorded words within the scriptures that come out of God's mouth, he says, "Let there be light." And there was light. And we lived in a relationship with God.

Humanity lived in relationship with God in the light of his presence enjoying what he created. And then the Bible says that we sinned. And when we sinned, darkness crept back over the Earth. Not in the same way, there was still a moon and there was still a sun and there was still stars and things that could reflect light and yet now the darkness was within the heart. It was a darkness of a separation in our relationship with the Lord. And amazingly is in this moment of panic and peril, is that God made a promise to send us a son that was born of a woman who had crushed ahead of evil, who would restore us into a relationship with God who would be a king. A son who would become a king, who would be the savior of the world. My savior and hopefully yours. That he would be our savior.

And so when we come to a study in the Kings, and there's 43 kings. We're supposed to ask every time we're introduced to a new king, is this the one? Is this the one? And 43 times the kings only contributed greater darkness. More pain, more peril, more confusion within society, within their family, within their own heart. And yet God, in all of his grace, he continued to pour out his love and he kept making promises to these Kings because he was determined to use this royal line in order to bring us the king. The true king. What we learned today is the forever king. This is what we find in Isaiah chapter nine, starting in verse one. He says, "But there will be no gloom for her who is in anguish. In the forward time, he brought into contempt, the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. But in the latter time, he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness on them has light shown that you have multiplied the nation. You have increased its joy. They rejoice before you as with joy, the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. The yolk of the burden, the staff of the shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for the fire. For two us, a child is born, to us a son is given and the government shall be upon his shoulder. And his name shall be called wonderful counselor, mighty God, everlasting father, prince of peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end. On the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forever, the zeal of the Lord of host will do this."

Isaiah is looking into a country, Israel, that is about to face an enormous problem. And what he does is he looks past that enormous problem into a day that is coming, that wouldn't come for another 700 years. When God would visit his people, and when this special son who would become the final king of the Bible, who would be the forever king when he would be born and he would come and when he would come to rule. And so what he does in this passage is 700 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. Of course, all of this is past

for us, is he tells us what the future king would look like. What he would be like, what he would accomplish. And for us, we can assume and know, it's what he has accomplished. So, what do we see and learn about this coming king, this true king?

The first thing we see here, verses one through five is that the true king will bring glory to places of gloom. A gloom is an interesting word. It's a terrifying reality. Many of us, all of us have experienced some measure of it. Sometimes it's a circumstance in our life. Some of you right now, you would say, "I feel like my life is kind of gloomy." And you look to a particular relationship, or a certain burden, maybe finances, or maybe your job. It maybe your business is going under. It maybe your marriage, it may be your children. It may be your parents, maybe something in your life that you can pinpoint and say, "That is a problem area in my life and I don't know what to do with that." And it feels gloomy, it feels dark. Others among us in the room have in our life and maybe some of us, even to this day, maybe in this day, you kind of look around your life and you can't see necessarily a circumstance. If you can imagine, it's like on fire.

You have a job, you have things, you have people in your life that you love. And yet within your heart, there is this overwhelming sense of gloom. There's this overwhelming sense of darkness within your heart. I promise you if that's what you feel, you are not alone. I'm convinced that some of us have sat in gloom for so long that it's hard to even imagine a day of glory. You just assume this is what it's always going to be. But what I want you to see is that with Christ, that's not the case. You see, I also imagine this is precisely what it felt like, whether it was circumstantial or whether it was just deep seated pain within the heart for so many people living in a place called Galilee. And this is where the first five verses of chapter nine, they're all directed towards. You see, after centuries of sin that has been resourced, aided and motivated by the Kings themselves, in their evil, their idolatry, their rebellion.

There's an amazing thing that's about to take place and a terrifying thing. And that is that God has chosen that he's going to bring in two foreign empires who are going to come and are going to conquer first, the Northern kingdom, Israel, and second, the Southern kingdom, Judah. And they're going to send the people into exile. But before he sends them, he wants to show them how painful it's going to be. So, we started in chapter nine, verse one. Well, chapter eight, verse 22 is the last verse of chapter eight. And this is what he says. These are the words that describe this time. He says, "Behold distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish, and they will be thrust into thick darkness." Now here's the reality about Israel, is that armies when they invaded Israel, they would invade from the north. You see, in all other directions, there was either mountains, a terrifying desert or the sea. And so they came from the north. And the two Northern tribes were Zebulun and Naphtali in Galilee.

In other words, when Israel was invaded and Isaiah in chapter seven and eight says that Assyria is coming to invade the land. What he's saying is that Galilee is ground zero for distress and darkness and anguish and gloom. This is where it's going to happen. It's going to be concentrated in these places. And so to live in Galilee, even though if you went today, it's one of the most beautiful places of Israel. The fact is, is that the people

who lived there historically were the people that were war torn. They were poor. They were the ones that were pillaged and conquered first as the armies would invade through the rest of Israel. But before the storm, God made a promise. And the promises in verse one. Notice what he says. He says, "There will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time, he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and Naphtali. But in the latter time, he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

You see, Zebulun and Naphtali, not only were they beyond the Jordan, they were the Northern most tribe, but they were also border tribes living on the border of Gentile nations. And so they called them the Galilee to the nations. They were connected to these nations. And so they received the brunt first. And you notice what he says is there's two different times. There's a former mean there's a latter time. Now, when he is writing, they're both in front of them. He's saying, "Look, there is coming an exile, but then he is looking beyond the exile. And he's saying this. You see, this former time is marked by gloom and anguish, but there is a latter time coming that it's going to be marked not by gloom, but by glory. And so the question is, how is this glory going to come to pass? And that's verse two. In verse two he says, the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness on them, the light has shown. Now, you know what this means?

First of all, you notice that the people who are living in this darkness in Galilee is they're the ones who are going to see a great light. But you notice what's happening. They're not generating this light, they're not creating this light, they're not manufacturing this light by themselves, by their goodness. No, this light is shining upon them. It's off and then all of a sudden it's on them. Now, this is really important because most of us in the room and in the world today, we assume that our greatest problems are outside of our heart and our solution to those problems is inside of us. It's our resources. I need to generate a light in order to create a solution for my problems. But what you find in the Bible and in the gospel, is that our greatest problem is internal. It is in our heart and there is solution internally, it's only externally. A light has to shine upon our heart. Something has to invade our space in order for our gloom to be replaced with glory.

And Jesus Christ 700 years later, stood in Galilee and said, "I am the light of the world." And Jesus Christ shone his light in Galilee. Matthew chapter four says it like this. Leaving Nazareth, he, that is Jesus, went and lived in Capernaum in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali up there north in Galilee, so that what was spoken by the Prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled. The people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light. And what you find within these next few verses, is that this light of Christ is so bright and it's so pure that it would not only be a blessing for the Jewish people living in Galilee, but it would be so bright and pleasant that it would also attract Gentiles from around the world. And that's why he says... In verse three he says, "You have multiplied the nation." Now this is exactly what he promised through Abraham. When he says, "And you will be a father of many nations." This is what happened to Jesus when he came to the Earth.

It says in John chapter 12 that a bunch of Greek people, they all came and said, "Philip, we want a meeting, can we have time with Jesus? There's something different about him." And this is why Jesus, when he was

speaking about the fact that he was the good shepherd, he says to a Jewish audience, “I have sheep that are not of this fold.” Now, do you know what he’s saying here? He’s saying that the light of Christ that shone in Galilee, not only touches the Jews, but it has touched me and you. That it’s not just a regional kingdom. It’s a universal kingdom. Jews and Gentiles alike and what it says is this, is that for those citizens of the kingdom, those who have his light shone upon them, and they put their trust in Jesus Christ, one of the first things that happens is that our joy is increased.

Our joy is increased. And then what you notice in the text, is immediately after that, he wants to describe the kind of rejoicing that takes place when someone who is living in gloom or feeling gloomy, when they see the light of Jesus Christ. He gives three different metaphors to describe what it’s like when Jesus invades our space with light and joy and hope and peace. He says, the first metaphor is this, “We’re going to rejoice before him as, as with joy at the harvest.” Have you ever planted anything like first grade, you put a little seed in a clear cup so you could see the sprouts? Right? You did some work and all of a sudden you waited and suddenly for most of us, there was a harvest. There’s always one kid his seed didn’t work.

And some of us are farmers. And so you can imagine the day of harvest was a day of plenty. It was a day of peace because now you know, I get to eat another year until we plant again and hope that it comes up again, we get to eat. I get to provide for my family. It was a sense of relief. When you experience the light of Christ in your heart, it’s like being a farmer when suddenly there’s a sense of peace and plenty that comes over you. I have enough. He goes on and he says, the second metaphor is, as they are glad when they divide the spoil, he’s talking about military conquest. You wake up and you’re in the army and you know you’re going to go to battle that day and you don’t know if you’re ever going to see your wife. You don’t know if you’re ever going to see your spouse, your kids, your parents. You don’t know if you’re ever going to sleep in your bed again.

You don’t know if you’re going to get to go to sleep again. And suddenly, the war’s over and you and your army wins. And suddenly this sense of rejoicing is the kind of rejoicing of I get to go on living. We weren’t defeated, we accomplished something. But then what’s interesting is the third metaphor he wants to describe the kind of victory that we actually get to experience. This is a really fascinating one. If you notice, he says, look, there’s a yolk that’s broken, a staff that’s broken, a rod that’s broken. But then he says... But here’s the metaphor. As on the day of Midian. Now, if you are new to the Bible, you may not know what is Midian? Well, that was a place. It was a nation, it was a people group who were invading Israel in Judges chapter six and seven.

And there’s a really unique war that God led. You can say it that way. And I want to describe it because it’s really important for your joy. So, what happens is it says there, that the army of Midian was so numerous that it’s compared to the sand at the beach. And Israel has 32,000 soldiers. And God looks at those 32,000 soldiers and says, “If I let you go to war and I help you, you’re going to assume because of your strength that you had something to do with this.” And so he goes to their captain Gideon, and he says, “Gideon, I want you to thin the army.” And he thins them eventually all the way down to where there’s 300. And then in the arms of those

300, he says, "Now you're not going to need a sword today. No, I have a new battle gear for you today." And they're like, "Oh cool, we got some new stuff." Right? And he gives them each a trumpet in and empty jar.

Now, imagine how offensive that is for a trained soldier. "Wait a minute, we're going to go to war and you're giving me a horn and you're giving me an empty jar? What do you want me to do with this?" And so it's time for battle. And God says, "I want you to break up the 300 men into three battalions of 100. On the flank over here, one in the middle, another one over here." The Bible says that God told the people, when you see what Gideon does, you do what he does. And at the moment he blows his trumpet and he breaks his jar. That's it. Everyone's like, "Well, okay, there it is." And the Bible says that God worked through that noise to create a fear that it says that the Lord actually turned the swords of the army against each other and they ended up wiping themselves out. And on that day, nobody could say it's because of my strength. And in a very similar way, God saved us in a manner that you cannot boast in yourself.

Jesus Christ, he came in an uninventable way. You couldn't invent this. In fact, for people who don't believe it, it's offensive to them. You're telling me that a man, 2000 years ago, who was God became a baby, needed a diaper, chose poverty, chose friends who were sinners, went to a cross and died on the cross to pay for my sin. You're telling me that is what I need to fix the problems and to fix the overwhelming problem of guilt within my heart? Yes, many of us are just like the army. Faith, that's it? But I got so much more that I can contribute. Just faith. And by the way, that faith that you have, I'm going to give that to you as a gift. So, you can't even boast in your faith. This is what he does. Jesus Christ came to the Earth. He came as a baby. He chose poverty and parents, he chose sinners to hang out with, because there's nobody else to hang out with. With sinners.

And then he died on a cross. He rose from the dead and he comes to us and says, "If you'll believe, I'll forgive you and I'll give you my righteousness." You say, "What does this have to do with rejoicing?" This is why. Because sometimes when we hear these first two metaphors, we think it's all about our work, but he comes down and he clarifies it and he says, "This is the joy that you're going to have, and it is knowing that because of pure grace that you've been saved." Which means that tomorrow, if you have your worst day, you can still rejoice. Because your righteousness is tied up in Jesus. Who's the same yesterday, today and forever more. So, let me encourage you with something. Let me encourage you to take your gloom to Christ and to do it today. Listen, I have pastored here now for 24 years. And what I've found is this. I have seen so often and so repeatedly that Christ has the power to restore beauty from ashes in people's lives when those people's, I don't know what to do, but God, I look to you.

This is what you find in the book of Joel. In the book of Joel, I don't know which side is the metaphor, but he looks out into the world and it says that there's this locust invasion that has come through, swept through, and wiped out all of the beauty of Israel. We don't know if the locust invasion is the metaphor for sin, or if it was a historical event to where Joel then says, "And this is like our sin." Because of our injustice, our rebellion, it's literally wiped out every good thing in the country. But then he comes to us and he says, "Look, come let's reason together, let's talk, bow your knee, repent of your sin and this is what can happen if you repent. If

you'll turn, if you'll look at me." He says, "I will restore to you the years that the locust ate away." Now, do you know what that means? Many of us in this room right now, your life has not turned out like you once thought it would. And you're disappointed in how it turned out.

And you look at some of the paths that you have chosen in life, and so do I. And we think that was a bad path, I wish I would've walked down that path that my godly friends or that God was telling me, I shouldn't have walked down, but I did. I chose this path. And all of a sudden, not only do we feel the consequence of that path, but we feel that we have missed out on all of the blessings of what could have been ours had we walked with the Lord. And what this passage says is this, is because of the overwhelming grace and mercy of the Lord, is that when we walk a path that literally strips us of dignity and beauty and godliness and friendship and locus of our sin, sweep everything away. He's says that God goes behind us and picks up all of the blessings that would've been ours, collects them all up and waits for the day that we repent and then he says that he has the power in his own time and way to take those blessings and to restore them to us when we repent.

This is what's available to you. Some of you think, "No, my path is so far off from where God wanted to be. I'll never be back in God's will." That is not true. You can repent today. You can turn. And how you do it is this. You go to the Lord and you say, "God, before I read it, my answer is, yes. Here's my situation, my yes is on the table. What do I do with this situation? Here's my money, here's my marriage, here's my mind, here's my addiction." Whatever it is. You open up the word and then you gather people around you who also love to read the word and you talk to them about your problem. You say, "This is the reality, this is what I'm dealing with. Are there any passages in the Bible that you believe will be pertinent to this?" And then all of a sudden, once you feel like you know what God would have you do, you give quick obedience to it. And what you'll find is this. It may not be tomorrow, it may be tomorrow's tomorrow, but a day will come when many of the blessings will be restored.

They will be restored. He made the promise that it will happen. And so I urge you to take your gloom to Christ. The second reason, or the second thing Isaiah wants to tell us about the king, is the reason we have confidence that he can bring our gloom into glory. And it's this, is that the true king will have the name above all names. We've only looked at 10 of the Kings out of the 43, but of two that we looked at, it said at the end of the story, that the people, because he was such a train wreck as the leader and as a man, that they didn't even want to bury him with the other Kings or say his name anymore. Because his name was such a bitter experience. Notice what it says of Christ before he talks about his name, he wants to tell us about his essence. In chapter nine, verse six it says, for to us a child is born, to us a son is given and the government shall be upon his shoulder. What is this saying? First of all, a child is born. A child is born. This speaks to Christ humanity. He came as a baby. He needed to be changed. He needed diapers. He needed food. He needed a blanket. He came in vulnerability. He became son of man. That means that he can sympathize with us. He's been tempted in every way just as we are yet without sin. He took on flesh. Not only that though, to us a son is given. This speaks to his deity. This is the son that we've been looking at and hoping for. When is the son born of a woman going to come? This is what Jesus said. For God so loved the world that he what? Gave his what?

This is him. He's the son of God, which means deity. He's God. He has the power to do what you can't do and he has the wisdom to know what you can't know. God and man, but not only that, it says, and the government shall be on his shoulder. You know how Kings wear these great big garments and whatnot. And when they wore that sash over their hair, it was symbolic that this was the one who has authority. This is the sovereignty. This was the one who's making the decisions for the country. And so, what we find here is not only is he humanity, not only is he deity, but he's also sovereignty, he's authority. And what you find, this is a beautiful thing. You see these two little words? To us. It says it twice, to us. This is such a big deal. Because what it means is this, is that all that Christ is for our benefit. If this wasn't the reality, if it was for someone else, but not for you, then who cares what he is?

If there's no benefit that you can tap into, if there's no light that can come into your gloom. Well, it's a great name and it's a benefit for someone else, but it's not a benefit for me. But no, what it says is to us, which means to you. You see, what you find in life and many of you have found is that life can get so confusing at times that you simply need a counselor to help you know which ways up and which way is down. Life can be so difficult. And what it says here is that one of his names shall be called the wonderful counselor. Wonderful counselor. I don't know if you know this, but everyone in this room can give counsel, but not everyone's council is very good. Not everyone's council is wonderful, but his council is wonderful. He can to discern our depths. That's one of the features of a great counselor. You see in Proverbs chapter 20 verse five, it says that the purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.

If you've ever have a friend or a spouse who's a great listener, a great counselor, one of the things that they're able to do is to fish down deep within the motives and tension of the heart, to be able to bring up things so that you can see, "Oh, this is a struggle. This may be the cause of some of the effect that you're experiencing." Jesus discerns us to our depths. He sympathizes with us. He listens to us. He speaks truth. He's a wonderful counselor. And sometimes life get so exhausting that we need help simply to carry our life. Well, Jesus is a mighty God. He has the power that we don't have. And he loves to share it with those who wait upon him. Isaiah 40 says, those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength. Sometimes in life, it gets so scary, you need a protector and a defender, you need a shield. You need dad. Now, some of you don't like your dad. And some of you that God given protector and defender did not do much protecting and defending, instead they did a whole lot of harming.

And as a result of that, you may even feel a sense of pain when I say this, that he's an everlasting father. You say, "I don't even want and a father." But don't you see that one of the reason that your pain is so intense with that relationship is because there is a God given category within you that he puts in all of a heart of what a father should be. That he should be there, he should be present. He should be protective. He should be a provider, he should be there to affirm and to teach and to a mentor. And this is what Jesus does for us. He's present. He provides, he protects, which is why in John 10 it says, "I give them eternal life and they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand." He's a perfect father and he will be a perfect father forever. An eternal father. And then sometimes in life, life can be so full of anxiety that for some of us, we have

a hard time taking a deep breath.

And it says that one of his names will be prince of peace. It's really a beautiful thing that the first time that he came, he didn't put the government on his shoulder, he put our sin on his shoulder. He put a cross on his shoulder. He put the wrath of God on his shoulder. And then he went to Golgotha, he died on that cross. He was arrested, crucified, he was... His life was literally nailed to a cross and there he gave up his spirit and then he rose from the dead and he says to us, "Look, you have not lived as you ought to have lived, but I have and this is the gospel I'm giving to you. The good news. If you will put your faith and trust in me, then all you deserve in your sin will fall upon me on this cross. And all that I deserve in my righteous life will fall upon you.

And it will do so forever and ever and ever." You see, when you put your faith and trust in Christ, he takes away your sin and he gives you his righteousness. And do you know the effect of righteousness in our heart? Well, Isaiah removes all doubt. The effect of righteousness will be what? Peace. And the result of righteousness, quiet and trust forever. You see, some of you don't know what it's like to be able to go to bed, put your head on the pillow and know that you are absolutely righteous before the father and therefore you feel just tremendous peace. Most of us, many of us for most of our life, we put our head on our pillow, when we begin to imagine what could I do tomorrow to merit some kind of favor with God so that I can feel some kind of peace? Peace is available to you now by placing your faith and trust in him. So, let me encourage you to run to Christ to meet your needs, to run to Christ to meet your needs.

I want you to know something. You are going to run somewhere. And so am I. We did this last week. You should think about this, this last week, when you were tired, when you were exhausted, when you were anxious, when you were terrified, what did you do? What did you run to? We all ran to something. You see, in ancient times when a city was attacked, people ran to the tower because the tower was the last refuge. Well, notice what it says in Proverbs chapter 18, the name of the Lord is a strong tower. The character of the Lord, the accomplishments of the Lord, the promises of the Lord, the name of the Lord, these attributes of the Lord is a strong tower that righteous man runs into it and is safe. But notice what he's saying. He saying for each one of us, even though that tower is there and it is there for us forever, we typically run somewhere else.

So he gives one point. And he says a rich man's wealth is his strong city and like a high wall in his imagination. In other words, we all have imaginary towers that we run to as well. For some of us like the rich man, it's wealth. For some of us, you can take out rich and you can take out wealth and you can substitute it with other things. An empty man's pornography, a dissatisfied man's job or greater wealth. It can be a drug, it can be a drink. It can be a basketball team. We'll turn anything into a strong tower. But what you find is this, is that if you run to any other tower, but Christ, it creates an addiction that takes away from the relationships in your life. Christ is the only addiction that adds to your marriage, adds to your friendship, adds to your small group. It adds to your workspace. He's the only one you can run to and say, "This is where I'm running to my place of hope."

And what you find is this, is that all other towers, not only are they imaginary, meaning they cannot help you, but they create and add new pains to old pains. In other words, you're afraid, you have a problem, you have an emptiness. Something. And so you run to a tower. And now all of a sudden, you run to a tower like a drink or a drug, and now you have two problems. You have your first problem and your second problem, so now you need another tower. And this is why we get so messed up in life, is because our entire life is spent running to imaginary towers and none of them are safe and they all create further addictions that tear away at our life, Run to Christ today. The last thing I want you to see is that the true king will reign forever. The true king will reign forever. And this is what we find in verse seven.

If it's even possible for our mind, I know it's probably not, but it's so good for us to use some sanctified imagination, which means sit down and say, "Okay, on the basis of these words, peace, righteousness, justice, what would a perfect king look like forever?" And just try to imagine it. Kingdom with endless peace. People have tried to imagine it just outside the UN building in New York city, there's a wall. And on that wall, this is what we find. An inscription. You probably can't read it, but I'll read it to you. They shall beat their swords into plow shares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up it against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. Do you know where this comes from? Isaiah chapter two, verse four. Exact same text. But what's interesting is this, the UN is just like most people in the world. And that is that we want the fruit of the kingdom without the means to obtain the kingdom.

And so what you need to see is what's before and after these verses, because that is the key. Notice what it says. He shall reign. There is no transition of war instruments into harvest instruments until there's a he, a specific who's going to judge between the nations. And then he tells us who that he is at the bottom. Afterward he says, come let us walk in the light of the Lord. He's talking about the son who would come, who would be born 700 years later, he's talking about Jesus Christ. There is a time of endless peace coming and it comes only through Christ. We can experience partially that kingdom today because we have the word of God, we have the spirit of God. We have the people of God. And so some of benefits of the kingdom, Jesus says the kingdom is at hand. And yet the completion is coming. It's all coming. That's why in verse seven it says, of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end.

It's going to increase. On the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forever more. The zeal of the Lord of host will do this. And don't you know, 700 years later, God sent an angel to a Virgin named Mary and said, "You will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you shall call his name Jesus. And he will be great and will be called to son of the most high. And the Lord, God will give to him the throne of his father, David. And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there will be no end." God made a promise to the Kings and to the second king David, "This special son will come from your line, I promise you." And we do. Jesus was born, the promise was fulfilled.

And so, let me encourage you to trust that he can fulfill the rest of his promises. If he fulfilled his promise 700 years later by sending Christ in order to die for our sin and rise from the dead, you can be assured that he is coming back again. His shoulders are broad enough to carry an eternal kingdom. I assure you, they're broad enough to carry you. So, let's pray. God, I pray for us. I pray for those who are considering this and have yet to have trust Christ and who see whose heart has just had the dots connected and they see that the gloom in their heart, there's only one savior and that savior was promised long ago, and that savior came in the person of Christ. Would you help them now to be able to do just what you tell us to do, and that is to call upon your name, to run to the strong tower. God, for those considering trusting you, would you incline their heart right now to talk to you?

Would you incline their heart to admit that they're a sinner and to confess their belief in Jesus' death and resurrection? And on the basis of his resurrection, it proves his authority that they would yield to his Lordship. Would you forgive them? Would you save them and would you give them peace? For those of us who already believe, would you help us to repent and see the years the locus took away restored to... Would you help us to repent of all of our imaginary towers? And would you help us to find life and joy and peace and glory in Jesus? Jesus, yours is the name above all names. You have no equal, there's no rival. And so we sing to you now, our king, our forever king. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen.



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