

be no more gloom for those who are in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles by the way of the sea along the Jordan, the people walking in darkness have seen a great light, those living in the shadow of death, on them the light has dawned." Here this statement--it was a Jewish version, of course it was a British archbishop who put in the ch. divisions in the 13th century. The Jews took them over and transferred them to the Hebrew Bible. But they thought it would be good to make a break between vv. 1 and 2.

Matthew quotes it right straight along. He says the land of Zebulun, the land of Naphtali, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people walking in darkness have seen a great light. So they start ch. 9 one verse further on. But it is quite clear Isa. says this area up here in northern Israel, this area where the Assyrians first come in, where the darkness first comes as a result of Ahaz' clever scheme, this is the very area where the light is going to come first because this is where Jesus Christ will begin his preaching. Matt. quotes it as being fulfilled in Christ's preaching in that very area.

So we have in this 9th ch. as we go on, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulder and his name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." A tremendous statement--to say that this child is going to be called Mighty God! It is no wonder that in the authoritative Jewish Version of the Holy Scriptures, it says that his name is called Pele-joez-el-givvor-Abi-ad-sar-shalom. It simply transliterates the Heb. That's a mighty long name for a person to have. So they put in a footnote that says, "That is, Wonderful in counsel is God the Mighty, the Everlasting Father, the Ruler of peace." There's no other evidence anywhere of anyone else ~~having~~ having as long a name as that! It is not impossible that a name should be somewhat like that in formation, but it is much more reasonable to take it in the way it is taken in our Christian Bibles.

So we have this definite prediction about Christ there, and the we go back and look at the situation in Isaiah's time, the coming of the Assyrians, and the problems they are going to face until at the end of ch 10, we read how the Assyrian power is going to be destroyed, God is going to cause it suddenly to be brought completely low, and using Lebanon for a figure of the great Assyrian power, he says at the end of ch. 10, he shall cut down the forest thickest thickets with an axe, Lebanon shall fall before the mighty one. He goes right on. A stump will == a shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse. From his roots a branch will bear fruit. So he goes right from the contrast with this mighty Assyrian empire, which falls utterly and never came to life again -- one of the most terrible destructions in all history was the downfall of that empire which had been so great for many centuries.

Immediately he makes the contrast between the great forest of Lebanon, the little shoot, the little tree that represents the rulership of Jesse's family, from his roots a branch will bear fruit.