

What Is In a Name?

Isa 9:2-7

2 The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them. 3 Thou shalt multiply the nation, Thou shalt increase their gladness; They will be glad in Thy presence As with the gladness of harvest, As men rejoice when they divide the spoil. 4 For Thou shalt break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders, The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian. 5 For every boot of the booted warrior in the battle tumult, And cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire. 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. NAS

Introduction:

The Church has never doubted that these words refer to the Lord Jesus Christ and the names listed in v.6 are names applied to Him. The NT even documents this section of scripture as applying to Him.

Matt 4:12-17

- 12 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;
- 13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:
- 14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,
- 15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;
- 16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.
- 17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. KJV

The border between Zebulun and Naphtali ran down from the NorthWest to the Sea of Galilee at right about the location of the city of Capernaum. Notice, by the way, that this 'light' that was sprung up to them was the preaching of the message of repentance by the Lord Jesus.

Names, historically, have been meaningful in the human race. All of the names of the Bible have a meaning. They are formed from words which were used commonly in the language, unlike the way that we use names. 'Adam,' for example, means 'man,' and 'Eve' means 'life-giver.' 'Abel' means 'temporary' and 'Cain,' 'a spear.'

Sometimes names were changed to make a point. 'Abram' (high father) was changed to 'Abraham' (father of multitudes) and Sarai (the one in charge) was changed to Sarah (a princess or a queen). Isaac was named 'laughter' because his mother, Sarah, laughed when she hear God

tell Abraham that she would conceive in her old age and bear a son. Jacob's name (supplanter) was changed, by God, to Israel (he rules with God, or a prince with God).

Many interesting things can be learned in scripture by researching the names given to people because they all meant something.

In our culture we have not followed this rule for a long time. Once our names, too, had meaning but now we sort of choose names for their sound or for their connection to someone else, either in our family or in our world. I will give you an example. My name, technically, means 'one from the people of the valley who is crowned with laurel.' Or, 'an honored one from the people of the valley.' But, in reality, my last name is Dean because that was my father's last name and my first name is Larry because a young fellow that lived near my parents before I was born, whom they liked, was named 'Larry.' My name was not chosen for me because of the historical meaning that it had but because of connections to people.

The names given to the Lord Jesus are important because they mean something in the language that tells us something about Him. He is called 'The Seed' because he was born of the human lineage of Eve and because He had been promised to Abraham under that designation. He is called Immanuel (Emmanuel) in Isa 7:14 and Matt 1:23 because He literally is, 'God with us.' The angel instructed Joseph to name Him 'Jesus,' literally 'Jehoshua,' 'Savior' because He would save His people from their sins.

But these names that we encounter in Isa 9 are of particular interest to us. We should note that the passage we are looking at is placed right in the middle of some really serious declarations of God's judgment upon Israel and Judah for their rebellion against Him. It reminds us that even in judgment, God held out the light of hope and the promise of redemption to all who would repent of their sins in faith and cling in hope to Him and His promises, especially the Promised Redeemer.

Wonderful

The Hebrew had no commas, so we cannot tell for sure if the intention is that this is a separate name or is to be joined to Counselor for one name, 'Wonderful Counselor.' For the sake of this message we will follow the punctuation in the Authorized Version and assume that it is a separate name. The Hebrew word means something similar to the English word. It means 'one who amazes by doing difficult or miraculous things,' 'one who fills us with wonder by his mighty deeds.' And, for sure, the things that Jesus did and is still doing make Him particularly well suited to the name. Everything that we look at in His actions overwhelms us with amazement, surprise, joy, and wonder.

He came from heaven to earth

Sometimes when we are hurting or discouraged it is a benefit for a friend just to come by or to call. They may not do anything or say anything that directly helps our situation but just the fact

that they care enough to come by and give us some of their time means a lot. Jesus *came*. He did not ignore us but rather *cared* enough to come by, to come to us, all the way from the Throne of Heaven, the most elevated place that exists, He came from the Glorious Presence that is the dwelling place, as it were, of the Infinite God. Though He was and Is God, He left that Incredible Place to come to a place that, because of the sins of His creature, has no glory at all. We really have no way to compute the distance but we surmise and logically conclude that it was enormous.

But He did not just come to visit, He came to help. We have already looked at the words of the angel to Joseph that He came “to save His people from their sins.” There was a definite aim in mind to actually secure and make safe a definite set of humans, called here, “His people.” Going back to the imagery of our friends who show up in our times of need, they often do undertake to help, with sometimes sad and ineffective results. Through no fault of their own, they are simply unable to do what they wish that they could or what we deeply and profoundly need. Again, we are glad for the effort but sometimes truly not helped by it.

But the One Who has come is the Miracle Worker, the Doer of Difficult Things, the One Whose labors fill us with Wonder, the One Who can actually Do that which He Purposes to Do. God Himself asked Abraham and Jeremiah (Gen 18:14; Jer 32:27), “is anything too hard for God?” We affirm Him as the Omnipotent One, the One Who Cannot Fail, in Whose Hand anything that He chooses to accomplish IS accomplished.

But He did not merely come to help, He came in a specific way in which He surrendered up, for a time, much of Himself and then took to Himself much that was undesirable.

Phil 2:5-7

5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. NASU

Hear those words, “existed in the form of God,” “emptied Himself,” “taking the form of a bond-slave,” and “made in the likeness of men.” It is impossible for us to fully understand the nature of the Person Jesus Christ but we can and do affirm that He was and is Fully God as well as Fully Man. The scriptures say that He even condescended to allow Himself to be set upon by temptation the very same ungodly temptations that plague us.

Heb 4:15

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. KJV

The Condescension of Christ was massive, infinite, totally voluntary and so very humiliating.

How could Deity walk through the pigpen of corruptions and wickedness, sins and ungodliness,

to rescue one covered in his own filth, loving to have it so, and determined to live all of his days in it?

But that is not all. **The Way** that this Wonderful Work was to be accomplished required Him not only to walk through the filth but to take it to Himself as if it were His Own, tied it to Himself in such a real and concrete way that (1) the Father would turn away His face, (2) the judgment of God for that filth would fall upon Him in a righteous and just way, and (3) His death would be received by Perfect Justice as the satisfaction for the sins of those He came to save.

2 Cor 5:21

21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (from New International Version)

We do not know what actually happened but we know what the results are: We, who were covered in and hopeless captive to sin, have been thoroughly cleansed from it and delivered so that the righteousness of God Himself might be imputed to us.

His name is Wonderful, the song says, and rightly so.

Counselor

Again, the word means much the same in English as in the original. This term designates one from whom we would seek and receive good and sound advice. I am reminded that our friends who come alongside to help us in difficult situations sometimes have advice, and sometimes it is good, but not always. Even if they are smart and wise, caring and prayerful, diligent and careful, they cannot and do not get it right all of the time. We must always carefully consider what they say to see if it is godly and sound advice.

But there is a Counselor, our Savior Who came to redeem us, Who knows both sides of the equation and knows exactly what we need to hear. His message during His earthly journey was the same from beginning to end, both to the world and to His people, “repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

There is no better advice that can be given to sinful man. The Eternal God has been offended and grieved by His Laws being broken. In Righteousness and Justice He condemns the wickedness of the wicked and has determined an everlasting place of torment for them. He offers one and only one remedy, turn from sin to obedience, from rebellion to faith, and from life to death. Those who do, He promises to save and those who refuse He is determined to destroy.

So, the ***Counselor*** comes to say, “repent,” “judgment is near,” “life is coming quickly to an end and is always uncertain,” “hell is real,” “eternity is a long time,” trust God and seek Him to grant you repentance, believe on the name of His Son and trust His advice. Do what He says and you will live.

John 6:35-40

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

- 37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.
- 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.
- 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.
- 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Only a true fool rejects the advice of a Wise Counselor.

The Mighty God

Scripture reveals that the Son of God is God and that God is Mighty beyond our capacity to compute or comprehend.

Listen to John, the closest friend that Jesus had on the earth.

John 1:1-4

- 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 The same was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
- 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. KJV

John 1:14

- 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

The writer of Hebrews concurred.

Heb 1:1-3

- 1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
- 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;
- 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

He made everything that is made, speaking it into existence by His mighty power. He is both the Savior of men and their Omnipotent God, both Human and Divine. He is Deity.

The Everlasting Father

The Trinity is a mystery to us and always will be. Jesus is identified separately from the Father

and yet He and the Father, along with the Holy Spirit, exist in such a profound union that when One acts they are all Three said to act and when a person sees One of the Trinity, in a very real sense he has seen them all.

John 5:16-18

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

John 10:30

30 I and my Father are one.

John 14:8-10

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Rev 3:21

21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

The Union that exists between Jesus Christ and the Father is both real and profound, so profound that without any difficult whatsoever we may call the One Who Came to the stable to the Virgin Mary, The Everlasting Father.

We should also look at the name from the other side as well. He is the *Everlasting* Father. He is no temporary parent who adopts one day and casts aside the next. For those to whom God is Father, He is *Eternally* so. They can no more be lost than He can stop being Who He is.

The Prince of Peace

So many people misunderstand this name. He stated plainly that He did not come to bring peace to this planet but rather trouble, heartache, division, and war.

Matt 10:34-36

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

There are only three ways to have peace with a world full of selfish, corrupt, and wicked rebels.

(1) One might surrender to them, not oppose them, not give them any trouble and have some

measure of peace;

(2) One might compromise with them, let them have their way, negotiate a sort of a peace, but they will not keep their word. Their wickedness will drive them to violate any agreements of this kind and destroy, or seek to destroy, anything contrary to them,

(3) Or, one can defeat them completely, overthrow all of their plans and desires, devastate all of their resources and energy, deprive them of any capacity to fight back. Then, one can have true peace.

#3 is the kind of Prince of Peace that Jesus Christ is.

1 Cor 15:20-28

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. KJV

My father had an expression that he would use sometimes when he perceived that there was resistance to and rebellion against his authority in the home. He would say, "you can fight me if you want, but I am going to win." And, he was!

Jesus Christ is and always will be the Prince of Peace because He has already won and is certainly going to prove that to all of His creatures. He is going to put down all rebellion, judge all wickedness, set everything eternally right, and then surrender up everything to the Father.

He has made peace between God and His people by bearing their sins and paying their debts, taking away every source of opposition or enmity between them and God. He is going to make peace in the Universe by utterly destroying all rebellion against Himself and God. Peace is going to ultimately reign and that eternally. Just on the pragmatic side it would seem logical for a person to desire to be on the side of the Winner.

Conclusion:

Jesus Christ, that baby in the manger that we think about this time of the year, is the Savior offered to the world, to all who will hear Him and obey Him. His name is Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

One can make peace with Him eternally by believing on Him and heading His advice. Or, He will make peace with you by making sure that you cannot do anything to resist Him for all eternity. The first option is by far the better one.