



## Growth Group Discussion Questions

### 2. the Government of the Godman

Read Isaiah 9:1-7

1. Before we get into this passage, think about Adam and Eve or the tragic episode of the Tower of Babel. ***What is the Bible's view of man's ability to govern himself? Looking over the history of the world and current affairs, how confident are you that people can govern themselves? Why are we so bad at ruling ourselves?***
2. The Bible says that God appointed Adam as an 'under-ruler' or 'vice-regent' to rule earth under the rule of God. Israel was also meant to be God's son ruling over the nations as God's representative on earth. David and his dynasty embodied this role. ***Since all of these failed, what do you think God should do in order to ensure righteousness and peace on earth? Hint: see Isaiah 63:5-6***
3. ***Compare verse 2-3 with Psalm 4:6-7. How would you describe what it's like to live under the government of God?***
4. ***How does the language of verse 4 remind us of the Exodus? Why do you think Isaiah evokes images of the Exodus?***
5. Everything that God's government achieves – the dawning light of salvation, the rejoicing, the liberating freedom and the demilitarisation – all of this is achieved through the Government of the Godman. ***Read verse 6 and 7 closely and fill in the following table to see whether the Godman is able to shoulder the burden of government:***

Description	Meaning?	Divine or human?
"a child is born"	must be a human baby; like God promised Eve	human
"son is given"		
"government on his shoulder"		
"wonderful counsellor"		
"mighty God"		
"everlasting Father"		
"prince of peace"		

**6. What is the extent, both in place and time of the realm of the Godman according to verse 7?**

**7. Discuss how all of this should fill people who live under the rule of Christ with comfort?**

## Leaders Notes

1. Man is hopeless at ruling himself. In every case man's desire is to rule *independently* of God. Yes, man (=man and woman together) were designed to 'subdue the earth and rule over it' but we were designed to rule *dependent* on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. We refused that and hence the chaos that follows.
  2. The best thing God can do is come and rule Himself. But, since He has promised that a man will rule earth, He somehow has to have both a man and Himself rule. This is why the history of man in the Bible begs for the solution of a Godman – someone who is both God and man.
  3. As God causes light to dawn, so His people who have been living in darkness begin to rejoice again. People who do not live under the rule of God are suffering from S.A.D – seasonal/sin affectation disorder. Like those who live in countries where there is no sun. Living under the rule of God is like living in Perth in summer: sunshine every day.
  4. The Exodus was the premier saving/liberation event in the history of God's people (until totally eclipsed by the cross.) Isaiah points them back and reminds them of God's great liberation and he does this so that they will turn again to God knowing He alone can redeem them. He wants them to look back and remember the pain, the misery, the slavery, the hopelessness. And yet, God wonderfully set the captives free. Only the Lord can set you free. There is no freedom under any government except under the reign of the Lord through His Godman. The last line of verse 4 is actually about the liberation God gave His people through Gideon. Interestingly, if you read those events the tribes that were liberated were Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali – the same Northern tribes Isaiah speaks about in verse 1.
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Description	Meaning?	Divine or human?
"a child is born"	must be a human baby; like God promised Eve	human
"son is given"	in fulfilment of God's promise to David in 2 Sam 7	human
"government on his shoulder"	He will be responsible to rule	human
"wonderful counsellor"	wonderful means 'supernatural'; supernaturally wise = Jude 1:25 to the only wise God our Saviour...	divine
"mighty God"	the omnipotent God; able to do anything even more than we ask or think	divine
"everlasting Father"	God alone is eternal; He only is the Father from whom every family in heaven and earth is named, Ephesians 3:15	divine
"prince of peace"	= Solomon. The wise King who reigns in peace and under whose rule all God's people rejoice	human

6. Everywhere, always. Every knee and tongue bowing and confessing Jesus as Lord, forever.
7. Up to the Growth Group but encourage each person in the group to express how the fact that Jesus reigns now on the Throne of the Universe gives incredible comfort. Seriously, what can go wrong? Everything that happens is under His sovereign reign and will work out for our forever good.