

**Isaiah 9:6-7**  
**December 12, 2010**  
**Lynchburg, Virginia**

**EXHORDIUM**

This great passage was given to us by that most illustrious prophet Isaiah and the words were forever imprinted in our minds by that illustrious musician Frederick Handel. It is difficult to even say these words without hearing the tune run through our minds.

But like so much of Scripture, if we are not careful, the words run through our mind but not the meaning. We hear the words but we do not heed them.

Many of our Christmas songs have this great power. We sing the words but we do not understand or perhaps do not believe what we sing.

P. 239, It Came Upon the Midnight Clear, v.4, the age of gold.

P. 240, Joy to the World, v. 3,4

No doubt, some of our Christmas songs are infected with sentiment, as well, proclaiming the power of Jesus in our hearts but not in the world. P. 251., v. 4.

Children, what is the purpose of education?

So, we must think about what we sing and what we say. If it is not an inspired song, anthem, or psalm, then we must question whether it is consistent with the Scriptures.

At the same time, we also should be aware of the history of our received faith. What is the general teaching of the faith through the ages? What did our forefathers think? And is that consistent with what the church has received and believed through the ages?

Of course, there is also a danger here. If we believe certain things and practice them and then pass them on to our children, in one generation they become the living history of our past. Our children assume that what we believe has always been believed, even if it was only practiced in their generation.

So, the historical faith is not Scripture. But it has the authority of time and permanence. It can be reformed where there are clear failings in the practices as related to Scripture but it ought to be respected, especially when

we have embraced ideas that are new or innovative in the church. Can we tie our new idea or innovation directly to Scripture? If not, then we should probably respect history more than our innovation.

All of this is said as a prelude to how we view the historic, current and future Kingdom of God. By far and away the historic view of Christ's Kingdom clashes with the modern American view. We see this even in Christmas hymns, until the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Prior to that time, the prevailing view of Christ's Kingdom is that it would continue to grow and fill all the Earth. In the modern era, a certain pessimism has set into the church, largely as a result of dispensational thinking. Instead of the kingdom of God growing, the kingdom of Satan grows and threatens the saints until Jesus comes back to save them. But, we need to remember what Jesus did. We need to remember our Christmas songs. Satan has no kingdom. At best, he is banished usurper, wandering the dry places of the Earth, hoping for a sympathetic ear. He is a pathetic outcast. How different that view than those who make Satan the archrival of the Lord Christ. Nothing of it.

Gladly, that seems to be running its course and running out of steam. You can only predict the end of the world and the tribulation for so many decades and generations before people start to grow skeptical. It is amazing what a tenaciously long life this view has though.

So, we arrive to this great anthem of the Christian faith. Can you say these words without singing the song.

## **EXEGESIS**

### **6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:**

God the Father, gave us His Son. Yes, Jesus Christ came to rule the world but first He was given to the world. He was a gift to the world from the Father. Sadly, even His own rejected Him. He was despised and trodden under. But the weak and beggarly recognized and honored Him. Shepherds keeping watch over the fields at night. Wise men from the nations recognized His Star and brought Him gifts.

**and the government shall be upon his shoulder:**

He is the support of the government. He is the governor. What government? Well, the government of His Kingdom. What kingdom, then? Well, first of all, the kingdom of Israel. The Jews recognized that the Messiah would rule Israel and all of the land that was promised to Abraham from the river to the sea would be under His authority. It would no longer be just the land around Jerusalem. But the land lost in the prior fall of Samaria and in the subsequent fall of Jerusalem would also be restored. All the authorities reigning over God's people would be thrown off and the government of all of that would be put squarely upon the shoulders of the Messiah.

This is a wonder and Jesus became that governor. But in short order, even in the book of Acts, we realize that He was not meant to rule only in Israel. That was short sighted. Perhaps He was meant to rule from Israel, from Jerusalem, from the New Jerusalem but His Kingdom extended far beyond the borders of Israel. His Kingdom extends as far as the curse is found. The curse is found all through the Earth, so His Kingdom must extend there, as well.

And we should wonder at this governor. He is not like all other earthly kings. Their kingdoms are always shaky. They are constantly consolidating power, putting down insurrections, justifying their works in the kingdom, holding on to authority that is slipping through their fingers, hoping to make it to the end of their life and pass on some semblance of the kingdom to their children.

David established the Kingdom. Solomon ruled the kingdom in peace but his son Rehoboam split the kingdom and it withered and died. Not so with the new King Jesus Davidson. Of His kingdom there shall be no end to the increase. No Monarch can ever hope for such kingdom. It always ends in disaster. But the kingdoms of the world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

Folks, this is Christmas! This is what we are celebrating!

**and his name shall be called,**

His name, the essence of who He is. We will call His name these following words because they describe what Jesus has done, what He is doing and what He will do. He is as good as His names. In the names of

Jesus we have promises. His names are promises. If the Bible has named the Lord, then we can count on Him acting like His name.

### **Wonderful-**

Of course, we know that the Lord is wonderful. We tend to use this word in a very pedestrian way. We mean that things are good. I got a job promotion. Oh, wonderful, meaning that is good news or I am pleased with the report.

But wonderful means more than that. It means, full of wonder. Wonder should be something that is hard to explain. Well, for some of you, maybe a job promotion would be hard to explain. But this word has the connotation of things too high to explain or understand, incorporating even the idea of the miraculous.

Mary wondered at all the things that were said of Jesus. She pondered them and couldn't quite understand them. The crowds wondered at Jesus because He taught with authority and not as one of the scribes. His virgin birth, the miracles, the spirits in subjection to Jesus, the unorthodox way He came to power through dying on a cross, the Messiah dying, the Resurrection, Ascending up to heaven. These are all wonders. He was full of wonder.

Much of what we thought we knew about Jesus, "Though art the Christ," we failed to understand, "Lord, you shall not surely die" and "Get behind me Satan!"

Jesus was hard to figure out because He was full of wonder.

### **Counsellor,**

The Word was made flesh and dwelt with man. A counselor is full of words. A good counselor gives good and wise words. The counsel of Jesus is always perfect. Since He only reveals that which the Father has spoken to Him, His counsel is always good. His Words can be trusted.

There is another aspect of receiving good counsel that is often overlooked. In our modern era, we choose to say, "Do as I say, not as I do." From the office of the presidency, to various congressmen and women, to our local pastor or counselor, there is no requirement for the counsel to be

lived out. Words, alone, are enough. But the Bible puts clear authority in the power of a godly life. St. Paul said to imitate him as he imitated Christ.

A counselor who says, “Do as I say but not as I do,” will find his words of counsel ignored. He will also find that good counsel evades him. He finds that his counselees tend to do as he does and not as he says. He also finds that his counsel fails to deal with the areas where he struggles. Thus, he is not faithful to teach all of the right counsel such that his words are not all good words, not all good counsel.

With our Lord Jesus, His words always match His actions. He does that which He calls us to do. He tells us to serve one another and He washes the disciples feet. He tells us that a faithful friend or a faithful pastor, lays down His life and then He does so. You cannot find failure in His counsel. His words and actions are always trustworthy.

### **The mighty God**

In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

The inconceivable incarnation. How can God become flesh? How can God dwell in human form? How can a human be both God and man? Furthermore, how can the mighty God empty Himself in such a way to be a man and yet still be God?

Well, there are answers to all of these questions and it takes a theology degree and lots of space to answer them. However, even after we answer them in detail, the mysterious still remains. We have attempted to explain these enigmas and yet we are still filled with wonder. We have only attempted to rid ourselves of the contradictions. We can never understand how God can be both uncreated and dwell in human form. We cannot understand how God can exist in the divine essence and yet still have multiple distinct persons in the Godhead. We have to believe these things more than we have to know them.

But Jesus is the Mighty God on Earth, mighty, almighty, all powerful. By Him all things were created and nothing was created without Him. This should give us great comfort. We are now the slaves of King Jesus. He is the perfect King, ruling His Kingdom with absolute knowledge, complete control over His enemies, perfect timing, perfect in every way. He has ALL

the might. So, we ought not to fear. Our Lord and King is empowered. He is mighty, the Lord of hosts is His name. He commands a mighty army, even though He is mighty enough in Himself to defeat every foe.

### **The everlasting Father,**

We seem to understand that Jesus is God, the Son, distinct from the Father and the Spirit, very God of very God. But this passage seems to claim that Jesus is the Father. We should keep our Trinitarian doctrine intact. Jesus is not the Father but even Jesus said, “If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.” Jesus has brought God, almighty, to Earth to dwell with man. Whatever was revealed of the Father to Him, is revealed to us when Jesus appears. He reveals the Godhead perfectly and He reveals the Father perfectly. He is the One who was in the beginning, from everlasting and to everlasting. He is uncreated, as the Father, and has dwelt with the Father in eternity past.

### **The Prince of Peace**

The advent of the Kingdom of Christ is a Kingdom of Peace. His government shall grow and so shall His peace. This is not merely a peace in the heart. But we know that peace on Earth cannot reign where men’s heart are not peaceful. If you desire peace on Earth, then you must first be at peace. Wars will cease when men stop seeking advantage over others. Wars will cease when men are content with their own possessions. Wars will cease when the rule of Christ is imposed over nations and the nations are in submission to Christ, having been duly disciplined.

But that kind of universal peace can only exist and persist where individual men and women walk in peace. That occurs through confession, repentance and forgiveness. Where a tumult is about to break out, reconciliation through Christ always involves some level of humility by at least one and usually both of the parties involved. When there is strife and division, there is always at least one of the parties who is in sin. However, one of the frustrations in addressing division is that neither party will admit their wrong. But it simply cannot be the case that two parties at war are both in the right. The Scriptures teach us to be willing to suffer wrong and suffer wrongly, for doing good, than to persist in strife and division.

Serving Jesus produces peace. Are you at peace? If not, are you serving Jesus?

**7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end,**

If we only believed this. We, of all people, would have hope but also a holy boldness. Jesus's government must increase. It must increase now, here on the Earth, and it must increase through all the ages. There shall be no end to His government, so shall there be no end to its increase. All nations, and all men, will one day serve the Lord Jesus. Every knee will indeed bow to the throne of God.

Thus, since the rule and reign of Jesus is ever increasing, it is a necessity that His peace is ever increasing. But is that what we see in the world? Is there ever increasing peace? Or, are things getting messier and messier. Are nations more and more at one another's throat? Is there a worldwide conspiracy of power forming up against our Lord and His Christ?

People, that idea is almost absolutely preposterous. And not from a scientific hope in the brotherhood of man or of rational progress. We are not getting better as a world because we are getting smarter. On the contrary, in many respects, we Christians seem to be completely oblivious to what is occurring. We are so stuck in the paradigm of the world is going to get worse and worse, that we cannot see what is actually happening.

It's been 65 years since the end of WWII. There have been some nasty wars in various places but we've seen nothing like the carnage of the first two great wars. What we call a horrendous war now has the sort of casualties that existed one day on the battlefield during the Civil War or the Battle of the Somme in WWI or DDay in World War II.

I grant that we have the capacity to kill millions in seconds and that it may yet occur. I do know the future or how the Lord plans to implement His peace on Earth. But during my lifetime the scope of world peace has changed dramatically to the positive. Also, during my lifetime, the Kingdom of Christ has expanded in most dramatic form. No coincidence.

**upon the throne of David,**

Jesus is a King, an earthly King, ruling over an earthly Kingdom.

**and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.**

His kingdom is established in Judgment. He judges it. We tend to think of judgment in a negative connotation. But we need not think that way. The book of Judges is all about Saviors. Jesus is our judge. That means that He rules in our favor. The judgment goes FOR us and AGAINST His and our enemies.

True Justice reigns. The strong can no longer run roughshod over the weak. I think we are seeing this come to pass in the world of nations. If the power is altered dramatically in the world, or if the United States fully forsakes Christ, then the International Justice that has been gained can be lost. However,

#### **EXHORTATION**

**The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.**

I trust that God is keeping tabs of all of this and He will establish judgment and justice in the World His way and in His time.