

Isaiah 9.1-7

Baby with Four Names

Simon and Garfunkel – Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, & Thyme

>> Silent Night then Overlay of 7 o'clock Nightly Newscast

Woes of Day – Politics, Suicide, Racial Attacks, War, Murders

TENSION: Joy and Sorrow – Clashing – Strange Juxtaposition

DOUBTS? Xmas NOT TRUE? Prince of Peace Failing @ JOB?

Xmas 2023 – World STILL at WAR – AS IS Most of the Time...!

1<sup>st</sup> Christmas > Location for Lord's Arrival decreed by ROME

Oppressive Colonial Power ordered Census > Bethlehem

TEXT – Prophet Isaiah – 700+ yrs before Birth of Jesus > WAR

Isaiah preached > S. Kingdom, Judah soon Swallowed by Babylon

Small Nation – Powerful Neighbor Nations: Assyria, Syria, Egypt

People of God faced Challenge > Will U Trust God? ALWAYS

Brothers in Northern Kingdom ISRAEL trusted Selves > Exiled

Now King Ahaz: Arm of Flesh or Arm of God? Politics or Prayers?

Live by Faith or Fear? Old > Nuclear Attack drills – Under Desk

Background some most Magnificent Promises of Coming of LORD

8.22 “distress & darkness, gloom of anguish, thick darkness”

All human attempts Order, Security & Justice have Failed

Prophet: God himself will Intervene... v. 1 But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. When all human attempts at order and security and justice have failed, God himself will intervene the prophet says.

Not because the People found the Magic Key to Power.

Because God is that kind of God – Full of Mercy & Grace

God speaking for Himself – Self-Introduction – Defining Himself

INTO this THICK DARKNESS > God shines penetrating LIGHT

“Galilee of the Nations = Gentiles” Lake Galilee to Mediterranean

Cosmopolitan mix - Arameans – Canaanites - Hittites - Hebrews - Mesopotamians - area where Israel often 1<sup>st</sup> Encountered Foreigners

Look Down: Compromised, Impure, Religiously mixed, Confused

Matthew 4: Jesus begins his Ministry in Galilee of Gentiles "...the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matthew 4.16,17

God's promise of transformation in verses 2 to 5.

They have walked in the shadow of death, but now life is coming.

Verse 3: "You have enlarged the nation ..."

Instead of being decimated by exile, by disease, by war, by savagery, now the numbers increase and their joy increases.

"They rejoice before you ..."

"People rejoice @ End Harvest, as men rejoice Dividing Plunder"

"in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke."

"Gideon! - only 300 men against tens of thousands

God shatters Burdens of Oppression, Bars across their Shoulders

Come under His Yoke - Servant King came to Set us FREE

King destroys all Oppression, ALL of it, War shall be No More

verse 5: "Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning."

Not needed anymore – no place for them – tools of war refashioned

"...they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." Isaiah 2.4

CHILD Born > Normal Birth – Fully Man born of a Woman

SON Given > Heavenly Conception – Father is Father God = GOD

Isaiah told us One who is Coming is EMMANUEL – God with Us

Announces in midst of GLOOM & DARKNESS – 4 More NAMES

## 1. Counselor whose Wisdom we Need – wonderfulcounselor

### ONE Word Not Wonderful Counselor

Isaiah mocks human wisdom & laughs at human counsel

God has Last Word – He alone does Wonders, Wonder thru & thru

“to him who alone does great wonders, for his steadfast love endures forever” Psalm 136.4

Manoah (father of Samson) said to the angel of the Lord, “What is your name, so that, when your words come true, we may honor you?” And the angel of the Lord said to him, “Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?” Judges 13.17,18

More than Great, Extraordinary: Wonder Taken to Another Realm

the Lord said: “Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me... behold, I will again do wonderful things with this people, with wonder upon wonder; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish” Isaiah 29.13,14

No Category of Thought / Language > Contain or Capture Him

“all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Colossians 2.2,3

John 6 Disciples LEFT Jesus because of Hard Sayings –Asks 12 if they want to Go? Peter “Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” John 6.68

Finishes Sermon on Mount “...the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes” Matthew 7.28,29

Wonderful Counselor – Speaks firmly & kindly to woman many husbands – She runs to tells whole village, “He told me all things I did”> All AGREE – “this not the Savior of World” John 4

People in Darkness, Stumbling, Lost, No Direction, No Anchor

We create COPING Mechanisms – Smile, Keep People Away,

Act like Don't really Need a Savior for our Sins

Don't need Coping Mechanism – Need X – wonderfulcounselor

## 2. God whose Power we Need - "Mighty God"

v. 4 "day of Midian" > GIDEON 20k, 10k, 300 men go and fight

Clay Pots with Burning Torches inside > Blow the trumpet... and shout, 'For the Lord and for Gideon.'" Judges 7.18

Mighty God will Save by Weakness and Frailty

CHILD is Born – Son is Given

Greeks seek WISDOM – Explain to Me I will Understand! Really?

Jews look for POWER – Naked, bloodied man, nailed to a Cross

Gov't on SHOULDERS when NAILED to a Cross

Counselor has super-abundance of Wisdom and Power = JESUS

EL = GOD / El-Gibor – Mighty / El-Shaddai – Almighty /

El-Olem – Eternal / El-Roi – All-Seeing / Immanuel > God w Us

MIGHTY God Come: More than we can ASK or IMAGINE

@ Creation SPOKE world into Existence – He is WORD w God

Made Man and Woman in IMAGE of God

In the beginning was the Word, & the Word was with God, & the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made thru him, and without him was not anything made that was made. John 1.1-3

Plans NEW Creation – Blessed in beloved – Unite all things

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. Colossians 1.15-17

## 3. Father whose Love we Need: Everlasting Father

No Jew would have ascribed 4 Names to HUMAN BEING

Jesus is SON – We not Know God as Father until Son Arrives

Nobody in OT calls God their Father – Jesus > Abba, Daddy

Jesus tells disciples to Pray "Our Father - Daddy in Heaven"

Triune God ONE – Father sent Son – Son glorifies Father

Spirit reveals God in Triune Fullness

Philip to Jesus, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.  
John 14.8,9

“I and the Father are one.” John 10.30

Father Everlasting > Father of the World to Come

For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist... “Behold, I and the children  
God has given me.” Hebrews 2.10,13

Jesus brings us to New Birth whereby we enter the Family of God

Father whose Name is from Everlasting

“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”  
John 17.3

We are Adopted into God’s Family thru Elder Brother Jesus

You will not know God as Father if don’t have Jesus as Brother

Thru Bible > Father’s have Sons in their IMAGE – Family Likeness

Story of Bible – People running from Home – Far from God

Parents drive Kid to School – Drop me a block away, I’ll walk

Don’t want People to See me with You! Foreigner in my House

Are you PROUD that God is your Father? Jesus is Brother?

Family of Christ brothers and sisters all around World

John 17 Jesus opens heart night before Cross > Homesick

“I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”  
John 17.4,5

#### 4. Real Lasting Peace - Prince of Peace

Famous people WISH for World Peace – Beauty Contest!

Jesus born under Pax Romana – Peace of Roman Empire

Peace of God more than Absence of Warfare

He is the Prince of Peace – at once a baby and the Mighty God

Son of David, the appointed ruler - wonderful counselor

whose plans are always perfect

Reason for Lack of Peace is NOT ‘OUT There’ but IN Here!

“since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”  
Romans 5.1

Try to hard thing – Shuttle on Diplomacy – Burn Fossil Fuels Jets

Do Hard Thing – Refuse to Do Simple Thing – Peace w God

No Forgiveness in Judaism or Islam – The Other is Non-Human

Not BROTHER but ENEMY > CUT off Heads of Babies

Resurrected Jesus Raised Hands Pierced by Nails said “Peace”

He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53.4

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth...“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Matthew 5.5-8

v. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Increase of Govt have No End – Acts > 12, 120, 3000, 5000

Continuing Growth of Global Church > 2 Billion and growing Daily

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Habakkuk 2.14

“And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.” Daniel 7.14

God’s means of transformation. A child is born. Son is Given

Not a sheet of brilliant light, riding on a charger, Marvel Actor

A baby. Vulnerable. Servant king wounded for our transgressions

Son enacts all that the father gave him to do:

Stand in God’s place / Effect God’s justice / Do God’s work

Great thing about Jesus > COMPLETE Savior, all you LACK and NEED is given by His FULLNESS given to us by GRACE

Yet THINK Fill our SOUL with Christmas BAUBLES

Like young child at Christmas > Joy in WRAPPINGS

Unto US = ME – He is MINE

MY Wonderful Counselor - MY Mighty God - MY Everlasting Father -

MY Prince of Peace: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” John 14.27

God’s timing is on a far larger scale than ours.

PROMISE of Isaiah - Middle of the 7th century

7 Centuries go by between this prophecy and the arrival of Jesus.

Trust God thru His purposes for his people – nitty gritty of life

God calls people in Solidarity w purposes across Centuries > X

Believe God in Control - All Promises to pass one after Another

The part I play in that may be in a time of suffering. It may be in a time of revival, or it may be in a time of declension. It may be in a time of prosperity. It may be in a time of poverty, but still God is trustable to bring about all of his purposes not only for my life, but for his people and for the triumph of his kingdom at the end and for all eternity.

We will misjudge God if we cannot think in these sweeping terms.

LAST Thing - X came as predicted, 7 ½ centuries later

Now we await Coming Again - Wars will cease - Savage World

God works Mysterious Ways - Brings about his own purposes,

He calls His own people > Now we hope in X’s coming again.

We too, like Isaiah’s day, expected to trust God,

Take him at his Word. Not to fear what our culture fears.

Not find false security in promises of man.

Remember that God is in control and Jesus is coming back.

Not invite passivity, but genuine God centeredness.

Genuine trust in God - fearlessness before changing historical tides.

20 Advent seasons > remind how people waited for 1<sup>st</sup> coming

Call to invite Christians to wait for his second coming.

“O come, O come, Emmanuel.”

## Congregational Prayer

We greet your coming, O God, with wonder:

You come to be with us; yet you remain far greater than we can imagine.

You are near; yet your wisdom sets you apart from us.

You appear among us; yet we cannot describe your glory.

We greet your coming, our God, with repentance:

We are often satisfied with ourselves; but your presence exposes our sin and failure.

We are self-confident; but you challenge our confidence in ourselves.

We are proud of our understanding; but you show us that we do not know everything.

Forgive us for being foolish and gullible to follow conspiracy theories and easy answers.

Forgive, merciful God, our individualism, our small and narrow perspectives.

**Praise the Lord who has Come for you. Come afresh to Him.**

We greet your coming, God, with joy:

We had no true idea of what you are like; but you have shown us yourself in Jesus Christ.

You have shown us life's value by appearing among us as a man.

The gulf between us and you is great; but you have bridged it with love.

Wonderful counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace! Almighty God, we greet your coming in Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.