



Christmas Gifts & Promises

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A look at a key prophecy about the advent of our Lord.

Notes:

1. The answers in this Bible study were taken from the Matthew Henry Commentary.
2. The Scripture references in this Bible study are taken from the New King James Version.

Isaiah 9:6-7 - 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. 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.

Who is born to us?

The Messiah (Christ).

What is significant about Christ being born to us?

He chose humiliation for our benefit. The same that is the mighty God is a child born; the ancient of days becomes an infant of a span long; the everlasting Father is a Son given. Such was His condescension in taking our nature upon Him; thus did He humble and empty himself, to exalt and fill us. He is born into our world. The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

What is significant about Christ being given to us?

He is given, freely given, to be all that to us which our case, in our fallen state, calls for. God so loved the world that He gave Him. He is born to us, He is given to us, us men, and not to the angels that sinned. It is spoken with an air of triumph, and the angel seems to refer to these words in the notice He gives to the shepherds of the Messiah's having come <Lu. 2:11>, Unto you is born, this day, a Savior. Note, Christ's being born and given to us is the great foundation of our hopes, and fountain of our joys, in times of greatest grief and fear.

Did Christ remain in His humiliation?

No, He has been exalted.

How is our Savior's exaltation a great comfort to us?

This child, this son, this Son of God, this Son of man, that is given to us, is in a capacity to do us a great deal of kindness;

for He is invested with the highest honor and power, so that we cannot but be happy if He be our friend.

Does Isaiah 9:6-7 refer to the first or the second coming of Christ?

Most Christians believe this passage refers to the first coming because it is quoted most at Christmas time. However, it actually refers to the second coming of Christ when He will be "born" to the nation of Israel. This is a complete prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ at His second coming, as Isaiah 53 is of His first coming. These verses continue the thought which we picked up in verse 3, and they look forward to the second coming of Christ.

If Isaiah 9:6-7 refers to the second coming of Christ, how come it says "a Child is born"?

First of all, He was not born "unto us," the nation Israel, at His first coming. They didn't receive Him. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). Although He was born at Bethlehem the first time, He was not received by the nation-- only a few shepherds welcomed Him. The wise men who came to worship Him were Gentiles from a foreign land. If you read verse 6 carefully, you will see that it was not fulfilled at His first coming, neither were verses 3, 5, and To say that Christ will be born to the nation Israel might be better stated. Actually, Israel will be born as a nation "at once," which is made perfectly clear in the final chapter of Isaiah: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed [that is the Great Tribulation], she brought forth her children" (Isa. 66:7-8).

Israel is to be "delivered of a man child" in the future, not by His birth, but by Israel's birth. This will be the new birth of the nation Israel when Christ comes again. Israel will be born at the second coming of Christ. With this said, there should be no objection to calling attention to the fact that the child is born - that is, His humanity. The son is given, which will be true at His second coming. In other words, it will be the same Jesus who was here nearly two thousand years ago.

How do these names that are given for the Lord help us to better understand Him?

They help us see the dignity Jesus is advanced to, and the name He has above every name. He shall be called (and

therefore we are sure He is and shall be) Wonderful, Counselor, etc. His people shall know Him and worship Him by these names; and, as one that fully answers them, they shall submit to Him and depend upon Him.

Specifically, what does the name Wonderful tell us about Jesus?

He is wonderful for He is both God and man. His love is the wonder of angels and glorified saints; in His birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, He was wonderful. A constant series of wonders attended Him, and, without controversy, great was the mystery of godliness concerning Him.

What does the name Counselor tell us about Jesus?

He is the counselor, for He was intimately acquainted with the counsels of God from eternity, and He gives counsel to the children of men, in which He consults our welfare. It is by Him that God has given us counsel, <Ps. 16:7; Rev. 3:18>. He is the wisdom of the Father, and is made of God to us wisdom. Some join these together: He is the wonderful counselor, a wonder or miracle of a counselor; in this, as in other things, He has the pre-eminence; none teaches like Him.

What does the name Mighty God tell us about Jesus?

He is the mighty God-- God, the mighty One. As He has wisdom, so He has strength, to go through with His undertaking: He is able to save to the utmost; and such is the work of the Mediator that no less a power than that of the mighty God could accomplish it.

What does the name Everlasting Father tell us about Jesus?

He is the everlasting Father, or the Father of eternity; He is God, one with the Father, who is from everlasting to everlasting. He is the author of everlasting life and happiness to them, and so is the Father of a blessed eternity to them. He is the Father of the world to come (so the Septuagint reads it), the father of the gospel-state, which is put in subjection to Him, not to the angels, <Heb. 2:5>. He was, from eternity, Father of the great work of redemption: His heart was upon it; it was the product of His wisdom as the counselor, of His love as the everlasting Father.

What does the name Prince of Peace tell us about Jesus?

He is the prince of peace. As a King, He preserves the peace, commands peace, nay, He creates peace, in His kingdom. He is our peace, and it is His peace that both keeps the hearts of His people and rules in them. He is not only a peaceable prince, and His reign peaceable, but He is the author and giver of all good, all that peace which is the present and future bliss of His subjects.

To what dominion has Jesus advanced per Isaiah 9:6?

To a throne above every throne: The government shall be upon His shoulder-- His only. He shall not only wear the badge of it upon His shoulder (the key of the house of David, <Isa 22:22>), but He shall bear the burden of it. The Father shall devolve it upon Him, so that He shall have an incontestable right to govern; and He shall undertake it, so that no doubt can be made of His governing well, for He shall set His shoulder to it, and will never complain, as Moses did, of His being overcharged. I am not able to bear all this people, <Num. 11:11,14>. Glorious things are here spoken of Christ's government, v. 7.

What does it mean that the Lord's dominion will be an increasing government?

It shall be multiplied; the bounds of His kingdom shall be more and more enlarged, and many shall be added to it daily. The luster of it shall increase, and it shall shine more and more brightly in the world. The monarchies of the earth were each less illustrious than the other, so that what began in gold ended in iron and clay, and every monarchy dwindled by degrees; but the kingdom of Christ is a growing kingdom, and will come to perfection at last.

What does it mean that the Lord's dominion will be a peaceable government?

This is consistent with His character as the Prince of Peace. He shall rule by love, shall rule in men's hearts; so that wherever His government is there shall be peace, and as His government increases the peace shall increase. The more we are subject to Christ the more easy and safe we are.

What is the significance of mentioning the throne of David here?

He that is the Son of David shall reign upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, which He is entitled to. God shall give Him the throne of His father David, <Lu. 1:32-33>. The gospel church, in which Jew and Gentile are incorporated, is the holy hill of Zion, on which Christ reigns, <Ps. 2:6>.

What does it mean the Lord's government will be ordered with judgment and justice?

That it shall be administered with prudence and equity, and so as to answer the great end of government, which is the establishment of the kingdom: He shall order it, and settle it, with justice and judgment. Every thing is, and shall be, well managed, in the kingdom of Christ, and none of His subjects shall ever have cause to complain.

What does it mean the Lord's government will be an everlasting kingdom?

There shall be no end of the increase of His government (it shall be still growing), no end of the increase of the peace of it, for the happiness of the subjects of this kingdom shall last to eternity and perhaps shall be progressive in infinitum-- for

ever. He shall reign henceforth even for ever; not only throughout all generations of time, but, even when the kingdom shall be delivered up to God even the Father, the glory both of the Redeemer and the redeemed shall continue eternally.

Who will accomplish all that Isaiah 9:6-7 speaks about?

God Himself has undertaken to bring all this about: "The Lord of hosts, who has all power in His hand and all creatures at His beck, shall perform this, shall preserve the throne of David till this prince of peace is settled in it; His zeal shall do it, His jealousy for His own honor, and the truth of His promise, and the good of His church."

What is significant about God Himself bringing about all that Isaiah 9:6-7 speaks of?

You can count on it happening. The heart of God is much upon the advancement of the kingdom of Christ among men, which is very comfortable to all those that wish well to it; the zeal of the Lord of hosts will overcome all opposition.