

Isaiah 9:6–7 — Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God

The Names of the Son, the Throne of David, and the Zeal That Performs It

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 9:6–7

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

A Child Born, a Son Given

The two clauses of verse 6 are not repetitions of the same thing. “A child is born” speaks of the incarnation — the coming in flesh, the helpless infant, the entry into the world. “A son is given” reaches behind the birth to eternity: a gift does not become a gift when it is unwrapped by the receiver. It is a gift because the giver has given it. The Son was given by the Father before time, the gift held in the Father’s hand before it was received — “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son” (John 3:16). Sonship carries dignity and relationship; childhood carries the tenderness of the Father’s love and the fact of begetting. Both are here.

The government shall be upon his shoulder. When the Lord found the lost sheep he laid it on his shoulders — and the shoulders that bear one lost sheep are the same shoulders that sustain the government of all the nations. His capacity to bear, to sustain, and to carry through is one of the marks of his glory in verse 6.

Wonderful

When the angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah and his wife, they asked his name. He answered: “Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is wonderful?” (Judges 13:18). That is the same divine person, the same answer. His name is wonderful because the one who fills it transcends every description that name can contain. It is not a label that fully captures him; it is a declaration that he exceeds all labeling.

The Mighty God

This is not a created being, not an elevated man, not a subordinate deity. These are names used of Jehovah himself in the Old Testament. The child born in verse 6 is God himself in human form — the central assertion of the Christian faith that cannot be softened or explained away. The incarnation brings together in one person the humanity of the child who is born and the eternal deity of the Son who is given.

The Everlasting Father: Father of the Coming Age

The title Everlasting Father does not mean that the Son is the Father in the Trinitarian sense — that confusion must be guarded against. What the title conveys is more precisely rendered by the Hebrew: Father of eternity, or Father of the age to come. The word for father here has the force of originator, initiator, sustainer — the one who begins and sets a matter on and carries it through to its end.

This connects with the word *archegos* used in the New Testament — author, captain, originator. Hebrews speaks of the Lord Jesus as the author and finisher of faith (Hebrews 12:2) — the one who sets the matter on and follows it through. In Acts, he is the Prince of life (Acts 3:15), the one who initiates life. The age to come will owe its entire character to him. He will begin it, he will sustain it, and he will carry it to its conclusion. He is the Father of that age in the sense that a father sets forth the moral character of a household and has the responsibility of its right ordering.

He is also, in a breathtaking paradox, both the root and the offspring of David (Revelation 22:16). As the root he preceded David entirely — David owed everything to him. As the offspring he descended from David through the incarnation. The question the Lord asked the Pharisees — “If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?” (Matthew 22:45) — is answered by these two words: child born, son given. He is David’s son as the child who was born; he is David’s Lord as the son who was given before all time.

The Prince of Peace

His reign will produce peace — not diplomacy’s uneasy truce but the real thing, grounded in righteousness. Isaiah 32:17 states it: the effect of righteousness is peace. The flesh prefers peace without righteousness, but peace without righteousness never holds. His kingdom will have both together, permanently. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.

The qualification is important: that endlessness applies to the present created order. Psalm 72, which describes the moral character of his reign, says his name shall endure “as long as the sun” (v.17) — a qualification that guards against reading eternity into what belongs to the millennium. First Corinthians 15 is plain: he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all. The millennial kingdom is not the eternal state; it is the final and perfect

administration of God's governmental ways within this creation, after which there is the new heavens and the new earth. Within those proper limits, the increase of his government and peace shall know no end.

The Throne of David

The throne of David is not simply the throne of one of David's descendants. Scripture says that Solomon sat upon the throne of Jehovah (1 Chronicles 29:23) — something never said of Saul's throne. The throne of David is the throne of Jehovah, and it was given to David as the man of God's own choosing, the man after God's own heart, in contrast to Saul the man of the people's demand. This follows the great Pauline principle: "first that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual" (1 Corinthians 15:46).

David and Solomon together set forth the two aspects of the Lord's coming and reign. David was the man of war and blood, who gathered all the materials and fought all the battles; Solomon sat on the throne in peace and ordered all the great sessional judgments of the beginning of his reign — the two women, the presumptuous Adonijah, Joab, Shimei — everything brought into adjustment. In the millennium the Lord will do both: the warrior judgments first, then the ordering of the kingdom in perfect accordance with the mind and governmental ways of Jehovah. The tabernacle of David that has fallen will be reared up again (Acts 15:16), and he who is both David's son and David's Lord will occupy the throne.

The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts Will Perform This

This closing sentence is not a formula. It is the key to everything. The same expression appears in 2 Kings 19:31 and Isaiah 37:32, in the context of the deliverance of the remnant of Jerusalem from Sennacherib the king of Assyria — and there too it is the zeal of Jehovah that performs it. The two things are linked

by that expression: the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, and the deliverance of the remnant of Israel from the hand of the Assyrian. Neither would be complete without the other. The Lord would not be satisfied for his kingdom to be established without the remnant of Israel delivered; the remnant delivered without their Messiah reigning would be no true deliverance at all.

All the subject matter of the first eight chapters of Isaiah — the spirit of judgment, the spirit of burning, the frequent theme of judgment — leads into this: the establishing of the Lord's kingdom with judgment and with justice. Even the Assyrian is brought as a matter of the exercise of God's judgment upon the nation. And the whole parenthetical section that began in chapter 6 with the vision of the holy throne, commissioned Isaiah, and unfolded the sign of the virgin and the person of Emmanuel, closes here with the only way this can come about: the zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform it. Not by man's power or arrangement. Not by any human institution or traditional structure. By the zeal of the Lord.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.