The Prophesy of the King
Isaiah 9:1, 6-7

Slide 1
John MacArthur tells the story of a little girl who came home from Sunday-School triumphantly waving a paper. *"Mommy!"* she said, *"My teacher said I drew the most unusual Christmas picture she has ever seen!"*

The mother studied the picture for a moment and concluded it was indeed a very peculiar Christmas picture. *"This is wonderfully drawn, but why have you made all these people riding on the back of an airplane?"* the mother asked.

"It's the flight into Egypt," the little girl said, with a hint of disappointment that the picture's meaning was not immediately obvious. *"Oh,"* said the mother cautiously.

"Well, who is this mean looking man at the front?" "That's Pontius, the pilot," said the girl. *"I see. And here you have Mary and Joseph and the baby,"* the mother volunteered.

Studying the picture silently for a moment, she summoned the courage to ask, *"But who this fat man sitting behind Mary?"* The little girl answered with a sigh. *"Can't you tell? That's Round John Virgin!"*

We may laugh at this story, but the sad truth is that little girl's perspective of Christmas isn't any more muddled than the notions the average person carries around today.

The truth is that much of what most people associate with Christmas is a mixture of pagan ideas, myths, and legends derived from culture.

The only reliable source of information about Christmas is the Bible. So, for the next few weeks leading up to Christmas, we'll be examining various aspects of the Christmas story.

What we need to understand is that the Christmas story in the Bible begins earlier than most people would suspect – hundreds of years earlier.

There are over 300 Old Testament prophecies about the birth of the King and in them we're told:

- Where He would be born.
- What He'd do.
- What He'd say.
- How He'd die, and
- How He'd rise from the dead.

But the centerpiece of all the Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming King is the ninth chapter of Isaiah, beginning in verse two.

Isaiah 9:2, *"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned."*

Then in verses 6-7, Isaiah tells us: "*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness 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."*

Slide 2
About 700 years before Jesus was born the prophet Isaiah introduced the coming King.

In the days of Isaiah, the world looked dark, bleak, and hopeless. The nation of Israel had turned their back on God and God, in turn, turned His back on them.

To punish them, God destined a nation from the North (Assyria) to sweep down upon them like a flood tide and wash over them in a vengeance.

Yet, there was something in Isaiah's words that spoke to his people. There was something in the message of this Child that was to be born, this Son that was to be given, that gave Israel a reason to hope.

Many in Isaiah's audience were not godly people. They were walking in darkness, in the shadow of death, so to speak, because they had abandoned God.

It was to this audience who walked in darkness, that God gave His guarantee that a child of hope and promise, a wonderful counselor, a mighty God, an everlasting Father, a prince of peace would come.

Verse six, reveals four names of Jesus and each name unlocks an aspect of His character. They teach us who He is and how He can help us today! Listen again to verse 6:

"*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*"

First, He is *The Wonderful Counselor*. A counselor is someone to whom you listen. Someone from whom you accept advice.

Now, people will listen to the advice of all kinds of counselors. Some listen to the advice of newspaper columnists or social media influencers.

Some people listen to talk show hosts. People will listen to political experts, quasi-religious leaders, comedians, actors, singers, and the list goes on and on.

If these people, to whom they listen, say it then it must be true. These counselors are so influential that people will form their opinions based upon what these people say.

Whoever we listen to becomes our counselor. Sometimes these counselors will give us good advice and other times they won't.

Like today, the problem for Israel was they had gotten into the habit of listening to the wrong counselors.

Isaiah 8:19, *"When someone tells you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?"*

There were men in Israel who were giving the people bad advice. These men were advising the Israelites to listen to someone other than God. These were mediums, spiritualists and people who talked to the dead.

Apparently, these men were trusted enough by the people to be taken seriously and because Israel listened to these counselors, their nation suffered terribly.

Don't misunderstand what I am saying. There are counselors who can help you with some of your problems, but they can only help so much.

By contrast, Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor, has the ability to help us deal with the root cause of all our problems. What is the root problem of all our problems? Sin!!!

Matthew 1:21 says, *"She* [speaking of Mary] *will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."*

One of the most repeated pieces of advice Jesus gave during His ministry was this: *"Go and sin no more."* Don't try to make excuses for it. Don't try to ignore it or rationalize it.

Sin isn't going to go away on its own. We must deal with it. We must confront it. In Matthew 11, Jesus issued an invitation for all who are in need of a wonderful counselor.

Matthew 11:28-30, *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

The only way we can deal effectively with sin is to realize that only the Wonderful Counselor can help us remove sin's power and guilt.

But Jesus wasn't just a Wonderful Counselor. He wasn't just a great teacher. He wasn't just a good example. He IS the *"Mighty God, Everlasting Father."*

Slide 3
The Hebrew word translated *"mighty"* means *"strong one or the powerful valiant warrior."* So, the term *"Mighty God"* is actually a military title. He's the God who fights for His people.

A couple of chapters before Isaiah 9, in Isaiah 7:14, we read: *"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."*

In Matthew 1:23, commenting on that prophecy, Matthew quotes about the virgin bearing a son, and then he explains: *"…they will call him Immanuel — which means, 'GOD WITH US.'"*

Isaiah's message was plain: A virgin was to give birth to a son, and He would be known as *"God with us."* This child that was to be born, this Son that was to be given would be called *"the Mighty God."*

But He's not just the Mighty God, He's the Everlasting Father. It may be a little confusing when we talk about Jesus as the *"everlasting father."* How can the Son be the Father?

That question takes us into the complex arena of the doctrine of the Trinity. Suffice it to say, Jesus isn't called the *"everlasting father"* because there's confusion about the nature of God the Father and God the Son.

Jesus is called the *"everlasting father"* because of His father-like qualities. He's still God the Son, but His love and grace are like that of a father with his children.

The name literally means *"the Father of Eternity."* He is before, above and beyond time. There has never been a time when He was not and there will never be a time when He will not be!

He is the great "I AM"! If you are saved, your life is tied to His and you will live as long as He does!

The word *"father"* used here also means *"producer or generator."* In other words, He is our source! He brought us into being and He sustains our lives by His power.

For those individuals in our day who struggle for a positive father image here is one that's worthy of the name.

In his letter to the Romans Paul wrote in Romans 8:15-17a, *"The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ…"*

Here is a father who'll never leave you nor forsake you! But remember this is true only if you are a part of the family by having placed your faith and trust in Jesus as your Savior.

He is not only the *"Everlasting Father,"* He Is The *"Prince of Peace."*

Slide 4
The term literally means *"the prince whose coming brings peace,"* and thus speaks of the effects of His coming. He brings peace to troubled hearts.

The New Testament describes at least three spheres of peace. One aspect of having peace with God makes it possible to be friends with God.

Romans 5:1, *"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

God offers peace to those that want it. Peace is a positive change in a relationship between two people who once were enemies. Peace is more than just the end to hostilities it means the restoration of a broken relationship.

It's what happens when two people who haven't been on speaking terms are reunited. We're not made right with God by our good deeds, or by any ritual we practice.

We're made right with God by what Christ did for us. Jesus is our Prince of Peace because He makes peace with God possible.

The reconciliation necessary between God and man is possible *"through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Isaiah defined man's problem in Isaiah 53:6 where he says, *"All we like sheep have gone astray, We have turned everyone to his own way; And the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."*

This reconciliation is possible because of an exchange. The doctrine of justification says essentially that we have been made right before God because of what Christ did for us on the Cross.

Man's part is to put our faith in Christ and His work. God's part is that He cleanses us from sin and credits to us the righteousness of Christ.

Because of this Paul writes in Ephesians 2:14, *"For He Himself he is our peace, who has made both one…"*

The result of this exchange is Peace with God. This isn't just a feeling of peace but a state of Peace. We must experience peace with God before we can experience the peace of God.

Slide 5
Another aspect of the Peace of God is that it brings calm in the storms of life. This is a peace that is experienced internally.

In Philippians 4:7, Paul writes, *"and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*

The peace of God is the sense of moment-by-moment joy which we can have as we trust our Heavenly father in the midst of problems of life.

In John 14:27, Jesus is recorded as having told His disciples, *“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”*

When Jesus said those words, He was warning His disciples of His upcoming death. It was going to be a scary and disturbing time.

But Jesus wanted them to understand that they could have peace in the middle of the trials and difficulties that were about to come upon them.

In 1863, America was embroiled in the Civil War. It was a tragic year for a poet named Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

In 1861 Longfellow’s wife, Frances or Fanny as she was known, died from an accident in their home in which she was using a candle and her clothing caught on fire and she died.

Then in 1863 Longfellow received word that his son had been critically wounded and crippled in battle during the War.

He was devastated, but finally on Christmas Day in 1864 he wrote the poem "Christmas Bells." You might recognize the words:

“I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth
Good will toward men.”

And you can also understand his bitterness when he wrote next stanza.

“And in despair I bowed my head
There is no peace on Earth I said
For hate is strong
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth
Good will toward men.”

Isn’t that the way some people feel right now? Where is this peace on Earth? There is no peace,” but then somehow God brought Longfellow through that terrible time until he could write this final stanza:

“Then pealed the bells
more loud and deep
God is not dead;
nor does He sleep.
The wrong shall fail
The right prevail
And peace on earth
Good will toward men.”

When Isaiah called Jesus the Prince of Peace, he wanted people to know that God wasn’t necessarily talking about peace between two people or two nations. He was talking about peace with Him.

God says, *“I want to have peace with you. I want to show my good will; my favor; my Grace toward you.”*

The most important peace is the inner peace we have when we come to know Jesus as our Lord and Savior. That’s what Christmas is all about! It’s not just a baby in a manger—it’s a Savior.

Slide 6
Conclusion

In fact, the most important part of Isaiah 9:6 are the first three words: *"For to us."* The gift of Christ is a personal gift from God to us, but a gift requires a response.

In this one verse we have four names of Jesus. This is what they should mean to us today:

- If we're confused…He is the Wonderful Counselor.
- If we're weak…..He is the Mighty God.
- If we're scared……He is the Everlasting Father.
- If we're disturbed….He is the Prince of Peace.

I read a story of a little girl who was in a Christmas pageant. It was the day of the Christmas presentation.

The little girl was so excited about her part that her mother thought she was to be one of the main characters though she had not told her what she was to do.

The parents were all there and one by one the children took their places. The mother saw the shepherds fidgeting in the corner of the stage meant to represent the fields for their sheep.

Mary and Joseph stood solemnly behind the manger. In the back three young wise men waited impatiently. But her daughter just sat quietly and confidently.

Then the teacher began: *"A long time ago, Mary and Joseph had a baby and they named Him Jesus. And when Jesus was born, a bright star appeared over the stable."*

At that cue, the little girl got up from her chair, picked up a large tin-foil star, walked behind Mary and Joseph and held the star up high for everyone to see.

When the teacher told about the shepherds coming to see the baby, the three young shepherds came forward and the little girl jiggled the star up and down excitedly to show them where to come.

When the wise men responded to their cue, she went forward to meet them and to lead the way, her face was alight as the real star might have been.

On the way home, after the play had ended, the little girl said, with great satisfaction, *"I had the main part!"* *"You did?"* her mother asked in surprise. *"Yes,"* she said, *"because I showed everybody how to find Jesus!"*

The most important thing we can do on Jesus' behalf is show others how to find Him. He is the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father and He wants us to introduce Him.