

**Isaiah 9: 6 & 7; “The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts”, A Christmas Sermon for those gathered at Birkwood Village Assisted Care, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

We are told at the end of verse 7 that the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform all the things that go before this statement in verses 6 and 7. So in this message to you I would like to link the zeal of the Lord of hosts, 1<sup>st</sup> of all – To the Child born. 2<sup>nd</sup> – To the Son given. And 3<sup>rd</sup> – We will link the Zeal of the Lord of hosts to the names of this Glorious Person. I believe that it is especially important for us to understand the zeal of our Triune God in relation to the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in relation to His entrance into this world in His Incarnation. May we all be able to rejoice in this as I explain these things to you.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – The Zeal of the Lord of hosts in causing a Child to be born.**

“For unto us a Child is born.” The “us” in the immediate context of the book of Isaiah is that Christ was given to the Jewish nation and people. He was and He is their promised Messiah. There are many promises of His being given to them in the Old Testament Scriptures as they were the only people in Old Testament times that God set His love upon. He let all the other nations of the world go their own way for some thousands of years, and provided no salvation for them except for some Gentile people who attached themselves to the nation and people of Israel, like Rahab and Ruth, and a few others. Also the Ninevites in the time of Jonah the prophet.

But when the fullness of time came, according to Daniel’s prophecy of the 70 weeks, God gave this Child to Israel. He was born of Joseph and Mary, both of their lineages being descended of David. Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, and you will recall that she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit before Joseph and Mary had come together to have any child. This was troubling to Joseph, but an angel was sent to explain things to him; that this child was not conceived from Mary’s infidelity with some other man, but this Child was conceived from God the Holy Spirit Himself forming Him in Mary’s womb.

You see, for any of us sinful people to have a Savior from our sins, a Child would have to be born, and this Child could not be anything other than an absolutely perfect Man in the sight of the Holy God. This was because all people who are descended from Adam, without exception, are sinners because of Adam’s sin. We are all born into the world sinners. We have been born with sin in our nature because it has been passed on to us from Adam, and Adam and Eve fell from their original righteousness. So this verse that we are thinking about tells us that this Child who would be born could not come into the world in the way that children normally come into the world. He had to be Virgin born. And He was.

And this was the zeal of the Lord of hosts that it was so, because not one of us, or any couple among us, could ever bring forth a Child who be a Savior for ourselves, or for any other sinful person in all the world; no one in all of human history. Only one Person can be our Savior, and that is Jesus Christ our Lord. After Adam and Eve fell from their original righteousness, a promise was given by God that He would send His Son. Since Satan had instigated the Fall of Man in the garden, God in His zeal for our salvation said to Satan in Genesis 3: 15 – “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise, or crush, your head, and you Satan shall bruise His heel.”

This was the first prophecy of the Child who would be born. Jesus Christ is the promised Seed; the One who was descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and David. Salvation is of the Jews because the Lord Jesus Christ was a Jew. The Jewish people looked for their promised Messiah for many, many generations, and finally He did come. Come thou long expected Jesus, born to

set thy people free; from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee. Israel's strength and Consolation, Hope of all the earth thou art; Dear Desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart." Beloved, the reason that we Gentiles can sing that song as well as the Jews, is because Jesus when He was born, and when He grew up and undertook our salvation. He knew that He had to fulfill God's law perfectly. He had to keep all of the commandments of God from the right motive of supreme love to God.

He knew that He had to keep them, also, with a fervent love for the salvation of all men. This He had, and fulfill the law He did. In fulfilling God's holy law, the apostle Paul tells us that He broke down the barrier between Jew and Gentile and made them into one new people; that is, the New Testament Church. In Jesus Christ, there is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave or free, male or female. You are all a part of one body in Christ. This is why this Child had to be born. This is what He had to do. And I hope that you are thankful for this at this season, and in every season of your life. For that is how you came to have a Savior. That is, if you are saved. We are not automatically saved by what Jesus has done, but each of us has to receive Him for ourself. I pray that you have done this, or that you will do it even now, as you hear me preach this message. Come to this child and find forgiveness of your sins and eternal life.

**2<sup>nd</sup> – It was the Zeal of the Lord of hosts that unto us a Son was given.**

"Unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder". We have seen why a Child needed to be born if we were to be saved. Now we need to understand why a Son needed to be given. A Son needed to be given in order that God could become Man; that He would take upon Himself human flesh and a nature like ours, except without sin. Indeed, the two natures of God and Man needed to be joined together in the Lord Jesus Christ so that all that He did as a Man would be established on our behalf. And thereby, we could be saved from our sins. What I mean by this is that no sinful human person could ever redeem his brother, his fellow fallen human being, or give a ransom for their soul. It was only the value of Christ's Person that established the work of redemption.

Our Lord Jesus Christ before His Incarnation was the Divine Son of the Father. He always was the Son in eternity past. He was, as the Son, just as much God as the Father. In the counsels of eternity past, in the Covenant of Redemption, made before time began, the Triune God foresaw that when they created the first man and the first woman, that they would not keep the one good commandment that would be given to them – That is, not to eat of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. They foresaw that Adam and Eve would fall, and that sin would enter the world through Adam's sin, and death through that sin. And thus sin would spread to all men.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts was that God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, covenanted together to save a people from their sins. Salvation would be of God and not of man. And that in order that the redemption of sinful people could be accomplished, the only begotten Son of the Father would have to leave the halls of heaven and become a Man as well as God. In His being given and sent by the Father, out of love for fallen sinners, the Lord Jesus Christ would be able to bring eternal and everlasting value to His work of redemption.

Because He was a Man, He could suffer on behalf of sinners. Because He was God, eternal and infinite value would be attached to all that He would do. And thus a real redemption, a buying back from the guilt, the defilement, and the power of sin in our lives took place when Jesus went to the cross. When He paid the penalty for our sins and was punished in our place, then the Triune God, the Lord of hosts, could most certainly apply His great redemption to our persons when we believe in Jesus, so that we are set free from sin and we willingly place ourselves under His righteous rule in our lives. Again the hymnwriter says – "Born thy people to deliver, born a Child,

and yet a King. Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring. By Thine own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts alone; by thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.” It was the zeal of the Lord of hosts that accomplished this.

**3<sup>rd</sup> – Let’s link the names of this Glorious Person to the zeal of the Lord of hosts.**

“And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” There is so much packed into these descriptive names of our Lord Jesus. First, He is Wonderful. Or Wonderful Counselor. The Lord Jesus is Wonderful in His Person. Wonderful as God with all of His Divine Attributes; Infinite in Wisdom and Understanding, Eternal and Unchangeable in His Being. As God he is of one Essence with the Father. He is the Radiance of His Glory and the exact Representation of His nature. In the Incarnation His Deity was joined together with a True Human Nature which was in every way is perfect.

Even though as God Christ is Impassible, and His great feelings of love and wrath, zeal and compassion exist continually free from the control of any man, yet as a Man, yet He is able to sympathize with our weaknesses which are due to our own sin and ignorance. This is what makes Christ’s Counsel so Wonderful. All the people that He preached to, to repent and believe in the gospel, He truly loved them and sought their highest welfare. Since this is the case, we find that the gospel itself is primarily concerning Him. The gospel is that each of us needs Him, that each of us must have Him to be our own personal Savior, and Guide into all the truth.

It is Wonderful to think that the gospel is not – Do this and live. But believe in Me and you will find life. You will come to know the reality of His grace transforming your life from one degree of glory to another, even by His Spirit, so that you will become more and more like Him. He is Wonderful in His comprehension of all that we need to know God. His being a Wonderful Counselor is found in all of His teaching. That being the only Way to Eternal Life, He would come and teach us the truth, and have it written down by His apostles, so that we can hold in our hands in the New Testament Gospels.

Truly, this is Wonderful. His Counsel in His Word is itself Wonderful, because everything that He has said is accompanied by His power. He is very Wonderful in terms of the Promises of His Word. When He says, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age,” His teaching and His counsel in regard to all that we will do in our Christian life, is established very practically to us, in the way that we will live our life. We will live our Christian life in utter dependence on His grace, and yet we will not mind that. We will grow to appreciate it more and more because we see that the surpassing greatness of His power in us to do what is right

This is how you can live to God’s glory, and to truly love other people around you. The power and the wisdom to do so comes from Him directly, and spiritually. It makes you the believer glad and joyful in your heart when you realize that His power is working in you. Because as the Mighty God, He is one with the Father, and He is the Power of God and the Wisdom of God. Therefore, He is well qualified to sit at the Father’s right hand, and to ever live to make intercession for you. As the Mighty God He knows the Mind of God and the Heart of God and well knows all the purposes and plans of God, so as to govern the world in a righteous and just fashion.

As our Savior the Lord Jesus will sit at the Father’s right hand until the Father puts all His enemies under His feet. As the Mighty God He shall someday return in great glory and judge the world in righteousness. As the Mighty God, in His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, He will bring an end to all rule and authority and power and destroy our last enemy death at that point. At that time He will also be seen as the Everlasting Father, or the Father of the vast number of children who have been given to Him by His Father.

This title does not so much respect His title of Deity so much as it does His position as Father in relation to His Church; His brethren, His spiritual seed. In Isaiah 8: 18 He prophetically says of Himself – Here am I and the children whom the Lord has given me! We are for signs and wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts. When He come in glorious 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, He will burn up the old heaven and the old earth, and He will recreate a New Heaven and Earth in which will dwell righteousness. And He will become the Father of the world to come, Father of the Everlasting Age, and the Father of Eternity.

But even now we know Him as the father of all strength, the father of all goodness; “the One whose Fatherly love and faithfulness surrounds all believers with a care far surpassing human understanding.” (Paul Kretzmann) He is also called here the Prince of Peace. His purpose in coming into the world was to make peace between God and man. When He was born there were angels who suddenly came to a group of shepherds outside of Jerusalem. And this multitude of the heavenly host were praising God and saying – Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!

God does not continually make war against sinners who do not understand the meaning of life. What He does do is to demonstrate His good will toward all men; in that he brings to them the offer of peace with Himself through the gospel of His dear Son. When we believe in the good news of the gospel we are justified; we are declared righteousness because of the righteousness of Christ and because of His blood which was shed on the cross for our sins. We have peace with God, and we have the peace of God which guards our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4: 7) May you know the reality of His peace guarding your heart and your mind, this Christmas!