

invasion into the land of Israel. It was there that the people first felt the terrible force of the attack of the heathen hordes which came as a result of their sin, and, more immediately, as a result of the wicked scheme of King Ahaz. Eventually this sorrow and darkness will be replaced by the joy and light that will result from the coming of the One who will replace Ahaz as the head of the house of David.

The New Testament tells us that our Lord Jesus Christ appeared privately to a few people in the temple at Jerusalem shortly after His birth and again at the age of twelve, but His first great public ministry occurred in Galilee, in the region described in Isaiah 9:1. Matthew 4:13-16 points out that His preaching in that area was a direct fulfillment of this passage. There have been interpreters who have thought that Matthew was simply picking from the Old Testament a geographic phrase with no connection with Christ, and then claiming that it was a fulfillment of the Scripture because it happened to be the place where He preached. Actually, of course, the passage is definitely fulfilled in the coming of the great light through the first preaching of Christ, in the very area where the great darkness of the Assyrian invasion had first descended.

Matthew quotes parts of 9:1 and 9:2 as showing how Christ fulfilled these verses. When the Jews took over the chapter divisions of the Latin Bible into the Hebrew Bible, this is one of the comparatively few places where they altered it (cf. American Standard Version margin). Some think that they did this in order to separate the two verses which Matthew quotes together. Whether that is or is not true, the fact is that there should not be a division at either place, for the verse is definitely and closely connected both with what precedes and with what follows. There should be no chapter division before verse 7.

The Prince Of Peace

The rest of the glorious Messianic passage at the beginning of chapter 9 continues to relate itself to the Assyrian invasion, and at the same time to point out the great changes which are ahead. Verse 3 describes the great joy which will come to the people. Here the King James Version and the