

## Q1 L05 - **Noble Prince of Peace** - 2021-01-30

Jean Ross: Good morning, friends. We'd like to welcome you to Sabbath School Study Hour, coming to you here from the Granite Bay Seventh-day Adventist Church in Sacramento, California. We'd like to welcome those who are joining us online across the country and around the world. We're meeting under some strange circumstances with the coronavirus and still needing to limit our actual contact, person to person, interacting in corporate worship, but we are glad you're joining us to study. We know the Spirit of God is not limited to a place or a time, but He is everywhere and He is willing to dwell in the hearts of those who are seeking His presence. So we'd like to welcome all of you to our Sabbath School program.

As many of you know, those who have been tuning in regularly, we've been studying through the book of Isaiah. Today we have a very important lesson. If you don't have a "Lesson Quarterly," we want to encourage you to go to-- you can actually find it at the Amazing Facts website, the lesson for today. Or you can contact your neighborhood Seventh-day Adventist church and ask them for a "Lesson Quarterly" so that you can study along with us.

We have a free offer we'd like to tell you about. It's a book entitled "From Stress to Joy," and this is our free offer. We'll be happy to send this to anyone who calls and asks. The number is 866-788-3966 and ask for offer number 705. We'll be happy to get that in the mail and send it to you in North America or you can request a digital copy of the book by texting the code "SH031" to the number 40544. You'll be able to get a digital download of the book, "From Stress to Joy," and what a timely book for everything that's happening in our world today.

Well, before we get to our lesson, we do have a special musical item. We want to encourage you to sing along with us as we look at one of these great hymns of comfort and encouragement that we find in Jesus.

Female: We invite you to join us in singing hymn number 189, "All That Thrills My Soul."

Jean: Let's begin with a word of prayer. Dear Father, once again how grateful we are to be able to gather in Your presence wherever we might be, recognizing that where two or three are gathered together in Your name, that's where You are. And so Father, we invite Your Holy Spirit, come and speak to us through Your Word, as we look at a very inspiring passage of Scripture found in the Old Testament in the book of Isaiah. For we ask this in Jesus's name, amen.

As mentioned earlier, our lesson study this entire quarter is on the book of Isaiah. Today, we're on lesson number five that's entitled, "Noble Prince of Peace." And I think you know who that is referencing, so we invite Pastor Doug to lead us in our study today.

Doug Batchelor: Good morning. Want to welcome everybody that is watching us online. We know we've got folks that are watching us on a variety of satellite networks as well as watching it live on the Internet, and we're just so thankful that you're able to study with us here at the Granite Bay Hilltop Church. I have a few people that are part of our online production crew that are here with us today. And I'm really excited to get into our lesson today. We've got a big assignment. We're going to be studying Isaiah chapter 9, 10, 11, and 12, and there's a lot of material in there. I don't know that we're going to get through it all, so I hope you'll extend some grace and mercy. Sometimes people write us letters that say, "You didn't get through the lesson," but you've got to know we tried our best.

Now, today, I'm using this microphone because my other microphone was having some technical problems, so I just wanted to explain that. Also I've got some notes spread out here that I'm going to need to use. You know, I think it would be a good place to start to get the background for the time in which Isaiah is writing. If you have your Bibles handy, turn to the second book of Kings chapter 16. Now, you know, in the very beginning of Isaiah, it tells us that he was a prophet during the reign of many kings. And it's in particular during the time of Ahaz that I think some of the events we're going to study today are transpiring.

So if you turn to Isaiah chapter 16 and-- I'm sorry, 2 Kings 16, and I'll start with verse 1: "In the 17th year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah, began to reign. Ahaz was 20 years old when he

became king, and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem; and he did not do what was right in the sight of the Lord his God, as David his father had done. But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel." The kings of Israel had turned to idolatry and they had a golden calf at Dan and they also had one in Samaria. And he had begun to get involved in the idolatry of these-- of the northern kingdom. "He made his son pass through the fire." And it also says later Manasseh did that. He became involved in some of the child sacrifice.

Now, you can tell God didn't bless Ahaz very much because he started reigning when he was 20, and he was done in 16 years. Makes him how old? Thirty-six. So it was a time of great apostasy in the southern kingdom.

"According to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. And he sacrificed, and he burned incense on the high places, and on the hills," and they had idols in these different places, "and under every green tree. Then Rezin, the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to make war; and they besieged Ahaz but they could not overcome him."

All right, now, let me give you just a little geography lesson here and a little history. Israel, when they first inhabited the Promised Land the 12 tribes were all one nation and they stayed one nation through the time of the judges. They stayed one nation through the time of King Saul, David, and Solomon. After Solomon had a son, and Solomon's son, Rehoboam, did not make some good decisions, and he ended up losing the kingdom, broke off into a civil war. They didn't want to pay the high taxes they had paid to Solomon, and so you had roughly ten tribes in the north and they were called Israel.

The southern kingdom was called Judah. Sometimes they called the north Ephraim, because it was the biggest tribe and they would call the southern tribe, they'd say Jerusalem, Samaria, so there are several terms, but Israel, for the rest of their history, was north and south because of this terrible civil war. North of Israel, the ten tribes, you have Syria, their capital is Damascus there on the Mediterranean coast. And of course, Damascus is still there today. Then inland was a great empire called Assyria.

I know when I first started reading the Bible, I got confused by Syria, Assyria. I said, "Are they the same thing?" Assyria is a different kingdom and even though they finally conquered Syria and they ended up owning some of that same territory, their capital was in Nineveh. You remember Jonah went to preach to the Ninevites. And so you need to understand that as we read now what happened and this all plays into Isaiah and his prophecies that he makes. So the king of Israel, Rezin, he got together with Pekahia, the son--Pekah, the son of Remaliah, the king of Syria. They attacked. They got a confederacy. They attacked Judea and Jerusalem. They tried to conquer Jerusalem. They couldn't conquer the city because it was a great fortress, but they did take several cities of Judah.

And it says that "they went to make war; they besieged Ahaz but they could not overcome him. And at that time Rezin king of Syria captured Elath and Syria, and drove away the men of Judah from Elath. Then the Edomites went to Elath, and they dwell there to this day." So a lot of territory was lost and changed hands. "So Ahaz," instead of turning to the Lord and repenting, he sends "messengers to Tiglath-Pileser the king of Assyria, saying, 'I am your servant and your son. Come and save me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel,' who is Pekah, the son of Remaliah, 'who rise up against me.' And Ahaz took the silver, and the gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and he sent it as a present," he sent millions of dollars to help fund or subsidize a war so that they would fight against his enemy, "So the king of Assyria listened to him; and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus," that's the capital of Syria, "and he took it, and he carried its people captive to Kir, and he killed Rezin." That was the king of Syria.

All right, and then it says: "Now King Ahaz," to thank the king of Assyria for fighting for him, he goes up to Assyria to thank him, he goes to Damascus, he sees an altar there. He thinks, "What a beautiful altar." He then begins to model the altar in the house of the Lord after the altar in Nineveh, or Damascus, rather. And so you just see that they're really losing their identity. Ahaz was not a good king. They're being attacked from the north, and Israel lost-- or Judah lost territory.

Now, before I go any farther, history repeats itself. What you had is you had one nation of Israel, but part of the nation turned to idolatry in the north. They began to make idols at Bethel and Dan in Samaria and Dan up in the north. That happened under the time of Jeroboam. His nickname was Jeroboam, the son of Nebat who did cause Israel to sin. Then for a while, the southern kingdom was faithful, the sons of David. But gradually, they began to

compromise until the whole nation compromised. That history is repeated after the time of Christ in what happened to the church.

The church gave itself over to idolatry. You had the faithful, those who protested that, starting with the Waldenses, and the Hussites, all the way through Huss and Luther, and they were resisting that. They were trying to bring about revival, but finally, the daughters of Babylon ended up copying the mother and then judgment came. That's what's happening to the church today. The Protestants are losing their identity just like Judah lost its identity and everybody's just saying, you know, "Hey, what they're doing looks pretty good. Let's model our worship after theirs. See what he has then?" Say "Oh yeah, I kind of like the way they worship-- the worship of the north." He's worshiping like the people in the northern kingdom. Then he's going to worship like the Syrians. And there's great religious compromise.

So these judgments begin to come. That gives us a backdrop for what Isaiah is talking about. So let's go to Isaiah chapter 9, and we have a memory verse. And the memory verse comes to us from Isaiah 9. This is lesson 5, it's called "Noble Prince of Peace." And again, our mission is to study Isaiah 9 all the way through Isaiah 12. So I'll be hopping around a little bit. In Isaiah 9:6, our memory verse: "For unto us a Child is born, and unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Now, when it says Wonderful, Counselor, some people think that Wonderful, then you see in the King James it says comma Counselor. Probably in the original, you've got four titles here: Wonderful Counselor is one. What kind of Counselor? A wonderful counselor. Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Those four titles sort of represent something universal: north, south, east, west, that God is King of all. And so and that's our memory verse. And then it talks about these wars in these chapters that we're dealing with.

In the Sabbath School lesson it makes an interesting note that in all the time of recorded history there's only about 8% of the time that the world has not been at war in one way or the other. Now, in chapter 9, our section here says: "The end of gloom for the Gentiles." And these are the Gentiles that are living north of Judah around the Sea of Galilee that used to be the territory of Israel, the ten tribes. And it's--keep in mind, as we're talking about the gloom, the chapters that you find in your Bible, a man did that. They're not necessarily divinely picked where they put a chapter line.

And so to understand about the gloom in Isaiah 9:1 you've got to go back one verse. Look at Isaiah 8:22. It says: "Then they will look to the earth, and see trouble and darkness, gloom and anguish; and they'll be driven into darkness." Next verse, Isaiah 9:1: "Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, as when at first He lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, and afterward more heavily oppressed her, by the way of the sea, in the Jordan, in the Galilee of the Gentiles." So he's saying that I know that the land of Israel has suffered a terrible judgment.

You know, it was during the time of Isaiah that the king of Assyria, Tiglath-Pileser, who had temporarily joined Ahaz to fight against Syria, he later got down, and he says, "Yeah, Jerusalem's got a lot of money. I think I'll just take them too." And so he thought, "Hey, will you be my friend and fight against my enemies," and what ended up happening is that king came down, he said, "I'm powerful enough to take the whole thing." So he became their enemy. He conquered the northern tribes of Israel at first. He took them away captive.

Now, don't forget this, friends. You're talking about over 500 years before Jesus. The ten tribes in the northern kingdom, southern kingdom had Judah, Benjamin, and the Levites were the priests so they didn't count so much as a tribe. They were really for everybody, but you really had Benjamin, Judah, and Levy. The ten tribes, Ephraim, Manasseh, Zebulun, Naphtali, who lived around the Galilee, they're carried off to Assyria. He conquered the land of the northern empire, carried them to Assyria. The people of Judah, after Babylon conquered them, they came back. The ones who were conquered by Syria never came back.

So when you read in Revelation chapter 7, and it says that God's going to get 12,000 from the 12 tribes of Israel, 12,000 from Naphtali, Ephraim, Zebulun, are they literal Israelites? They can't be. Long before Jesus was born, you'd be hard-pressed to find ten people that were purebred, pure blood from Issachar or from Zebulun. So to

say you've got 12,000 of them now in the last days, it's obviously there's a spiritual meaning there. See what I'm saying? The ten tribes never came back.

The southern kingdom, when they were conquered, they did come back then because Jesus came from the southern kingdom, through Judah. They not only came back after the Babylonian captivity, the southern kingdom came back in 1948, and now we talk about the Jews, we're not talking about Israelites. The Jews are really from the tribe of Judah. That's the name that was used. So, it ends up that the king of Assyria ended up attacking them. They went through great judgments, and Isaiah's saying, "Look, the darkness that you suffered, the land being taken over," he said, "God is going to show you mercy." And if you can read in 2 Kings 15:29: "In the days of Pekah the king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria came, and he took Ijon, Abel Beth Maachah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, Galilee, and the land of Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria."

Now, they never came back. They intermarried with the Assyrians, they did not maintain their distinct identity. Do you know why the Jews maintained the distinct identity? The Bible. They still had the Scriptures. They were going by the Scriptures. It told them who they were. It told them their heritage. It gave them their language. A Jew today who's educated can read some of the Dead Sea Scrolls, even though the text is very difficult. It's like you and I reading the original King James. You can kind of fight through it, but they're still the same people.

The ten tribes in the north had given up the Scriptures. They did not have the temple. They lost their identity. They intermarried with the Assyrians, and if you do a DNA test, many of the Assyrians, they're all Semitic people, they'll have some Jewish blood. It came back from the ten tribes. But what happened then is after Tiglath-Pileser carried the ten tribes north, you know what the people of Judah did during the time of Hezekiah, and the king just before him? They began to move north.

So when Jesus is living, who is it that when Jesus is ministering around Galilee, are they the ten tribes, or are they Judah? The people of Judah had come and inhabited some of the northern kingdom at that time. All right, hope that all makes sense. So with that, you've got--it says: "Zebulun, Naphtali, and Manasseh, that is the country of Galilee all around Gennesaret, was part of that principal that suffered under the Assyrian invasion under Tiglath-Pileser," that we just read about.

Now what is the promise Isaiah makes in verse 2? Isaiah 9, verse 2: "People who walked in darkness have seen a great light; and those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them light has shined." Now, Matthew applies this to the ministry of Jesus.

Did Jesus begin his ministry in Bethlehem, or did he begin his ministry in the country of Zebulun, Naphtali, Manasseh, around Galilee? And that was the great light that had shined. Yes, they'd been through some time of gloom and darkness, but God said a light is going to come to this territory. And you can look in John 1:43-44. Says: "The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and He said, 'Follow Me.'

Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter." All of the early--not all. Most of the early apostles came from the regions around Galilee. You remember when Peter was denying Christ at his trial, the girl said, "You're a Galilean. You've got an accent of a Galilean. Your speech betrays you. We know the followers of Jesus are largely from Galilee." And so that prophecy was fulfilled that a lot of Jesus's ministry was in the land of Galilee. He knew He'd have so much resistance from the priests in Jerusalem in the temple to His teaching. And so He went to where the poor people were working up around the sea.

You look in Isaiah 60, verse 2, talking about darkness and gloom and light: "For behold, the darkness will cover the land and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen on you." All right, let's go to Isaiah 9, verse 4: "For You have broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of the oppressor, as in the day of Midian." He's saying that God is going to set them free from the land of the oppressor.

Now, the liberation that Isaiah's talking about from the enemy, is he talking about the Syrians, or the Assyrians, or the Romans, or the Babylonians? Or is he now when Jesus preaches, is he talking about a different kind of liberation? It's a liberation from the devil who was the real enemy. And he describes in the days of--he says: "As in

the days of Midian." He's talking about Gideon, and the Judges, the Midianites were oppressing the people of Israel. And just a handful of Israelites, Gideon had how many men? Three hundred men. They went against an army of, like, you know, 800,000 and they won.

And what they used, they used a trumpet which is a symbol for the Bible. "Lift up your voice like a trumpet." They used a lamp. "The Word is a lamp unto my feet," a symbol of the Bible. They used a sword. They said, "The sword of the Lord in Gideon," so they had swords, a symbol of the Bible. So how did they overcome the enemy? With the Word. And so that's why he said, "As in the days of Midian, it is going to be God that will give you the victory, and free you from the oppressor."

So this is what Isaiah is referring to here. And then he goes on, and he says, "You've broken the yoke of the burden." Well, what is that talking about? Jesus says in Matthew 11:29: "Take My yoke upon you." So it's talking of breaking free from the yoke of the devil. The light of Jesus's teaching sets them free. "Learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Now go to Isaiah 5, verse 9: "For every warrior's sandal from the noisy battle, and the garments rolled in blood, will be used for burning and fuel of fire." I know that may seem a little difficult when you first read it but you look other places, and Isaiah talks about things that were made for war being used for peace. He said they'll take their spears and they'll shape them into pruning hooks for the garden. And they'll beat their swords and turn them into plows. In other words, they won't use the iron for weapons, they'll use the iron for farming because it's a time of peace. And so here these garments are going to just be used for fuel; they're not going to be used for fighting anymore. And so he's saying this land of Naphtali you're going to have, the yoke of the oppressor is removed, great light is going to shine in your gloom, and you're going to find peace. That's talking about the ministry of Christ that would come to that area.

Isaiah's--he's called--Isaiah's called the Old Testament messianic prophet. So much what of Isaiah says talks about Jesus. All right, let's move on here. In--then he goes on, and he says, let's see here. Start with Isaiah chapter 9, verse 6: "For unto us a Child is born." Who is that talking about? That's Jesus, right? "Unto us a Son is given." "For God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son," that's Jesus, "that we might not perish." And it says, and now, just so you know, some of the Jews when they read this, they say, "Well, yeah, that was talking about Hezekiah." Hezekiah became a very godly king and when the Assyrians attacked the northern kingdom, they tried to attack Hezekiah, but Isaiah said, "God is not going to let them even fire an arrow here."

God delivered that little kingdom of Jerusalem and Judea from the great Assyrian empire. God fought for them, 185,000 Assyrians died in one night. Now, I'm getting ahead; that's later in Isaiah. But some people say, "Well, Hezekiah was the promised Son." Not so. When this prophecy is written, Hezekiah's already born. And so it's not talking about Hezekiah. Hezekiah was a type of Christ, but it's ultimately talking about Jesus. "And the government will be on His shoulder."

Now, I think it's talking about more than an earthly king. What does it mean, "The government will be on His shoulder"? Doesn't say shoulders, like He's holding it up. Kings back then often carried--they wore a banner that would go across and on the shoulder hung a badge or a key showing their authority, their signet. And that was representing that he would have the authority.

Let me give you an example from Isaiah that shows that. Go to Isaiah 22:22, if you can find that. Isaiah 22:22. It says: "The key of the house of David I will lay upon His shoulder." Does that make it clear? Saying that this person would have that key. Now go to Revelation chapter 3, verse 7. "He has the key of David. He who opens and no one can shut." So there both it talks about the key of David in Revelation and Isaiah, and if you read in this prophecy it's saying that He's got--it says a child, the son of David that is going to have the authority of the kingdom.

So do we need to guess who it is that lifts the gloom that's talked about in Isaiah 9? It's talking about the ministry of Christ, and you compare Scripture with Scripture. It goes on to say that it says: "He's got the key and He opens and no one can shut. And He shuts and no one can open." Now, does Jesus say something in His teaching about sharing those keys with believers? He does. He says, "I give you the keys to the kingdom." He wasn't talking about Peter; He's talking about every believer. And what you bind on earth will be bound in heaven. How do you and I

have the key? We don't really own the key. Christ is the key, the truth is the key, but in knowing Christ we get to share it.

Does Jesus say you are the light of the world? He does. But doesn't Jesus say, "I am the light of the world"? So do we have any light of our own, or do we really glow because of Christ? So as we share Christ, we also are the light of the world. See what I'm saying? And so it's His key.

I remember a funny story a friend told me. I think I may have shared this in church before. He flew to see his brother, I won't tell you his name, in Montana. And he had a nightmare of a travel experience, so the next day he was exhausted but his brother had to go to the dentist, and the dentist office was at this-- the biggest mall in Montana. And my friend, he walked around for a minute in the mall, and he just got so tired, and he went to his brother and said, "Look, give me the key to the car. I've got to get a nap. I'm exhausted. I'm going to lay down in the car until you're done with your dentist appointment." He went to the parking lot and have you ever done this before where you weren't paying real close attention to where you parked when you went into the parking lot? And he knew his brother had a white Subaru. You have no idea how many Subarus there are up in Montana. You'd think they'd be more loyal Americans but they drive a lot of Japanese cars there. And I guess a lot of them are made in America.

So he says, "Oh man." He doesn't want to bother his brother and this is a huge mall. It is surrounded by parking, thousands of cars. He starts to walk around, hitting the panic button. Have you ever done that, yeah, in trying to find where's your car? And he said, finally, beep, beep, a light went off, and he went and--but the key would not open it. He said, "Well, this isn't the right car. It just had the right signal for the panic button." So, then he commences to walk a little further. Keeps pressing, keeps pressing. Another one went off. He went to open it up. It didn't open. And he's becoming suspicious because there's cameras in the parking lot, and he's thinking, "They're going to watch me. Some security somewhere is going to see me just going from car to car, trying to get into a car."

And he was a little self-conscious about that, but he said, "I've got to go to sleep." And he just kept going. Pretty soon, he got one that went "beep, beep." White Subaru. Went, and he--the key worked. He laid down, took a nap. Woke up pretty soon. He thought, "Well, I probably ought to take the car over where my brother is going to be waiting for me," and he stuck the key in the ignition. It didn't work. He had taken a nap in someone else's car. Eventually, he found his brother, and he found the right car.

But it does make a difference having the right key, and are there some churches out there that have counterfeit keys? You think they work, but when you really go to use them to get the car started, it doesn't work. And only Jesus has that key. And it says, "His name will be called," and we talked about this, "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Now, who is this speaking of? Got a few people here. You can answer me. Who's this talking about? Jesus. It's not a trick question. When you think of Jesus, we always think about Him as the Son of God. Do we sometimes think about Him as the Everlasting Father? You know, Christ goes by many names, but all things that were made were made by Him. So is He our creator? Then in that sense He is our Everlasting Father. But He also is called the Son. He's also says, "I am your Brother," and He says, "I am your friend." And He's our husband.

So Jesus has many familial titles, and one of them is the Everlasting Father. But is it true that Christ, and the Father are one also? Yeah, so anyway, that's just one of His titles. And why is He called Wonderful? How many of you remember the story where Samson's parents, they spoke to the angel and finally they said-- they made an offering, they said, "Tell us Your name so that we can worship You." He said, "Why do you ask after My name? It is Wonderful." And so actually, He says that is one of His names. And then He ascended in the offering that they made. All right, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father.

Go to Isaiah 9:7: "Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end." Now if you had doubts before, hopefully you have no longer any doubts that this is talking about Jesus. "Whose kingdom will have no end." If you look in Daniel 7:27, like the airplane, "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all dominions will serve Him." And then you read on here in Isaiah in the next verse and it's still going with verse 7: "Upon the

throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this."

So we're still in Isaiah 9. He's making it very clear, the light that was brought to the north of Israel, Galilee, the freedom from the yoke, the Son of David, the keys of truth, the Everlasting kingdom. Where did Jesus first say, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"? Was it in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, or around Galilee? Galilee.

So Isaiah is predicting this is where the ministry of truth is going to begin. Yeah, Jesus was baptized down by the Jordan, but He began His ministry up around Galilee and He was preaching through their cities. And it says that He's going to have the throne of David. You read in Luke 1 one of the prophecies about Jesus that was given. It says: "He will be great and He will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of David--his father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob," not just Judah. Jacob is all 12 tribes. "He'll reign over the house of Jacob and His kingdom there will be--of His kingdom there will be no end."

Now, I talked to you a little bit ago about the history of the 12 tribes and how 10 of the tribes fell into apostasy. They were conquered by the king of Assyria, carried to the north, replaced. And the king of Assyria later brought some Assyrians down to live in that area and they were called Samaritans. Why did Jesus choose 12 apostles? Were the 12 apostles of Jesus from 12 different tribes? Or were many of them from the same tribe? The number 12 now for the people of Judah still was important because when Judas killed himself, Peter said, "We need to replace that one to get back to the number 12." That's Acts chapter 1.

The number 12 was important to Jesus. It no longer mattered that they were all from the same tribe. Jesus was saying, "My 12 are going to be 12 that are spiritual Jews. If you're real children of Abraham you will worship Me." Jesus said to the religious leaders who had a lot of Jewish DNA in their blood, He said, "You are children of your father, the devil, because you're rejecting Me. If you don't follow what Moses and Abraham followed, you are not a Jew." That's what He said, isn't it?

So now when it talks about Him being over the tribe of Jacob, is it talking about the literal 12 tribes? I think God still has a special work for the Jews, don't misunderstand, but I think sometimes we put so much attention on the literal nation, and the politics over there in the Middle East we forget that Israel today, he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, he is a Jew which is one inwardly. Circumcision is not which is in the flesh, it is that which is in the heart. If you're Christ, you are Abraham's seed. That's when Jesus said, "Many will come from the east and the west and sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." They're in that kingdom because they're adopted in the family, but it's some of the natural children will be in outer darkness.

It's like the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man who's feasting on the bread, he's supposed to be like the Israelites, but he doesn't care about the baker at his gate, the Gentiles. In the judgment, the baker's with Abraham. That was the Jewish place of rejoicing, and the rich man is in the pagan place of torment, Hades. Jesus is saying you can't say, well, you know, God is a-- God is no respecter of persons. He's made of one blood all nations, right? God does not say, "I'm going to like these people because of their blood type or their race more than other people." Whoever accepts Him becomes part of that nation of Israel, if you worship Him. All right, going now to Isaiah 9, verse 8 through 17. I've got to hasten along. The Lord sent a word against Jacob, and it has fallen on Israel. All the people will know-- Ephraim, and the inhabitants of Samaria--who say in pride and arrogance of heart: 'The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with hewn stones; the sycamores are cut down, but we will replace them.'"

So when they were attacked by the Assyrians, they said, "Oh, it's okay, we're going to rebuild, rebuild." Instead of humbling themselves, they hardened their hearts and said, "We're going to come back. We're going to make a big comeback." And God said, "No, you're not because you're not repenting." And they had reason to be alarmed by what was happening.

And then you read again in verse 11, Isaiah 9: "Therefore the Lord will set up the adversaries of Rezin against him," that was a king of the northern kingdom. His adversaries would come. "And spur his enemies on, the Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they'll devour Israel with an open mouth." In other words, he's saying a terrible judgment will come from the north and from the south, from the Philistines because you're not repenting and turning from your idolatry. And it says: "For all this," now, if you have your Bible, you might make a little star

next to this verse. "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." You find that phrase several times.

For instance, if you've got your Bible open, you look. I just read in Isaiah 9, verse 12, "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." You go to Isaiah 9, verse 21: "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." You go to Isaiah 10: "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." Six times, mostly in this sequence that we're reading now, He's pronouncing judgments on Israel.

You realize, friends, this was as serious as it gets. He was basically saying, "Look, I brought you out of Egypt. I saved you from slavery. I made you My people. You kept turning from Me, turning from Me, turning from Me. I've been so patient with you. Other kingdoms oppressed you, but then I gave you victory because you turned back to Me. But now, you're not turning back, and I am going to utterly cast you off." That's what He did to the ten northern tribes. Says, "Yes, even though you think, 'Well, this is a terrible judgment, we'll just repent,'" He said, "No, I'm not done yet." "His hand is stretched out still." And so it's telling us that there's more to come because they would not repent.

So we'll go to chapter 10. Oh, let me see here. Did I get that? So they were being chastened. He's striking them but they're not seeking the Lord. It's a--you read in verse 13: "For the people do not turn to Him who strikes them, nor do they seek the Lord of hosts." You know, if we're smitten by the Lord, we should humble ourselves.

Listen to Hebrews 12, verse 5: "And have you forgotten the exhortation that speaks to you as sons: 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you're rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and He scourges every son whom He receives.' Therefore," and this, I'm going back to Isaiah, because they would not repent. "Therefore the Lord will cut off the head and the tail from Israel, palm branch, and the bulrush in one day." The top of the tree, the bottom of the brush, the head, the tail. "The elder, and the honorable, he is the head," and the bulrush in one day. And it says: "The prophet who teaches lies, he is the tail."

Now, if you go up to a rattlesnake, you know how you hear you're near a rattlesnake? Does the head tell you or does the tail tell you? You often find out with a snake, even non-rattlesnakes, take their tail and they flick their tail in the leaves. I've seen that before where bull snakes will imitate a rattler and they vibrate their tail. I said, "Oh," and I thought, "That's a bull snake. He's fooling me."

And so the tail speaks. And so He's using that language to say your false prophets in Israel, these prophets of Baal, they're not the sons of Aaron, they're not from the sons of the prophets. These are the false prophets that were set up by Ahab and Jezebel and others after them. They're saying, "We're going to win, we're going to beat the Syrians." And they wouldn't repent when the judgments came. He said, "I'm going to take away the head and the tail. They'll be destroyed." "Therefore the Lord will have no joy in the young men, nor have mercy on the fatherless, and the widows; for everyone is a hypocrite and an evildoer, every mouth speaks folly. For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." It's not like--you've probably seen these offers that they have on TV. It's an infomercial and they'll tell you about this wonderful product and you think, "Ah, I'm almost sold," and then they say, "But wait, there's more." And God is saying, "But wait, there's more." And He's letting them know that, you know, the heavy judgments were coming.

All right, Isaiah 10: "Woe to those who decree unrighteous decrees, who write misfortune, which they have prescribed to rob the needy of justice, to take away what is right from the poor of My people, that the widows may be their prey, and they might rob the fatherless."

Now, He's basically saying those in position of leadership that are making laws, they're oppressing the poor. And in the time of Christ, let me give you one example. God said, "Honor your father and mother," and-- but they had made a law that said you don't have to honor your father and mother if you pronounce corban over your estate, you can spend it the way you want. You can tell your father and mother, "I don't have to help you in your old age," even though your mother might be a widow. You don't have to help your siblings or family. Say "Look, I've willed it all to the church," and so they've got this law they wrote that once it's willed to the church, I pronounce corban over all of my property, and I get to use it as long as I want, but I can't share it with you because I've willed it to the church. They just made this law where Jesus said, "You made the law of God of honoring your father and

mother of null effect because you've prescribed the law that the priests came up with to get more money from the people."

And so they had all these evil laws in the northern kingdom that were oppressing the poor. And let me see here, yeah, "'Woe to those who decree unrighteous decrees. To whom do you flee for help? And where will you leave your glory? Without Me they will bow down among the prisoners, and they will fall among the slain.' For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." We'll go to Isaiah 11 and this is a great part. "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse," this is Isaiah 11:1, "and a Branch will grow out of his roots." Who is this talking about? The stem, now who is Jesse? Jesse was the father of David. Jesse is the son of Obed who is the son of Ruth and Boaz, and the Messiah was going to come through this line.

So it says, "A stem shall come from Jesse." Jesse had seven or eight sons. You know, there's some mystery. One place it says he has eight sons, one place it says he has seven sons. Did you ever spot that? They think it's because one of his sons died young and so they didn't know whether to count him in the other sons. But from those sons, one, the youngest, would spring. And he uses the picture of a tree that is cut down, and it looks like that tree is dead and gone. The branches are rotten, it's weak, it's got moss and you think it's got no glory and from that humble stump, all of a sudden a shoot comes up.

Now, I know something about trees. I've spent a lot of time cutting trees, working trees. You don't know, I used to do tree service, climb trees, prune trees. And trees were different. If you cut down a Douglas fir tree, it's dead. You ain't going to see no suckers coming up off the roots. You cut down a Douglas fir tree above branches, one of the branches will turn into the main trunk again, go straight up, and start putting off side branches again. If you cut down a madrone, it's hard to kill. It is coming back. It will send shoots back up again. You cut down an oak, a black oak, very likely if it's still got moisture, next year you're going to see these shoots start coming up. You think you're mowing grass, it wrecks your lawnmower because they're tough. And so different trees act differently. So this is a tree that a sucker comes off, and from that a great tree grows.

Now, do we have a prophecy in Daniel that talks about a tree that is cut down, it looks like it's over with, but it comes back? Remember in Daniel chapter 4, the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. And so that's the language that's being used here, that from this stem. When Jesus came, did the tribe of Judah look glorious? Did Jesus spring from one of the royal sons that were sitting on the throne, or did it look like the tree of Judah was down?

When Jesus came, said it looked like that--the monarchy of David is gone, but it wasn't gone, was it? From that root, a shoot came from the line of David, and it tells us that he would end up being the great king. He will grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon him. The spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, and might, the spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the Lord.

Have you read in Revelation where it talks about the seven spirits of God? You look here in Revelation 5, verse 6: "I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne, and the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God."

Does that mean that the Holy Spirit's seven persons? No, it's talking about the seven facets or characteristics of the Holy Spirit. Where do you find them? We just read it: Isaiah 11:2. Follow with me. Count with me if you want. Isaiah 11:2: "Spirit of the Lord," that's one, "shall rest upon them," spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, fear of the Lord. And so some scholars, you might say, "Ah, I don't know if that all adds up, Pastor Doug, but I'll look-- I'll expect you to give me a better answer." I think that's a pretty good one. What are the seven spirits of God? They're seven facets or characteristics of the Spirit of the Lord. And so this--all of God's Spirit is going to dwell upon this stem, this shoot, this branch, that comes from the tribe of David. And this is Jesus, of course. "His delight is in the fear of the Lord, and His eyes shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness He will see and judge the poor." "Blessed are the poor in spirit," Jesus said. "And He'll decide with equity for the meek of the earth." Jesus said, "I am meek and lowly." "He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth."

The Bible says that her Son goes up to heaven and He rules all nations with a rod of iron. That's Revelation 12. "And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked." Thessalonians says He will come, Jesus, and He'll destroy the wicked with the brightness of His Coming." "Righteousness will be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the

belt of His waist." He's described with this belt again in Revelation chapter 1. "The wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat, the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child will lead them."

So the ultimate goal of this finished kingdom is going to be Jesus reigning on the earth with peace. First, the literal--spiritual kingdom comes, 2,000 years ago, but in the very near future, Jesus is coming and He will ultimately establish a literal kingdom in this world, amen? Chapter 12 is only six verses, and it's largely a Psalm of praise. It's a song of encouragement and praise, and it quotes from many other Psalms because of the Son of David.

I want to remind our friends if you missed this at the beginning, we have a free offer you can request and it's called "From Stress to Joy." That is something that would be helpful in our days, and you can simply call 866-788-3966. That's 866-Study-More. Ask for offer number 705, we'll send this to you for free. God bless you, friends. We are out of time. I hope you learned something and Lord willing, we'll study His Word together again next week.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing free resource. Not only can you receive this free gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of today's free gift, simply text the keyword on your screen to 40544 or visit the web address shown on your screen and be sure to select the digital download option on the request page. It's now easier than ever for you to study God's Word with Amazing Facts wherever and whenever you want. And most important, to share it with others.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts" Changed Lives.

Male: One night, we were out late. We--there was this young persons' club. It was no alcohol so anybody could go in. And it was a kind of a midnight cafe, but they played heavy metal music, so we were there. On our way there, as we pulled into the garage, all of a sudden, the cop lights start flashing and so we-- all of us were high, drugs all over the car, paraphernalia, pipes, and you know, rolling papers. All these are in the car, and so we jumped out. We ran. We run as fast as we could to get into--to get away from that. I ran into the club and tried to mingle with everybody. I mean, my heart is pounding. I'm--to me, I'm just-- I'm afraid I'm going to get caught, you know? I've been arrested so many times I don't know what they're going to do this time.

So I sit down across from this man. He's dressed in a long black trench coat. He doesn't--he doesn't seem to be interested at first, and then he begins to engage me in conversation. He says, "So, you know, what's going on? What's wrong?" And I just kind of dismiss it. And--but then he kind of insists. "No, I can see something's going on. What's going on with you?" And I could tell the guy's not a insider or a cop or a, you know, so I said, you know, I just started telling my story a little bit. And so he just nonchalantly asks me, "Have you ever heard of Satanism?" So I said, "Yeah." He said, "Well, have you ever looked into it, what it's about?" I said, "Well, not really."

He started asking me a few questions about it and which kind of prompted me to ask him some questions. So we get in this conversation. He starts describing what Satanism is, and so one of the first things I did, is I went out to the bookstore and bought my own satanic Bible, and I began to read the satanic Bible and study with it with a friend. And get to know it and starting to understand the philosophies behind it. And we pursued that heartily.

My friend, and I, we went out, and we gave each other a satanic tattoo to just give us a sign of Satan. Well, even with the power of Satan in my life now and just weird things happening all around, I kept getting arrested. I got arrested for running away from home, not once, not twice, three times. Maybe even a fourth time. And they took--always brought me back home. Every time I was-- I had a dirty urine. That's what they called it. I tested positive for marijuana. And you know what happened? They had the--I think it was the third or fourth time, I think it was the fourth time I got arrested for habitual absence, they called it, they said, "We're done. You know, you obviously have a drug problem, and we have a way to help. And so we're going to send you to a drug treatment center," and that's where they sent me. And they sent me off to drug treatment.

So one night, I get caught smoking a cigarette. The man who catches me is the drug counselor, and he, in my eyes, is the worst person in the whole world. They took my satanic Bible from me. They wouldn't let me have it there. In fact, it was him that did that and so all this animosity, all this hatred, all this wrath that I had built up, I took out

on him. I attacked the man with a knife. They locked me up and put me in juvenile. So here I am, sitting in this lonely cell. All I can think about is death. I want to die. I hate everybody. I hate the world. I hate God. I just want to die.

But my mom was going to call me later that week, and so I just looked forward to that. And finally, she did call. And during that 15-minute conversation she put this thought in my head: "Do you have a Bible in there?" My mind starts to work, and I start to think to myself, "You know, this cell's really, really boring. I could do to read some stuff." And then I was--I was getting a few books here and there to read, but this Bible was different. Finally, I came to me. I said, "You know what I'm going to do? I am going to grab that Bible. I'm going to take it back to my cell. I'm going to begin to read it, and I'm going to prove all those Christians wrong."

So I'm reading the story of King David, and I realized for the first time that there is a God out there, but this is a God of love. And from that point forward, I just kept reading through the Bible, and I finally come to the New Testament, and I get to read about this man named Jesus. I've heard of Jesus. I've used His name in swear words so many times. I didn't know who He was. But now I read in the book of Matthew this incredible person named Jesus, and He lived this perfect life. His compassion, His love, His mercy that He showed to people, it was incredible.

In complete desperation, said, "God, I don't know why You want me, but here I am. You have my heart." And I gave my life to God. Providentially, my dad, he sent me a Walkman radio. My mom's gift was a new Bible and a Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. And together with those, I was able to hear the most profound truths I've ever heard before, testing them by the Bible, and seeing whether or not for myself if they're true. In a miraculous way, for 14 years, while I was incarcerated, God turned the penitentiary into a seminary. I studied, and I studied, and I studied. I had a insatiable desire to learn and grow and to get to know this God that I'm--this God of the universe.

So week after week, I'd have this little radio up in the corner of the windowsill in my small cell, listening to "Bible Answers" live, listening to a message that it was really transformational for me. I began to grow and learn and study more and more. I began to do Bible studies with people. In fact, here comes "Amazing Facts" again because I get these Bible study guides through the mail and as I've done them and completed and sent them back, getting the new ones, now I have all these lessons. What am I going to do with them?

Well, I sit down on the yard, in the prison yard, with fellow inmates, fellow convicts, and we open the Bible together. And we study. We study God's Word together, using these Bible study guides as a way to go through the Bible. So they let me out six years early for good behavior and as I walked out to a free world, I didn't know what to do. Everything was-- everything changed.

Praise God for those in prison ministry that adopted me, took me in, helped me to get established. Many people began to encourage me, said, "Why, you really need to go to Amazing Facts Center of Evangelism, AFCE." Amazing Facts Center of Evangelism has been life-changing for me. And not just for me, but for many people who have come.

It's been more than a decade and a half ago, I was sitting in a cell, listening to Doug Batchelor on a radio with my Walkman way up in the corner of this window. And now I'm sitting in the audience, listening to Doug Batchelor live at the Amazing Facts Landmarks of Prophecy series, working with many of those in the audience and bringing people to the meetings. What a--what a contrast. God has led me so far. God has brought me to where I'm at today, and I know that God is continuing to lead me into my future.