

## “Gifts from God”

December 2, 2018

Isaiah 9:2-6

### I. Introduction

As we begin our Advent preparations, we think about the prophets who hundreds of years before the birth of Christ predicted His birth. With prophets and their foretelling in mind, we often read this prophesy or a different prophesy about the birth or the life or the death of Jesus Christ. Sometimes we read from **Micah 5:2** which says, “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” Or we read from **Zechariah 12:10**: “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.” Or we read from **Isaiah 53** where Isaiah foretells the “Suffering Messiah.”

There are over a hundred different prophesies which were fulfilled by Jesus. Today’s Scripture from Isaiah 9 is one of those describing the coming Messiah. Here we see descriptive titles that belong to Jesus the Messiah or Christ—then and now and on into eternity. **Verse 7 of Isaiah 9** goes on to say, “Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.”

Isaiah’s prophesy is actually a double prophesy concerning the Messiah. It describes the child prophesied of in **Isaiah 7:14**: “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.” This is the birth we celebrate on Christmas Day. But Isaiah 9 also describes the Messiah who is coming in the future and will establish His eternal kingdom on the earth—a kingdom prophesied in the Book of Revelation. As we are reminded in several places in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament, Jesus is coming again. This

morning, though, let's look at each of these descriptions from Isaiah 9 and see what they mean to us today.

## II. Descriptions of Jesus Christ

**A. Wonderful Counselor** First, Isaiah says that the Messiah, the coming One, is the **“Wonderful Counselor.”** *“Wonderful”* is defined as the ability to excite wonder or admiration; exciting surprise; other synonyms are: strange; astonishing; incomprehensible, marvelous or miraculous. It was an incomprehensible love, by which Jesus came; His humility, His self-denial, His sorrows were admirable; His mighty works were astonishing; His death on the cross was surprising; and His resurrection and ascension were miraculous. Much of which Jesus did was incomprehensible, astonishing, and marvelous; they excite wonder—Jesus Christ was and is wonderful!

*“Counselor”* emphasizes the wisdom of the Messiah. It tells of one who determines a plan of action and carries it out or one who gives guidance to others who then carry out the plan. It is indicative of one who has great wisdom and has the qualifications to guide. Isaiah 9 is saying that Judah's only hope—mankind's only hope—was this **“Wonderful Counselor”** whose plans, purposes, designs and decrees for His people would be marvelous. As the **“Wonderful Counselor,”** the coming Son of David will carry out a royal program that would cause the entire world to marvel.

Most leaders have advisors. Presidents have all kinds of people whose only job is to counsel and advise them on plans of action. We all need a counselor at one time or another. We need the advice of family or friends—someone we respect; someone who understands us; **Isaiah 44:2** says, **“This is what the LORD says-- he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid.”** As Christians, we can seek guidance from God; Jesus said in **John 14:26**, **“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”** **James 1:5** says, **“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”**

Jesus provides two things that we'd look for in a great counselor. First, Jesus is understanding. Hebrew 4:15 says, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin." Second, He is someone who really cares. 1 Peter 5:7 says, "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." Jesus has the credentials to be our top advisor. He is understanding and caring. He is completely trustworthy; He is wise; He has only our best in mind; He loves us.

So when we face any and every decision—small or gigantic, Isaiah's prophecy reminds us that Jesus is there to advise us and give us direction. If we want to be successful, Jesus must be our top advisor. He can see every possible outcome; He knows which choice is best. Every time. All we have to do is come to Him and trust Him. Proverbs 16:3 says "Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."

**B. Mighty God** Isaiah's second title for the Messiah is "Mighty God." This title emphasizes the power of the Messiah. The word "*mighty*" was often associated with warfare and has to do with the strength and energy of a successful warrior. Calling the Messiah "*God*" is a prophecy regarding the divinity of Jesus Christ. Isaiah said that He is more than a man; He is the all-powerful God himself!

Many people have an incorrect opinion of Jesus Christ. They view him simply as someone very meek and very mild; Someone kind and gentle. Someone who turned the other cheek, and when the soldiers beat him, and made him carry his cross, He did not resist. And all those things are true. Paul wrote in Philippians 2:7-8 that Jesus Christ "made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!" But Jesus didn't come to be a martyr for a good cause—He came to be the victorious, "*Mighty Warrior*." Turn to Philippians 2:9-11. As the mighty God, the Messiah can and will lead His people to victory and will be worshipped by the whole world.

God's enemies—our enemies—are Satan, death, and the unseen powers of evil that have permeated and influenced the individuals and cultures of the world—including the American culture. Jesus the Christ is the Mighty Warrior—the “Mighty God”—who has defeated and conquered those powers through His work on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. 2 Timothy 1:10 says that “our Savior, Christ Jesus, has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” But even though these powers have been defeated, they still cause us trouble. It's like they are unwilling to give up and admit defeat. Turn to Ephesians 6:10-13.

Jesus Christ is our victorious king who has already triumphed over the evil powers of this world! Because of this, we can expect Jesus to lead us to victory in our personal struggles. As the “Mighty God” He will deliver us safely from the wars we wage against the temptations that come our way. 1 John 5:4 says, “For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.”

**C. Everlasting Father** Isaiah's 3<sup>rd</sup> title for the Messiah is “Everlasting Father.” “Everlasting” means that Christ had no beginning and has no end. Turn to John 1:1-2. Jesus is eternal—everlasting. “Father” tells of the Messiah's care for His people. It refers to the Messiah's enduring, compassionate, fatherly care. In Matthew 9:36, we read, “When he, i.e., Jesus, saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” Later in Matthew 23:37 Jesus said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.” Jesus is ready to give us the care and protection we need, all we have to do is come to Him. He is ready to be our Jehovah Jireh; our “Provider Forever.”

**D. Prince of Peace** Finally, Isaiah says that Jesus is the “Prince of Peace.” A “Prince” is a leader, a military commander, or a noble and Jesus is all that and more. He is Immanuel, “God with Us.” “Peace”

highlights the serenity of the Messiah. It is the Hebrew word “*shalom*” which means the absence of strife; it means security, health, and wholeness resulting in unbroken relationships. It means serenity.

Jesus came to bring peace to a broken relationship with God. **Romans 5:1** says, “**Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.**” In the beginning, God and man walked together in the Garden of Eden. But sin entered the world and created a gap between man and God. Christ came to bridge that gap; to bring us peace with God. This peace is Christ’s greatest gift: a completely unbroken relationship with God. What once was broken by sin, and impossible to restore by mankind’s efforts, has been restored by Jesus Christ – on the cross He cried, “**It is finished!**” (**John 19:30**). Now, through Jesus’ sacrifice, everyone can have “Peace with God!”

As Christians we don’t have to wait until we get to heaven to have the peace of God as well. In **Luke 2:14**, the angels said to the shepherds on that first Christmas Eve: “**Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.**” Jesus provides “*peace on earth*” for those who come to Him. Jesus came to give us peace in the midst of the things—the troubles—we cannot control. In **John 14:27** Jesus said, “**Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.**” As His child, this peace is available for you today, right now.

### **III. Conclusion**

This Advent season as you look at the baby in a manger, remember that Jesus Christ is more than just a babe. He is the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. If Jesus is your Lord and Savior, then you are a child of God and as His child all this is available for you. Open your heart and listen to His counsel. Solomon wrote in **Proverbs 3:5-6**, “**Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.**” Allow the Holy Spirit to fill you and then walk with the power of God, and then, as **Romans 8:37** says, you will be “**more than conquerors through Him who loved us.**”

Trust yourself to your Everlasting Father and “He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart” (Psalm 91:4). Let the Prince of Peace fill your heart “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7). These are some of the wonderful gifts from God, but it’s up to you to accept them or not—beginning with eternal life. Choose wisely.