

ADVENT #3
Mighty God

Back on Dec 7 we saw the reopening of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

As you recall, it saw extensive damage back in April 2019.

Watching the coverage of that fire was heartbreaking for me because that church stood in the middle of Paris, and it was a treasured landmark.

In our earliest days in France, to get to language school, I would take the commuter train from the southern suburbs of Paris right into the heart of the city and come up out of the subway stop and ND was a few blocks away directly in front of me. I had to pinch myself to realize that I was there.

We visited ND several times and climbed the stairs up to the bell tower area where you could be right next to the gargoyles and the flying buttresses that made the cathedral so iconic.

It was mind boggling to me that it was so damaged, and it seemed impossible that it could ever be restored. But it was, and in some ways, it is better and cleaner than ever.

I say this to make a comparison with the status of Israel. The nation was damaged by their own sin and the righteous judgement of God, but here in Isaiah, God is promising restoration. And what he promises is not just good for his people then. It is good for us today.

I am also reminded that it is easier to restore a classic Cathedral than it is to restore the human heart and rebellious people.

The efforts at ND involved hundreds, if not thousands of workers, architects, experts from so many domains, funds from the State and private donations. It took five years.

But none of that compares to the cost of restoration and REDEMPTION to our broken spiritual lives. That cost was paid by God himself who sent his son.

I Peter 1:17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay *on earth*; 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ.

While the passage from Isa 9 doesn't predict the death of the baby who is promised, we know that the promises came true because of the Sacrifice that Christ made for us.

As we understand God's redemption plan, it will promote a response in us:

REVIEW

Let the joy of Christmas give you a 5 E focus in your life.

Exalting the Father

Embrace the Son

Equipped by the Holy Spirit

Encouraging His followers

Expressing the Good News of the Gospel of the kingdom

LAST WEEK we saw the First title – Wonderful Counselor

Not just an agreeable counselor, but the Wonder working God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Isaiah, John the Baptist, Joseph, and Mary

The wondrous miracle of Immanuel – God With Us- was foretold from Genesis to Malachi and the devout believers like Simeon and Anna were looking for the consolation and redemption of Israel.

In the familiar passage of Isa 9 we see several titles of this child who was to be born, the son who was to be given. Today we'll look at the second couplet – MIGHT God.

Isaiah 9

v. 1-5 speak of the great light that will come upon the people who walk in darkness.

Then the restoring promise begins in v. 6

6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;

And the government will rest on His shoulders;

And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace,

On the throne of David and over his kingdom,

To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness

From then on and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

Last week we looked at Jesus the Wonderful Counselor. He is the great Wonder.. He is the divine Son in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We can trust Him. He will guide our steps. His counsel is sound and sure, and we can trust Him. That was last week. Which means, of course, that our focus this week is on the second title, Mighty God.

Jesus is Mighty God. You'll notice each of these titles has two parts. We're going to look at each part in turn – Mighty God. It's helpful to know that in Hebrew, unlike in the English translation, the word for "God" is actually the first word, so we'll deal with that first.

God"

The baby child is God. The son who is given is God.

**A Hebrew scholar notes that "given" is in the verb form that indicates that he is already in existence.

That truth would only be known at first through revelation or an announcement. No one looking at the newborn baby would say, "Yep, that's God alright."

That very idea would seem bizarre for the Jews because they understood God to be transcendent, majestic, holy – set apart and other than created beings.

Yet, here is the prophecy of a baby who would be Mighty God.

BORN TO REIGN

Verse 7 points to the importance of this male child as the one who would inherit the throne of David and there would be no end to the increase of his government or of Peace.

Isaiah is already connecting this son to be given to the reign of King David.

Remember that Isaiah lived THREE hundred years after David, yet David was the paradigm of the ideal ruler, and the prophets looked forward to the day when a king like David would rule again.

Imagine someone speaking like that in our world today...

He will take the throne of ... who was President 300 years ago? NO ONE....

Go back 100 years ago ...Who was President in 1924????

Calvin Coolidge

So, "A child will be born who will take up the rule of Calvin Coolidge' or even FDR OR Lincoln or Jefferson or Washington."

Sadly, that would be meaningless to MANY people.

But for the people of Israel in the days of Isaiah, a 300-year-old reference to David has great significance.

Now jump ahead 700 years from Isaiah to the birth of Christ and see how it is depicted...[Matt 1](#)

1 The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham... Continuing in the line of David we read...16 Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

Jesus AND Joseph are listed in the line of David, and in v. 20 after learning that Mary was pregnant... 20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

The baby who was conceived by the Holy Spirit is God incarnate, Immanuel – God With us. He who was born to reign lived the life we should have lived and died the death we should have died. He did so because although He existed in the form of God, He did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2)

The baby who was born to die was raised from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father. He reigns as God today. His throne will endure forever. And He lives to make intercession for YOU.

Do you avail yourself of the Throne of Grace?

One way to experience Christmas EVERYDAY is to pray. Go to him. Cast your burdens on Him because He cares for you.

Another way to enrich your experience of Christmas is to read through the OT passages that speak of this coming king. I highly recommend Isaiah for your Advent reading.

MIGHTY God

The Hebrew word is used to describe a hero, a man of valor, a warrior.

That's who Jesus is- He is the hero of the story of Redemption.

He is the Captain of our Salvation.

He is the mighty warrior who conquered sin and death.

He is the promised seed of the woman who will crush the head of the serpent Satan. (Gen 3)

When God took flesh and came to dwell among us that day in Bethlehem, this seed of the woman was born, and He came to do battle with the great enemy of our souls.

We've seen in our series in the Gospel according to Mark that Satanic activity was front and center during the earthly ministry of Christ. In each contest with Satan, Jesus was the victor.

Even though the cross looked like a victory for evil, it was simply the instrument of God for redeeming a people for Himself.

And since death could not hold him down, Jesus rose in triumph because God raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Eph 1)

He has won, He is winning, and He will win. Jesus is the Mighty God, the hero warrior God who rules and protects his people.

To reflect the might or power of this baby born at Mighty God, Isaiah cites the Battle of Midian in the days

of Gideon. This battle from the past would foreshadow the future power and victory of this baby to be born.

Chad Bird was very helpful in explaining the reference to Midian
“The Day of Midian” was shorthand for the Hebrews like we might refer to D-Day or Iwo Jima in WWII.

The reference to God striking Midian comes from Judges 7 and Isaiah uses it again in 10:26. There is a correspondence with Judges 7 and Isa 9 in that both refer to the role of Naphtali. Men from Naphtali fought alongside Gideon and when Gideon’s men illuminated the darkness with their torches, those in darkness saw a great light. So too, at the coming of Christ the people who walk in darkness will see a great light.

Gideon’s narrative records both scarcity at harvest and spoils of war (Judg. 6:4–5; 8:24–26), both of which figure into Isaiah’s description as well (Isa. 9:3). And, of course, the graphic militaristic pictures of trampling boots and garments rolled in blood, ready for the fire (Isa. 9:5), is in accord with the death of Midian on the battlefield.

While Isaiah 9 refers to the Day of Midian, his language in v 4 echoes the language of the Exodus
**4 For You shall break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders,
The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian.**

Those terms are not used in Judges 7 but they are used in referenced to Israel’s condition prior to the Exodus.

In a manner typical of OT writers, Isaiah draws parallels between similar deliverance events – i.e. the Exodus and the battle of Midian.

Each event is a demonstration of the MIGHTY acts of God.

This wondrous child given to us is MIGHTY to save and to reign.

**And the government will rest on His shoulders;
7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace,
On the throne of David and over his kingdom,
To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness
From then on and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.**

None other than the Mighty God can accomplish this.

This announcement from Isaiah is not simply of a future Hebrew King of Israel.
He is the king forevermore.

The prophet is not just telling of a future birth to be marked by a birthday celebration like we do regularly here at Highlands. We celebrate this birth because it has cosmic implication – God has come in the flesh.

The Mighty wonder working God of Eternity came to us.. He came in the flesh for us.

He didn’t send more prophets; he came from heaven to be born as a baby to bring Redemption and Restoration.

**Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour,
All for love's sake becamest poor;
Thrones for a manger didst surrender,
Sapphire-paved courts for stable floor..**

Thou who art God beyond all praising,

All for love's sake becamest man;
Stooping so low, but sinners raising
Heavenwards by thine eternal plan.

Thou who art love beyond all telling,
Saviour and King, we worship thee.
Emmanuel, within us dwelling,
Make us what thou wouldst have us be.

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