

Isaiah

9:1-7

Introduction

The name you choose for your child is more significant in some cultures than in others. In the Hebrew culture of the Bible your name could be a *portrait*, a *prediction*, or a *prayer*:

1. Your name could be a portrait in words that defined your personality and interpreted your personal traits. A good example would be Esau and Jacob, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebekkah. The account in Genesis says that Esau came out of the womb "red all over like a hairy garment, and they called his name Esau," meaning *hairy* and *rough* - an accurate descriptor of both his person and personality. Jacob was born second to Esau but was grasping his brother's heel; his name means *heel catcher* or *supplanter* and proves itself an accurate descriptor of his personal traits.
2. Your name could be a prediction of future things. Methuselah is a good example. Commentators say his name means *when he dies, it shall come*, referring to the global flood in the days of Noah.
3. Your name could be a prayer. Leah was the first wife of Jacob; but Jacob loved his second wife, Rachel. Leah began to bear Jacob sons while Rachel remained barren. As she gave birth Leah named them as prayers that her husband would love her. Her first son was Reuben, which means, *behold a son*; at his birth Leah said, "surely the Lord has looked upon my affliction [and] now... my husband will love me."

Did you consider any of these things when you named your children? You might have... *But probably not!* The popularity of a name is usually more the deciding factor in our culture than these other things.

In our text in Isaiah "a child is born... a son is given." A portion of these verses is quoted in the New Testament Book of Matthew and

applied to Jesus. Jesus is the Person described by this set of significant names.

We want to take a look at each of His names in their proper context. We'll organize our thoughts around two points: #1 The Names Of Jesus Manifest His Mission To The Jews, and #2 The Names Of Jesus Manifest His Ministry To You.

#1 The Names Of Jesus Manifest His Mission To The Jews

We've been selecting portions from Isaiah that give us portraits of Jesus. We've been studying them in the chronological order of Jesus' earthly life and ministry. We started with the prophecy of His virgin birth; then we looked at His earthly ministry; then we discussed His death, burial and resurrection. It might therefore seem out-of-order to be discussing these verses, but it's not. While they remind us of His birth, they reveal His birthright and describe Him as He is today and as He ever shall be.

We know from Matthew's Gospel that the Deliverer being described is Jesus. In verses one and two He is compared to a "light" shining in darkness:

Isaiah 9:1 Nevertheless the gloom *will not be* upon her who *is* distressed, as when at first He lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward more heavily oppressed *her*, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles.

Isaiah 9:2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.

These first two verses describe His mission to the Jews in the first century when He came as "the light of the world" to the geographical regions listed. In the Gospel of John you're told that the light shined in the darkness, but the darkness did not comprehend it:

John 1:9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

John 1:10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

John 1:11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

His "own" refers to His own people, the Jews, who officially rejected Jesus as their Deliverer - even though He fulfilled the Scripture

concerning Himself. This set-up a Second Coming of Jesus to the earth.

It is the opinion of many outstanding Bible scholars that there is an interval of time between verse two and verse three in our text. As you will see, verses three through five refer not to the first coming of Jesus to Galilee but to His *Second Coming* to rule over the whole earth.

Isaiah 9:3 You have multiplied the nation *and* increased its joy; they rejoice before You according to the joy of harvest, as *men* rejoice when they divide the spoil.

Isaiah 9:4 For You have broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

Isaiah 9:5 For every warrior's sandal from the noisy battle, and garments rolled in blood, will be used for burning *and* fuel of fire.

The “nation” that Isaiah was writing to and about was the Jews. He speaks of a time when they have been “multiplied” and are rejoicing and prospering; of a time when the “rod” of their “oppressor” has been “broken”; of a time following a great battle in which the implements of their enemies will be “used for burning and fuel of fire.” Students of Bible prophecy recognize these as indicators we are looking beyond the first coming of Jesus, beyond even our own day, to His Second Coming to earth. It is at His Second Coming that Jesus defeats Israel's enemies in the great Battle of Armageddon and establishes the Jews in a kingdom on earth to prosper and multiply.

The famous verses (six and seven) predict **both** comings of Jesus in His mission to Israel:

Isaiah 9:6 For 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, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

At Christmas we celebrate the Child Who was born. But the babe, the child of Mary, was also a “Son... **given**” unto us. Jesus was a Child born as to His humanity. He was the only begotten Son of God, given to us as to His deity. He is *Immanuel*, God with us, fully God and fully man.

Immediately after Adam and Eve sinned, God promised to send a Savior Who would be both God and man. The Bible reveals the unfolding drama of God sending the Savior to the earth through

Adam and Eve's descendants, and through the nation of Israel. He would defeat the powers of darkness and reclaim a lost planet, returning to rule and reign over the kingdom of God on earth.

"And the government will be upon His shoulder." The only thing that was upon His shoulders in His first coming was the beam of the Cross upon which He was crucified. The government promised the Jews in verses three, four, and five, follows Jesus Christ's Second Coming to earth. It is this yet future government that is described in verse seven:

Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of *His* government and peace *there will be* no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

The Old Testament everywhere predicts a real kingdom of God on the earth. It will encompass the whole world; it will be ruled from David's throne in Jerusalem. The Lord Himself will "perform this" in His Second Coming.

Our subject is the names of Jesus in verse six. Their first meaning is for the Jews and describe the reign of Jesus over the kingdom on earth.

Jesus will be mankind's "Wonderful Counselor" in the kingdom. Earlier in Isaiah you read,

Isaiah 2:2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days *that* the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it.

Isaiah 2:3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Jesus will be mankind's "Mighty God" in the kingdom on earth. It means that He will be the One to Whom all power is given.

Jesus will be mankind's "Everlasting Father" in the kingdom on earth. The reference to Jesus as "Father" throws us because we understand God as a trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Son, *not* the Father. True enough! The word "Father" applied to Jesus in this context means *founder*. He is the "Everlasting Founder," the One

Who establishes eternity at His Second Coming. We use the word “father” in this same way when we say, for example, that George Washington was the “father” of our country. There's a whole group we refer to as the "founding fathers." That's the usage here.

“Prince of Peace” means that Jesus will establish and enforce lasting peace when He governs the world. There can be no lasting peace on earth or good will toward man until Jesus returns.

We know from both Bible prophecy and human history that there is an interval of time between verse two and verse three, between the first coming of Jesus and His Second Coming. We are still living in that interval.

The names of Jesus describe His future rule over the kingdom on earth. But Jesus *already has the right to rule* over the earth. On the Cross at Calvary He defeated His enemies; in His resurrection from the dead He declared His victory. He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of His Father, and is ready to return. He waits to return only due to the longsuffering of God that is not willing that anyone should perish but that all would come to repentance.

Jesus is **already** “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,” and “Prince of Peace.” He is, or can be, those things to you **right now**. So we say,

#2 The Names Of Jesus Manifest His Ministry To You

Let's talk about how Jesus is (or can be) these things to you.

He is, or can be, your **Wonderful Counselor**. First let me explain that some scholars see this phrase as two separate names for the Lord – “Wonderful” and “Counselor.” Others see it as one name. There are grammatical reasons on both sides.

There can be no doubt that Jesus is Wonderful. It is translated from a word that means *miraculous*. His virgin birth was a miraculous wonder; He performed miraculous wonders in His ministry; His resurrection from the dead, and ascension into heaven – wonderful

miracles. His offer of eternal life to all those who believe upon Him only for salvation, and His causing believers to be born-again – wonderful, miraculous. "Wonderful" certainly stands alone as a name of Jesus.

It is also proper to say He is your Wonderful Counselor. Whether you want to acknowledge it or not, you need a counselor. In the Proverbs you read,

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way *that seems* right to a man, but its end *is* the way of death.

So much of the hurt and pain in our lives comes from following our own counsel to ourselves or from the counsel of other men and women. The counsel seems right, but it always leads us wrongly if it is not based solidly on the Word of God.

Jesus is Wonderful Counselor for many reasons:

1. First, His counsel is wonderful because it is always truth.
2. Second, He knows your heart more fully than you. He wants to give you the real desires of your heart. His counsel, when received and followed, will always lead you toward fulfilling those deep yearnings that ultimately satisfy your spirit.
3. Third, *He know your future!* More than knowing it, the Bible says He has prepared good works for you to discover. You only discover them by listening to your Wonderful Counselor.

We've established that Jesus *was* and *is* both God and man. As a man, He can fully sympathize with your hurts, fears, dreams, and desires. "Though some know [you] well, nobody knows [you] like [Jesus]."

A good counselor is not just sympathetic. You can sympathize with others but still not know how to help them. Jesus knows how to help; He has the power to help. You can look into the lives of saints over the centuries and see the appreciable results of His counsel – joyful, abundant lives.

Jesus **is** your Wonderful Counselor. You only need to be willing to both *hear* and *heed* His wonderful counsel.

Jesus is, or can be, your **Mighty God**. In the Hebrew it's like saying Jesus is the "Mighty Mighty God." He is the Mighty God Almighty, set apart from all other sources of power, strength, and ability.

There are many things we could say about His mighty mighty power:

1. He has power over creation. Scripture declare He was the One Who created all things, and that He is the One Who sustains all things.
2. He has power over all supernatural beings, both angels and demons.
3. He has power over the earth; in Matthew 28:18 He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me."

There are many evidences of His mighty mighty power. He taught with authority when He was on the earth. He performed miracles. The events of His death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven were a display of His mighty mighty power.

As the Mighty Mighty God Jesus can accomplish everything He has promised you:

1. He can save you and give you eternal life. This above all else is what you need. You are lost, dead in trespasses and sins, without hope of heaven. But if you will believe on Jesus His mighty mighty power will save you.
2. He can give you abundant life right now. His mighty mighty power promises you the filling of the Holy Spirit. He not only delivers you from the *penalty* of sin, but from the *power* of sin.
3. Eventually His mighty mighty power will deliver you from the *presence* of sin. You have been promised a resurrection from the dead to a glorious eternity in which there is no sin, no death, no hurt, no pain, no fear.

Jesus is your **Everlasting Father**. We saw earlier that "Father" is being used in the sense of "founder." According to the Bible we are all descended from Adam; he is the "father," the founder, of the human race. Adam is sometimes called "the first man." Jesus came to redeem us and save us from the sin Adam plunged us into. The

Bible calls Jesus “the second man” because He is the Father and founder of a new creation.¹

Jesus is Everlasting Father in that He has given you life. “No man comes to the Father” except through Jesus Christ. It is because of Him that we can have life and be brought into a relationship with God the Father.

1. A Father is a provider. Jesus provides all we need for life and godliness.
2. A Father cares. Jesus cares for you. He shows His care by praying for you in heaven. He lives to make intercession for you!
3. A Father disciplines. Discipline is too often seen as synonymous with punishment. However it is better to see discipline as synonymous with involvement and love. Jesus cares enough about us to get involved in leading and directing our lives. He takes an interest in developing our character.

All of this is both now and “everlasting.” **Nothing** can **ever** separate you from the love of Christ. He loved you before the foundations of the earth; He loved you when you were yet a sinner – *or if you are yet a sinner!* He will love you for endless ages throughout eternity.

I must note that Jesus is not Everlasting Father of all mankind. Only those who believe in Him for salvation are born spiritually into God’s family.

Jesus is **Prince of Peace**. We live in perilous times when peace seems most illusive. The world is tottering at the brink of war, and especially heinous nuclear or chemical or biological warfare.

Jesus offers you peace *with* God, **and** the peace *of* God. Paul the apostle wrote,

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

¹ First Corinthians 15:45, 47

You were born a rebel, dead in trespasses and sins, the enemy of God. Jesus died in your place, as your Substitute, to make peace with God. He is the only means by which anyone can be saved.

Once saved, you can experience the peace of God. In Philippians 4:6-7 you read,

Philippians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;
Philippians 4:7 and **the peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

This kind of inner peace is a gift from the Prince of Peace available to any who have acknowledged Him.

Conclusion

This portion of Scripture is famous as a Christmas text. I hope you see that it encompasses far more than the *birth* of Jesus as it establishes His *birthright* and looks forward to His Second Coming.

Our annual celebration of Christmas does provide an apt illustration. On Christmas we give gifts because God gave Jesus to “us” as His “indescribable gift,”² the gift of eternal life both now and in the future and forever. Whether on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, people open packages that family and friends have given. *You cannot enjoy or possess the gifts until you open them.*

Jesus Christ is God in human flesh, *Immanuel*, God with us. **But you must open your heart to Him before you can enjoy and possess God’s gift of salvation.**

“Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.” Are you among the “us?” There is no more important question to answer.

² Second Corinthians 9:15