

“Gifts from God”

December 1, 2024

Isaiah 9:1-7

I. Introduction

A prince wanted to find a maiden suitable to be his queen. One day while running an errand in the local village for his father he passed through a poor section. As he glanced out the windows of the carriage, his eyes fell upon a beautiful peasant maiden. During the ensuing days, he often passed by the young lady and soon fell in love. But he had a problem. How would he seek her hand? He could order her to marry him. But even a prince wants his bride to marry him freely and voluntarily and not through coercion. He could put on his most splendid uniform and drive up to her front door in a carriage drawn by six horses. But if he did this, he would never be certain that the maiden loved him or was simply overwhelmed with all of the splendor. The prince came up with another solution. He would give up his kingly robe. He moved into the village, entering not with a crown but in the garb of a peasant. He lived among the people, shared their interests and concerns, and talked their language. In time the maiden grew to love him for who he was and because he had first loved her. This is the story of Advent, our God coming down to us, to live with us, and to win us, not by his power, but through HIS great LOVE!

Today is the first Sunday in Advent. Advent begins a 4-week journey leading up to Christmas Day. Advent is the celebration of the coming of the Christ Child. As Karen and Alden read earlier, today we remember the prophets who foretold the coming of a King; the Messiah. Today's Scripture from Isaiah 9 is one of those describing the coming Messiah. In these verses Isaiah wrote descriptive titles of the coming Messiah; Jesus Christ—then and now and on into eternity. As he wrote in **verse 7** **“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.”**

Isaiah's prophesy is actually a double prophesy concerning the Messiah. It described 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 described 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. Throughout Scripture we are told that Jesus is coming again. But this morning let's look at these descriptions from Isaiah 9 and see what they mean to us today, as well as the future.

II. Descriptions of Jesus Christ

A. Wonderful Counselor Isaiah wrote that the Messiah, the coming Child, “**will be called Wonderful Counselor.**” “*Wonderful*” is defined as the ability to excite wonder or admiration; exciting surprise; other synonyms are strange; astonishing; incomprehensible, marvelous, or miraculous. The love Jesus had for mankind was incomprehensible; 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; Jesus Christ was and is truly 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 describes one who has great wisdom and has the qualifications to guide. Isaiah 9 was saying that Israel'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 so that “**there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress.**”

Most leaders have advisors. President-elect Trump is choosing men and women+ whose only job is to counsel and advise him 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.**” Christians can always 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 has all the characteristics one looks for in a great counselor. Jesus is understanding. Hebrews 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.” He is someone who really cares. 1 Peter 5:7 says, “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” He isn’t only understanding and caring. He is completely trustworthy; He is wise; He has only our best in mind; He loves us so much that He left heaven to live with us and to die for us. If you want to be successful, Jesus must be your top advisor. He can see every possible outcome; He knows which choice is best—every time. All you have to do is to 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 was “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 emphasizing 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; when the soldiers beat him, and made him carry his cross, He did not resist. And all those things are true. But Jesus didn’t come to be a martyr for a good cause—He came to be the victorious, “Mighty Warrior.” Turn to Phil. 2:5-11. Romans 14:9 says, “For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the lord of both the dead and the living.” 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 influence and rule 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 3rd title for the Messiah was “Everlasting Father.” “Everlasting” means that Christ had no beginning and has no end. Turn to John 1:1-2. Jesus is eternal—everlasting. When the world was created, the Word—Jesus Christ—was already there. “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 wrote 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 is complete and total peace.

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 in [John 19:30](#) He cried, “It is finished!” Now, through Jesus' sacrifice, everyone who believes 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.” This peace is available for every believer today. All one has to do is to accept this gift of love and peace.

III. Conclusion

This Advent season as you look at the baby in a manger, remember that Jesus Christ is more than just a baby. 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 as [Psalm 91:4](#) says, “He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.” 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.

Communion Devotion – December 2024

1 Corinthians 11:23-31

The Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace came into the world to give every person the opportunity to reestablish a relationship; to make a new covenant with God.

In **1 Timothy 1:15** Paul wrote, “**Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.**” But every person must choose to believe or not to believe. As Paul told the Philippian jailor in **Acts 16:31**, “**Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.**” If you believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sins and if you have made Him your top advisor—your Lord—then whether or not you are a member of TBC, we invite you to join us in this celebration of God’s love and your birth into God’s family—God’s awesome gift to you. If you choose not to follow Him, then this Table means nothing to you. You can’t celebrate something that hasn’t happened. You can’t give thanks for a gift you never received.

If you belong to the family of God, if you are a Christian, then this Table is a time to celebrate; it is also a time to take inventory of your heart. Is Jesus really your top advisor? More than that, is He your Lord? Has sin slowly crept into your heart? Is there a part of your life that you have held back from Him? Do you have perhaps a “pet” sin? (You may rationalize that it’s not that bad, but in **1 Corinthians 5:7** Paul wrote, “**Get rid of the old yeast, i.e., sin, that you may be a new batch without yeast (sin) -- as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.**”) To hang onto sin is really a slap to Jesus’ face, that’s why Paul says to examine your heart.

As the elements are being passed and the music plays softly, as well as thanking God for all His promises, including the promise of eternal life in heaven, look truthfully at your heart, at your mind. Get rid of any thoughts or actions—any sin—that shouldn’t be there. Open your heart to Jesus who stands at the door knocking, waiting for you to let Him in.