



Sunday, 12/11/16

JOY IN GALILEE

READING: Isaiah 9:1-3

Have you ever wondered if the Old Testament prophets had any real idea what their prophesies really meant? We see examples of forth-telling (explaining an event or situation), and examples of foretelling (identifying or describing events yet in the future). These verses in Isaiah are a great example of both. Isaiah describes the distress experienced by the tribal lands of Zebulun and Naphtali, and foretells blessing to come in Galilee. From our perspective, more than two thousand years later, it is clear that Isaiah was describing the coming of Jesus. We understand the "great light" and references to light in the darkness. In retrospect, we can assemble the puzzle of prophecy, connecting the dots that link the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem to the signs in the heavens, the call out of Egypt, the special role of Galilee, of John the Baptist, and the suffering and sacrifice of the Messiah.

But for those who lived in those ancient times, it must have been an impossible puzzle. We can perhaps understand why the Jews expected a conquering king in the earthly model, and were puzzled, even perplexed by the very different kind of king embodied in the person of Jesus. A good question for us today: would we recognize Jesus if He chose to return this very day?

Prayer: Lord, we seek to know You and to understand You. Thank you for the gift of Your Word, especially for the words of the prophets. We pray that You would prepare our hearts and order our lives in such a way that we would be ready for Christ to come again without warning, even today.

-Tom Ward