

The King With Four Names

ISAIAH 9:6-7

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****COVID-19 SPLIT SERVICE****

It is good to be with you this morning! As usual, I hope everybody has the bread and the fruit of the vine for the Lord's Supper (either from home or from the table in the entryway). Aaron will be leading us in those prayers immediately after our study this morning. We will then close with a song before we head outside.

As we've been doing lately, we are starting this morning with God's plan of salvation. God sent his Son as a sacrifice, and we respond by obeying the gospel – we believe the word of God, we turn away from sin, we confess Jesus as being the Son of God, we allow ourselves to be buried with him in baptism, and at that point we are born into the family of God. And once again, we have several examples today, starting with Noah, a young man from Spencer, Wisconsin (about three hours north of here). Noah was baptized by his dad, Dan. Noah's mom, Rhonda, is one of our counselors at Beaver Creek Bible Camp. We actually stayed at Dan's house many years ago, back when he was single. I went up there to preach, and Dan was very hospitable. He owns his own outdoor furniture company and also serves as a deacon. So, we are happy along with Noah this week.

And then we also have some recent baptisms due to the good influence of the Gospel Broadcasting Network. You might remember we had Mark Teske come talk to us about GBN last year, and they continue to do some very good work. We are thankful for those who have been baptized lately due to their influence. And again, we are sharing these images by way of example. What these people have done over the past few weeks you can do today. If you have any questions, if you can think of a reason why you should NOT be baptized today, I would love to hear from you. If you are watching the livestream, our contact information is hopefully on the screen. If you are joining us on the phone, the church number is 608-224-0274. You can either call or text that number.

This morning, I would invite you to be turning with me to Isaiah 9, to what is basically a birth announcement. We know that parents these days will often send out cards or pictures or will post something online. And many of these are rather creative. What all of these announcements have in common is that each announcement is made AFTER the child is born. Today, though, we'll be looking at an announcement that is made more than 700 years beforehand. It's also unique because the child is given four names, and as we study, hopefully it will be rather obvious that these four names refer to the coming of Jesus.

The announcement comes through the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah is bringing some encouraging words for the distant future. Immediately, life will be very difficult, but in the opening verses of Isaiah 9, Isaiah says there is a time coming when the northern tribes (the area where Jesus will grow up), these tribes, once treated with contempt, once in gloom and in anguish, once walking in darkness, there is a time coming when they will see a great light, when they will rejoice with great gladness and will break the yoke of the oppressor.

This brings us to Isaiah 9:6-7,

- ⁶ ***For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.***
- ⁷ ***There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace,
On the throne of David and over his kingdom,
To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness
From then on and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will accomplish this.***

This morning, I want us to focus (briefly) on the names that are given to this future king at the end of verse 6. And what is especially strange is that these names describe what the child will do. We don't usually name our children based on what they will do in life, do we? Why not? Because they haven't done anything! This birth announcement, then, is rather unusual. So, in the time we have left, let's look at these four names.

I. And we start with the name or the description WONDERFUL COUNSELOR.

Today, what do we think of when we hear somebody refer to a counselor? We think of a therapist. We think about somebody who helps us through a difficult time in life. And this is certainly part of it. But in the ancient world this term often refers to an advisor of some kind. The term refers to someone who gives advice to the king. Just a few days ago, I had the news playing in the background, and I heard Kelly Anne Conway described as being "the counselor to the president." So, I looked her up online, and that is her title. She's not a therapist, but she is a giver of advice. But unlike the traditional counselor to a king or a president, Jesus gives his own advice! He doesn't have advisors, but he is the advisor. He personally is described as being a "**wonderful counselor**." Since we just finished studying Genesis 3, I should point out that Eve first got in trouble when she listened to BAD advice. Eve listened to a BAD counselor. Jesus, though, is a "**wonderful counselor**."

As far as I can tell, the word "**wonder**," by the way, is always used in scripture to refer to something God has done. And when Jesus spoke, people knew that he was supernaturally wise. As we just studied a few weeks ago in Luke 4:22, the Bible says that, "**...all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips**." People were amazed by the Lord's wisdom.

And what we really need to notice here is that Jesus is not just any counselor, but he is OUR counselor. He is approachable, and he always understands exactly what we are going through. As Scripture explains in Hebrews 4:15-16, "**For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need**." He knows what it means to be

tempted. He knows what it means to be betrayed by a friend. He knows what it means to be tired, and hungry, and afraid. He knows what it means to be homeless. He knows what it means to lose a close friend to death.

With all of this in mind, I would encourage all of us to make an appointment this week to sit down for a discussion with the Wonderful Counselor. He is always available. We come to the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ, we tell him what we are struggling with, and then we patiently listen for ways that his word can apply to our situation.

II. As we go back to the text, we also find that this future king is described as MIGHTY GOD.

That's a heavy title for a baby, isn't it? Some translations might say "**HERO GOD**" or "**WARRIOR GOD**." He is miraculously strong and powerful. And yet we think of the birth of Jesus, and he seems to be anything but mighty – no room at the inn, placed in a feeding trough, born into a poor family, raised as a carpenter – nothing to indicate any supernatural strength. And yet we know that as the Lord grows up, he calms the sea, feeds thousands, casts out demons, gives sight to the blind, heals the sick, and raises the dead. Almighty God came to this earth in the form of a seemingly helpless child.

And yet he was not helpless, was he? A few years after Isaiah writes these words, Daniel prophesies that this child to be born would be **"...given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed."** As Paul says in Philippians 2, **"...although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men."** So yes, he came to this earth as a baby, but he came as Mighty God. And so, when life is hard, we go to him for help. When we struggle, he is mighty. When we are weak, he is strong.

III. And this brings us to ETERNAL FATHER.

We understand that Jesus is not the Father (there is a distinction between the Father and the Son), and yet we also think of that passage in Hebrews 2, where we have Jesus referring to **"...the children whom God has given to me."** We might also think of the apostle Paul who wrote to the church in Thessalonica and said, **"...you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children."** A father exhorts, encourages, and implores. The same is said of Jesus in Revelation 7, **"...for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."** That's a very fatherly thing for the Lamb of God to do. So yes, Jesus is the Son of God; but in another sense, he is a Father to us; we are also the children of Jesus. Jesus, then, is our **"Eternal Father."**

Of course, as we think of our own fathers, we realize that they are not **"eternal."** Our earthly fathers are only with us for a few years. We also realize that not all fathers are good. Jesus, though, is our Eternal Father, and he is a good Father. He is our provider and protector. He looks out for us. Years ago, I remember one of our members describe his daughter taking the city bus to get to school for the first time. As a dad, I know how terrified I was when that day came. But this father watched his daughter get on the bus, and then he followed along behind the bus. I can't remember if the girl knew this at the time, but that's what dads do – they watch, they protect, they support, they provide. And that is what Jesus does for us. He is our Eternal Father.

IV. We close today with the Lord Jesus being described as the PRINCE OF PEACE.

Today, when we hear the word *“prince,”* we usually think of a future king, a little boy, perhaps, who might be a real king some day. But that’s not really the word Isaiah uses here. The word we have here as *“prince”* is sometimes translated as *“chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, officer, overseer, governor, or commander.”* And the idea is: Jesus is a leader, a ruler, who will bring peace. And the peace he brings is obviously not the absence of war. There’s a war going on almost constantly somewhere on this earth. But the peace in this passage refers to completeness, soundness, or welfare, a state of being, a solid or healthy relationship. We might say, then, that Jesus came to establish peace between us and God. We sinned, causing a break in the relationship, but Jesus came to make things right. As Paul said in Romans 5:1, *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

And so, the question is: Are we at peace with God right now? Are we okay with God? Is God okay with us? Or is there tension in the relationship? Is the relationship good and healthy, or is it broken? If it’s broken, we need to remember that Jesus is the Prince of Peace. He came to make things right. But we also need to remember that some of this is up to us. You might remember the angels announcing the Lord’s birth and how they said, *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased”* (Luke 2:14). The question, then, is: Are we the ones with whom God is pleased? The *“peace on earth”* is only promised to those *“with whom He is pleased.”* Peace with God is a gift, but it is a gift that has to be received to be appreciated. He is the *“prince of peace.”*

Conclusion:

This morning we have studied the King with four names! I hope we’ve noticed that all four of these names can only be associated with deity. These are the names of God.

- He is our *“Wonderful Counselor,”* and as we mentioned earlier, the word *“wonderful”* is only used in scripture to refer to God. He is wonderful. He is our advisor. And so the question is: Are we going to him for advice? Are we listening? His word is perfect in every way.
- He is our *“Mighty God.”* One chapter later, in Isaiah 10:21, this term is used to describe God himself. Do we understand that Jesus is truly mighty? That he has the power to fight our spiritual battles? Do we leave our worrying to God?
- He is our *“Eternal Father.”* Only God himself is truly everlasting. According to Hebrews 13:8, *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”* He is eternal, and he is our Father. Do we trust that Jesus is looking out for us? DO we really believe that Jesus cares for us just as a good father cares for his children?
- And finally, he is our *“Prince of Peace.”* He is the source of all peace, for those with whom he is pleased. *“He is our Peace,”* as Paul says. He has the power to restore relationships. When we sin, only he has the ability to make things right. Do we believe that Jesus is the answer to sin? Do we live like it?

And at the end of all of this, more than 700 years before it happens, Isaiah says that, *“The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.”* Isaiah was right. Jesus came into this world, he took on flesh, and he gave himself for us. He is the King with four names, *“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12).

Before we remember his sacrifice, let's go to God in prayer:

Our Father in Heaven,

Thank you for Jesus. He is truly our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace. You are the one and only awesome God. As our Father, you know exactly what we need even before we think to ask. We ask you, though, to watch over us as congregation. As individuals, we pray that you would continue blessing us not only with resources, but also with opportunities to do good and to share.

We come to you today in the name of Jesus, the name above all names. Lord, come quickly.
AMEN.

To comment on this lesson: furlakeschurch@gmail.com