

—{1}. **Isaiah 9:6–7** **“Unto Us A Son”**

A. The Text and Some Background

1. 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, Counsellor, 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. (Isaiah 9:6-7 NKJV)

2. this statement, this promise, was given by God through Isaiah to a troubled people, in troubled times
 - a. Pul, Tiglathpileser, and Sennacherib, kings of Assyria, came repeatedly against Palestine and took into captivity first the Israelites on the east bank, then the tribes around the sea of Galilee and finally those in Samaria
 - b. and in Isaiah’s day they came
 - (A) took some of the walled cities of Judah
 - (B) and were threatening Judah
 - c. This ninth chapter of Isaiah commences with these words: ‘*But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.*’ (Isaiah 9:1 NAS)
 - d. for Zebulun, containing the cities, Nazareth and Cana, and Naphtali, are found in the region of Galilee
 - (A) this was a time of gloom
 - (B) but a time of glory for them is promised
 - (C) and the Christ, though born in Bethlehem of Judah, it was in Nazareth that He was raised and lived and began His ministry, so that it was fulfilled the prophecy of verse 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.*’ (9:2 NAS) even as Matthew records in his gospel in chapter 4:15–16.

3. this morning, let us spend just a few moments, centring our thoughts about these verses, which we heard sung from that great oratorio by Handel, under these three points
 - a. the Crib: 'Unto us a Child is Born' —^{2}.
 - b. the Cross: 'Unto us a Son is Given'
 - c. the Crown: 'And the Government Shall be Upon His Shoulders'

B. the Crib: 'Unto us a Child is Born'

1. the birth of the Babe in Bethlehem
 - a. initiates the most tremendous event in all of history
 - b. at the AWANA closing meeting, Dave Coulter had five of the clubbers standing with various signs, and asked about each sign, 'is this the meaning of Christmas?'; some were
 - (A) a baby was born
 - (B) He was laid in a manger
 - (C) His name was called Jesus
 - c. and in each case the clubbers said 'yes' but then Dave went on to show that these events were commonplace in themselves and were not what made this event so special
 - d. but it was the fact that God came in the form of man to live with man and to die for mankind
 - e. so the message of the crib which we are celebrating on this Christmas eve, is that of Immanuel: 'God with us'
2. On December 25, 380 AD, Gregory of Nazianzus, in the Church of the Resurrection in Constantinople, preached a Christmas sermon. Here are some excerpts —^{3}.
 - a. The Festival is the Theophany {Greek: 'God appearing or manifested'} or Birthday, for it is called both, two titles being given to the one thing. For God was manifested to many by birth. On the one hand Being, and eternally Being, of the Eternal Being, above cause and word, for there was no word before The Word; and on the other hand for our sakes also Becoming, that He Who gives us our being might also give us our Well-being, or rather might restore us by His Incarnation, when we had by wickedness fallen from well-being. The name Theophany is given to it in reference to the Manifestation, and that of Birthday in respect of His Birth

- b. Therefore let us keep the Feast, not after the manner of a heathen festival, but after a godly sort; not after the way of the world, but in a fashion above the world; not as our own, but as belonging to Him Who is ours, or rather as our Master's; not as of weakness, but as of healing; not as of creation, but of recreation.
- c. Look at and be looked at by the Great God, Who in Trinity is worshipped and glorified, and Whom we declare to be now set forth as clearly before you as the chains of our flesh allow, in Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom be the glory for ever. Amen

C. the Cross: 'Unto us a Son is Given'

1. names, particularly those given by prophetic word or those ascribe to people in their maturity tell us about the person
 - a. Billy Sunday in one sermon ⁻⁽⁴⁾ pointed out that 'Such names as Kill Deer, Eagle Eye, Buffalo Face and Sitting Bull tell us something about the men who possessed them.' He went on to say 'This tendency to use names that are expressive still crops out in camp life, and whenever men are thrown together in an unconventional way. In mining, military and lumber camps nearly every man has a nickname that indicates some peculiarity or trait of character. Usually a man's nickname is nearer the real man than his right name.' – except, of course, that the biggest man is usually called 'Tiny' and the fattest, 'Slim'!
 - b. in this prophetic passage, four compound names are given to the Son, each which bears upon His work on the Cross
2. Wonderful Counsellor
 - a. the truth of this verse is reiterated in Isaiah 28:29: 'This {wisdom} also comes from the LORD of hosts, Who has made His counsel wonderful and His wisdom great.' (NAS)
 - b. when we studied the Trinity last Sunday we mentioned but did not dwell upon the fact that the whole of our salvation was planned by the Father in the councils of eternity
 - c. and the Son has a part in this in that
 - (A) He carried out those councils, those plans, in bringing our salvation to completion through the cross
 - (B) further, in His earthly ministry, he gave council to all men, advising sinners to repent; urging faith in Himself

- (C) and now, He acts as our Counsellor in a different sense as we noted in our Bible Class, *My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*' (1 John 2:1 NAS)
- d. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, because He was punished for our sins, can stand before the court of heaven as we are accused, point to His hands and feet, and say 'I paid for that sin; they cannot be prosecuted; they are forgiven.'

3. Mighty God

- a. when God the Son, emptied Himself, setting aside some of His divine prerogatives – e.g., His glory, omnipresence – He never ceased for an instant from being God, Deity
- b. He is God the Mighty One
 - (A) He is the Jehovah God who with a mighty outstretched hand laid waste the gods – the idols – of Egypt and carried His people from that land filled with riches
 - (B) He is the Lord God who set up and put down rulers in all the nations in accordance with His eternal purposes, nudging, pushing, moving peoples so that *'... when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, ...'* (Galatians 4:4a NAS)
- c. He is the God, the Mighty One, who alone is sufficient, so that by His death it can be said, *and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.*' (1 John 2:2 NAS)

4. Everlasting Father

- a. we need to keep the meaning of Father here distinct from God the Father, the First Person of the Trinity
- b. Father here is the title of respect given in the mid-east to someone in authority and honour
- c. Jesus Christ sought to make it clear to His disciples of the difference between man's honour and God's. *'... The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called "Benefactors." But not so with you, but let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as the servant. ... But I am among you as the one who serves.'* (Luke 22:25-27 NAS)
- d. so the way to glory to Christ, to His everlasting honour, was that of servant-hood and doing the will of the One who sent Him; it was to be found in the cross where He would die for you and me, so that as He

headed to Jerusalem to that cross, he said, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified' (John 12:23b, NAS)

5. Prince of Peace

- a. before He died, Jesus Christ made a wonderful bequest to His disciples and to us: '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, nor let it be fearful.' (John 14:27 NAS)
- b. which led Him in the Father's will to the cross ... 'For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fulness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.' (Colossians 1:19-20 NAS)

6. so, the Crib led to the Cross; and from there, to ...

D. the Crown: 'And the Government Shall be Upon His Shoulders'

1. the story is not yet over

- a. when we relate the wonderful story of Christmas, reading these familiar passages from God's word ... that is not the end of the story of Christmas
 - b. when we remember the cross where that same baby Jesus, now grown to a man, the Son of Man, laid down His life for His friends, for us, for all those who will turn and trust in Him, that is still not the end of the Christmas story.
 - c. when after His resurrection, and the forty days He spent with His disciples in many appearances to many people, He then was taken up into a cloud, that was not the end.
2. for even as the disciples stood there gazing into the clouds, there appeared two angels who 'said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.'" (Acts 1:11 NAS)
3. which is why those of us who are in Christ, who follow Him, are here this morning, 'looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus' (Titus 2:13 NAS) ... and that will be the event that brings the story of Christmas to its completion!

1. © 2006 by Garth Hutchinson, Faith Fellowship Baptist Church of Aurora (Ontario): may be distributed or quoted freely, only let this be done to the glory “of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).

Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, www.holwick.com. Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick's database are identified by “Kerux” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. From messages by Rev. Don Robinson, Grace Baptist Temple (BBF), Bloomington, Indiana – Kerux sermons #12134, 18097
3. ‘Christ Is Born, Let Us Keep the Feast and Leap Before Him’ by Gregory of Nazianzus – Kerux sermons #15665
4. ‘Wonderful’ by Billy Sunday – Kerux sermons #19088