

Monarch Born in a Stable (Isa. Ix: 6-7)

by Seth Rees

Jesus Christ is the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace, who provides eternal salvation, comfort, and strength to those who follow him.

Scripture: Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 22:22, Micah 4:3, Matthew 1:23, John 10:9, John 14:27, 1 Corinthians 1:27, Philippians 4:7, Revelation 3:7

Topics: "Humility In Christ", "Divine Guidance"

Description

Seth Rees preaches about the profound significance of the birth of Jesus, emphasizing the humble circumstances of His birth in a village barn, surrounded by strangers and enemies, yet witnessed by a few shepherds and wise individuals. He challenges believers to embrace a similar humility in their Christian walk, not seeking recognition or favor from the world but remaining closely identified with the despised Nazarene. Rees delves into the five illustrious names given to Jesus in Isaiah 9:6-7, highlighting Him as a Wonderful Counselor who provides divine guidance contrary to human wisdom, and as the Mighty God and Everlasting Father who offers unwavering support and eternal salvation.

Transcript

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders. 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 establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." Isa. 9: 6-7.

The old prophet here stood upon the mount of inspiration and looked down the dark valley of seven hundred and thirty-eight years and saw the coming of the Messiah. He gazed upon the circumstances of His birth, the trials and tests of His life, the awful dark tragedy of His death, and he breaks out in the language of an inspired prophet, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given." As we think this morning, of all that it means, it breaks our hearts.

The circumstances of the birth of Jesus were quite unique. The birth of earthly kings is always attended by great royal display. Lords wait in the antechamber, messengers are mounted at the door, ready to herald the news of the advent, from city to city. Great preparations of the most splendid character are always made for such an event; but here the prophet sees a monarch born in a country village barn. His parents had walked eighty miles, and were hoteled in a stable. Strangers among strangers, and surrounded by

enemies, Jesus the King of kings, and Lord of lords was born. What a strange sight! The Creator of the universe, the God of all living, born among cattle, with no display and no reception and no recognition, and almost nobody to love Him. Just a few shepherds and a few wise people, some humble folks gathered about the manger. But for the fact that it seemed to interfere with the supposed rights of others it would never have been known a half dozen blocks away. Thank God, He was born under just such circumstances. It would be well for us to remind ourselves that real Christianity will never get beyond the stable and manger. Even in this age of culture and refinement.

It seems very strange that we should expect and demand the recognition of this world, that we should ever expect the favor of men when our Lord was born under those circumstances, and living under the frown instead of the favor those years, and was put to death by those who ought to have received Him and honored Him. I can not quite understand the great disappointment that some people seem to suffer when a little persecution comes to them. I am at a loss to know what some holiness papers mean by making so much of the fact that a holiness preacher is placed at a great disadvantage ecclesiastically, and possibly deposed and sent to the woods. What more should be expected? Is the servant above His Lord? Why should we expect places of ease, and comfort, and luxury, and favor in this world when our Lord came unto His own and was rejected? When he came as the light of the world they rose up and put out the light? When He came to bless men He was treated as a curse, and was hung between two thieves? God help us not to get too far from our position, and keep us to where we will remember the crowd to which we belong. We are not of this world and this world can not love us, and it is absurd for us to expect the love or favor of the world, or worldly churches, so long as we are closely identified with the despised Nazarene. I fear the applause of men. I repudiate and revolt from everything that seems like the favor of the world. Our Lord did not have it, and we must somehow order our steps so we will escape it. We must go through this world without allowing it to pat us familiarly on the shoulder. I can hardly endure the familiar pat, or familiar expression, from men whose hearts I know to be against the Christ of my text.

So our blessed Savior in this glorious prophecy is given five illustrious names. O how replete, how full! How much there is in the description heaven has given us of our Lord! An attempt has been made to aid us to appreciate all that He is and all that he can be to us. He is "Wonderful, Counselor." The word "Counselor" means one who is not only fitted to give advice, to stand near kings or princes to give counsel, but the word involves the thought of giving wise counsel. A man may know a great deal, and may be able to express it and yet not be a good counselor. But our Christ has always been not only the counselor of His people, but He has the power to Divinely guide them and turn them and enable them to escape all they ought to escape, and come in contact with all they ought to have. He is a wonderful Counselor! Beloved, I love Him this morning because He gives counsel contrary to all human instructions and often leads us in paths which we would never choose and our friends would never choose for us. He often leads us contrary to what is known as prudent, or where some folks would choose to call sanctified common sense, because He leads us many a time contrary to the judgment of our friends. He has always done this; He of His own choice takes the foolish things and often counsels that which would seem to this world to be foolish.

It must have seemed very foolish to the Canaanites to have folks marching around their city every day for a week, and then to march around seven times on the seventh day, and then do nothing but blows a ram's horn and shout. They must have laughed over it; but that was God's way of accomplishing His purpose, and He does not have to go according to the counsels of earth. It has always seemed strange to people that a boy -- just a lad -- should be sent out against a giant with nothing but a shepherd's sling, but it was

God's counsel and it was the wisdom of heaven.

It has never been accepted yet by the world nor by the schools, and nobody seems able to explain why He should choose twelve fishermen and commission them to evangelize the world when there stood Rome ruling the world; there sat Jerusalem in the height of her splendor; there was the Sanhedrin, it was all that man could wish, yet God's counsel was to go down along the shore and take some boys with fish scales all over their clothes, to stop the mouths of earth's counselors and give wisdom to the schools.

Don't you suppose, Beloved, that you are going to be lead according to the counsel of our Christ if you are going to follow the schools or the counsel of ecclesiastical bodies? If you are going with Jesus, many times you will have to go so misunderstood and misrepresented that you will go weeping, but you will go smiling through your tears; you will go burdened but dancing with joy; you will go serious and steady, but you will go surely. If you will follow His counsel you will go forward, not ignoring or despising the counsel of your friends, but weighing it all with care, you will follow the Lord just the same.

Well, this counsel is wonderful because of His choice of instruments. Why, nobody would want the folks He takes. There is hardly anybody gets chosen anymore until other folks have gotten through with them. The counsel of the Son of God is to take the people and the things that are no-good, "that no flesh should glory in His presence," and then whatever is accomplished the honor and glory will be given to Him; but if you will read the list and look over the roll of honor this morning, most of you would doubtless feel disappointed and feel that you are not in it. Some of you might feel very much humiliated to find yourself counted out, but God's choice, and the counsels of heaven is that He should take the weak things, the things that are despised, the things that are not. Praise the Lord! He makes no mistake.

He is a "Wonderful Counselor," again because He not only counsels you as to how you, should go but He says, "I will go with you, and see that you get through alright." If you were to go to Cairo and ask a native for a chart by which you might cross the desert, he would laugh at you; he would say, "I can not tell you how, but I will go and show you." He has been there and knows the way. God has not only given us the chart, He has not only shown us the way, but He has been over it Himself and has sent the Holy Ghost as the representative. There are finger-boards up, it is true; there are warnings, "Look out for the engine;" there are indications all along, but for fear we may overlook some of them He sends the Holy Ghost with us that we should not lose our way, and with the chart in hand -- the Bible -- and the Holy Ghost in our hearts, a common fool can go through safely. The plan was conceived in the counsel chamber of the skies, but it has been given to us, and wherever people have followed the counsel they have landed safely without shipwreck.

Again, He is a "Wonderful Counselor," because there is nothing in our lives so intricate, so difficult, so insignificant, but that He cares; and there is never such a tangled skein but that He can untangle it. He is interested in all you do or say. Other folks would listen to you but they have not time. You may meet me on the way and want to enter into conversation, but often I have a dozen things just ahead of me, and I can't listen to you, and everybody may seem so busy that they cannot stop to listen, but Jesus always has time to step and hear you through with every little thing. If you talk half an hour it is all right; if you talk three hours He likes it better. If you come to me, sometimes from force of circumstances, I am compelled to ask to be excused; but the Lord never does, He will hear you through. Never a tear gathers on your cheek, my sister, never a heartache, never a heave of your breast, but that the Son of God knows about it, and is moved with compassion, and His great tender heart of love is ready to advise you in the little things, the difficult things, in the things you can hardly explain to your dearest friends, in the things you keep shut up

in your own soul, and of times it is proper that you should, and He will comfort you. Others sleep, but He stays awake all night and watches your interests. He sees how you act and how you feel in the severest trials that ever come to you; and He will untangle the most tangled circumstances, and pile it up in a straight pile like cordwood. If there is anything so knotty that you do not understand it now, He will make you feel as contented as if you did. Instead of being troubled about the mysterious you will say, "I will just leave that until the clouds part and He comes back again."

The next name is "The Mighty God." What does this suggest? It suggests that He is not only capable of giving counsel but He is able to carry it into effect. He is able to advise, and He is able to execute. He can tell you what and how, and He is able to do it for you. Some people can counsel us but they leave us counsel-less. The Mighty God who framed the world; the God by whom all things exist this hour. We have Him. Why should we fear? Why should we tremble?" What have I to dread, what have I to fear, Leaning on the Everlasting Arms?"

The clouds gather, the thunders rumble, I almost get frightened. I sometimes feel like my whole frame was fairly quivering, then I remember some text like this, and I hide and rest and sleep like an infant. There is nothing to fear, my sister; do not be afraid. Brother, do not tremble; the Mighty God is ours and He will stand between us and all difficulties.

"The Everlasting Father." What does this mean? It means that He can, not only do all that we have hinted at, but He can keep it up forever. He can, not only do it once, but again and again, and what He did for the prophets or martyrs He can do for us, and He is doing them for some of us. What He did for us yesterday He can do for us tomorrow; He is "the Everlasting Father." Thank God for something that will not fall, for a salvation that will never crumble! Mutability is written on everything about us. Stand where you will, everything is getting mossy and dingy; and everybody is getting wrinkled and gray; and everything is getting old. It only takes a few years to change the old homestead until you can hardly feel that it is the same place when you go back. You go into the old country church where you went when you were a child and you see but few people that you ever saw before. Everything is changing. Thank God we have a salvation that never changes. "The Everlasting Father!" How little the things of this earth have amounted to anyway. The great centers of this world, the boasted centers of power; the kingdoms and thrones and emperors of this earth -- how they have gone down into oblivion! But how people who have had "the Everlasting Father" have scattered all their foes, outlived all their enemies, and blazed and burned and shone for God, and will go on forever. What is Pharaoh this morning but a withered old mummy in a glass case in the British museum? Moses stands out as the most illustrious character of all that century. What is Caesar anyhow but a particle of dust that goes to make up old Rome, but Paul is preaching to millions and millions of people this hour. What has become of Nebuchadnezzar's grandeur? I am told that the exact site of his splendid magnificence can not be identified, but the prophecies of Daniel live on, and are just now reaching their most glorious fulfillment. Who in this audience can tell me the names of the ten unfaithful spies? Not one. But every school girl knows of Caleb and Joshua. The kingdoms of this world have fallen into decay but the smallest particles which have been truly Divine lives and will live forever. Many of the greatest men of earth are almost forgotten, but the men who have walked with God in the past, however humble, are walking with Him today over the hill-tops of glory and they will come with Him in the clouds when He comes back to this world. Thank God for something that will never get old -- "the Everlasting Father."

I remember when I used to have a sense of loneliness and regret for such a glorious opportunity as this Camp meeting to come to a close. How I dreaded for the meeting to conclude, but when I get to this

thought that is burning in my soul this morning, and came to know the Christ of my text, it was all changed. The Cincinnati Camp meeting will never break up, these are days of triumph and of victory; and the very Person who makes this Camp meeting what it is, has promised to go home with everyone of us and make our homes, our kitchens, our parlors, our farms and places of business a Camp meeting, and He has promised to journey with us until the Lord comes back again. Holiness will never get old. People come to me and say, "Well, this is a wonderful meeting; I never saw anything like it." Well, it is under wonderful management. His name is "Wonderful." Every time I get a new glimpse of new scenes in the kingdom, I say, "It is wonderful." But why not? This is His name. Do you know our lives are not only to be filled with wonder, amazement, astonishment, and with things that the world does not understand, but it is going to be wonderful forever. Don't you suppose for a minute that we are going to comprehend Heaven in half an hour. Do you suppose there will be no progress there? We are distinctly told that "to the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." Not only what we have is to reap forever, but there is to be no end to the increase of it. Do you know we will add to it, the next day it will be doubled, and soon it will be multiplied; to the increase there shall be no end. This Camp meeting will never die.

Again, He is the "Prince of Peace." This distinguishes our Christ from the kings and princes who have delighted in conquest and bloodshed, and have made themselves distinguished because they have loved that sort of thing. Our Christ is just the opposite: He loves peace, and He declares it everywhere He goes and if he ever comes into your heart, He will not only give you peace, but He will be the "Prince of Peace" to sit on the throne and see that peace is observed, that there are no disturbers of peace in your soul and that all the combined forces of earth and hell cannot disturb the peace that comes into your breast. Just as He beckoned to the troubled sea; just as He speaks a word; just a look is enough; the "Prince of Peace" will hush and quiet all our fears and all disturbing elements will be paralyzed. The delegates from hell will find themselves stunned, paralyzed, held in powerless inaction when they come to attack us. They will find us under the reign of a "Prince of Peace." Glory to God for this Sabbath-like rest, this holy hush, this tranquil stillness that can never be explained! Thank the Lord it can never be taken from us.

When our Lord shall come again, the nations of the earth will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and they will learn war no more. It will be a time of blessed, holy peace and quiet such as we have read and dreamed of all our lives. Let Him come in. He will take all your cares, answer all your questions, satisfy every longing, rest your tired soul, and you will sing and smile and laugh and will hardly know why, but the peace of God will flood your being, and every time a wave comes in it will only cut deeper channels for fuller tides, and you will go on and on in this holy peace forever.

In connection with this I want to notice that "the government shall be upon His shoulders." Turn to the twenty-second chapter, twenty-second verse, and we find it declared that the keys of the house of David shall be upon His shoulder, and as the text says, "to His government there shall be no end." A key is that by which we unlock or fasten a house. To possess the key is to be in possession of the property. You sometimes surrender the property by giving up the key. To have the key, means a right to possess, or go in or go out, a right to shut and to open. The verse referred to says, "He shall open and no man shall shut; He shall shut and none shall open." Now, I am told that the ancient lock was a large wooden lock, and the keys were large and also made of wood. They were sometimes carried on the shoulder, and to see a man carrying a large wooden key meant that he had authority to unlock the treasury, that he had access to the storehouse where the treasures were kept, so the Word says that the keys of the house of David are placed on the shoulder of Jesus. That means that He can unlock all the treasures of the skies; that He can get in to where all the resources are held in reserve; that He understands the whole combination; and

when He walked out of Joseph's new tomb with the key of the house of David on His shoulder He practically said, "Come on, Beloved, I will let you in; come on, everything is purchased, and however it is locked, or however it is guarded I am able to unlock it. I will take you to where the gold is, to where the diamonds shine, where there are pearls of great price. Come, go with me when you are hungry, and I will take you to the cupboard." You can not think of anything that your soul may desire but that He is able to give it to you.

Come on, Beloved, let us go with Him; the keys are on His shoulder. Angels may seem to forbid you; men may say, "Do not trouble the Master;" but He says, "Come on. When I open no one can shut; when I shut none can open." Thank God this morning, He has opened the treasures of the skies to my soul! How slow my heart has been to follow; by the grace of God I will quicken my pace, and I am making better time in this camp meeting than ever before. The more I am called to suffer, the more I am going to find among the supplies. Come on, poor soul; come on, sin-sick sinner, disappointed heart and He will make life worth living; He invites the hopeless of earth. Let everybody come and follow Him; He is just now about to turn the key; some of these days the lock will spring back, and the door will open wide, and we will be ushered into the presence of the King.

There have always been a few saints who were determined to follow Him so closely as to get the best things. There have always been a few, Elisha-like, who were determined to see Him and get the mantle. The key of the house of David is on His shoulder, and on His broad shoulder rests the government of the kingdom. Why, some people seem to think that they are almost too much for God to manage. They would not be if they would only give Him a chance. He who created us is able to deliver us and guide us through all the minutia of life.

Sinner, receive Jesus. Believer, seek and find your Pentecost. Saints, do not be discouraged. He who sends us against brazen walls will be there in time to batter them down. Let all who will receive and walk with Him. Open wide the door of your hearts and let the blessed Savior come in.

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