

**5 December 2021**

**Isaiah 9:2-7 – How can Jesus turn darkness into light?**

**By building his kingdom**

<sup>6</sup> For to 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 Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
<sup>7</sup> 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 for evermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

*Question 1:* Do you have strong links or heritage connection with another country other than the UK. How do the two countries compare?

*Question 2:* What is special about the Kingdom of God as described here?

**By changing people's lives**

**. . . . Hope in our despair**

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,  
on them has light shined.

*Question 3:* How can God bring hope in our despair?

**. . . . Joy in our fruitfulness**

<sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation;  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

*Question 4:* How do we gain joy in our fruitfulness?

**. . . . Peace in our hearts**

<sup>4</sup> For the yoke of his burden,  
and the staff for his shoulder,  
the rod of his oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.  
<sup>5</sup> For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult  
and every garment rolled in blood  
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

*Question 5:* It's warlike imagery, but what does it say?

*Question 6:* What is the encouragement, promise or challenge of this passage?

*Question 7:* What do you take away personally from these verses, and how will it change your approach to and experience of Christmas?

**A Prayer**

Loving Lord, thank you that you are building your kingdom and changing lives today. Please bring me hope in my despair, joy in my fruitfulness and peace in my heart, and so turn my darkness into light, this season of Advent, for the sake of your Son my Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.