

I.N.I.

Christmas Day
Dec. 25, 2013
Isaiah 9:6-7

In Christ Jesus, the most unique Baby in the history of the world, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

The birth of the Baby has arrived. Last night our children asked “Who gets to hold the Baby?” Thankfully we heard that not only did God the Father and Mary and Joseph and the shepherds hold the Baby Jesus, but so do we—through faith. And what is so great about this Baby?

This Baby is so great because the cradle and the cross also held Him. He was born in order to die for us. Or as a little poem says: “Little Baby on the hay, soon there’ll be another day when nails shall pierce Your hands and feet as You provide our sin’s defeat.”

Even though we know this lesson so very well it is still so amazing to realize that God the Son left His glory on high to be born as a human being and laid in a manger in a stable. But looks are deceiving. This of course is the humble Savior who came to suffer and die for all of mankind, but He also is the **VICTORIOUS KING FOREVER!**

God certainly works in strange and wonderful ways, not as mankind expects. His deliverance of His people would not come through powerful and famous people, like a King David or Solomon, but through a lowly baby born in a stable. A Child of a poor mother, yet the Child of God.

We read again vs. 6 **FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN, UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN; AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER. AND HIS NAME WILL BE CALLED WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE.**

In these verses we see that this Child is given 4 special names that are descriptive of His character and His attributes. The names are grouped into 4 sets of two words each:

1) **WONDERFUL COUNSELOR:** Peter said to Jesus: **LORD, TO WHOM SHALL WE GO? YOU HAVE THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE.** Jesus is the Word! In Him and in His Word we have the most wonderful counsel. His Word **IS A LAMP TO OUR FEET AND A LIGHT TO OUR PATH.**

Are we burdened or depressed, are we confused or aimless, are we in throes of despair and turmoil? Then turn to the Word for counsel that gives you power to believe in Jesus and to live for Jesus in joy. Jesus also carries out His wonderful counsel and plan which is the salvation of all of mankind. That plan was accomplished by this special Child because He also is:

2) **MIGHTY GOD:** Jesus is both true Man and true God in one person. He has the power to carry out His plan of salvation. He is the mighty war hero who has lead captivity captive; who conquered sin, death and the devil and rose victorious on the third day triumphing over all of His and our enemies. Jesus assures us in John 16:33

THESE THINGS I HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU, THAT IN ME YOU MAY HAVE PEACE. IN THE WORLD YOU WILL HAVE TRIBULATION; BUT BE OF GOOD CHEER, I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD. The Apostle Paul wrote in Col. 2:13-15 **AND YOU, BEING DEAD IN YOUR TRESPASSES AND THE UNCIRCUMCISION OF YOUR FLESH, HE HAS MADE ALIVE TOGETHER WITH HIM, HAVING FORGIVEN YOU ALL TRESPASSES, HAVING WIPED OUT THE HANDWRITING OF REQUIREMENTS THAT WAS AGAINST US, WHICH WAS CONTRARY TO US. AND HE HAS TAKEN IT OUT OF THE WAY, HAVING NAILED IT TO THE CROSS. HAVING DISARMED PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS, HE MADE A PUBLIC SPECTACLE OF THEM, TRIUMPHING OVER THEM IN IT.**

3) **EVERLASTING FATHER:** The Son is not the Father, but He has the same loving concern that the Heavenly Father has for His children. We think of the loving picture that the Spirit through David draws for us in Psalm 23. Jesus as the Good Shepherd loving and caring for His sheep. In John 15:9 Jesus says that He has the Father's love for His own: **AS THE FATHER LOVED ME, I ALSO HAVE LOVED YOU; ABIDE IN MY LOVE.** This love of Jesus is eternal and unconditional. It never ends and is not based upon our behavior or what we do, but upon what Jesus is, full of grace and mercy to us sinners!

4) **PRINCE OF PEACE:** Jesus has destroyed all the evil powers of this world and now rules as our King with PEACE! Peace which He brought about between God and sinful mankind by paying the price of our sins and satisfying God's justice upon the cross. Last night we heard the angels proclaim: **GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN.** Jesus said: **PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU, MY PEACE I GIVE TO YOU; NOT AS THE WORLD GIVES DO I GIVE TO YOU. LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED, NEITHER LET IT BE AFRAID.** Paul tells us in Eph. 2 **FOR HE HIMSELF IS OUR PEACE ...BY ABOLISHING IN HIS FLESH THE LAW WITH ITS COMMANDMENTS AND REGULATIONS ... THUS MAKING PEACE... TO GOD THROUGH THE CROSS. HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR.**

This peace calms our fears and worries; settles us and fulfills us; assures us of a blessed life both here and hereafter.

Isaiah tells us that this Peace and this rule of Christ in our hearts is eternal. We read the second verse of our sermon text: **OF THE INCREASE OF HIS GOVERNMENT AND PEACE THERE WILL BE NO END, UPON THE THRONE OF DAVID AND OVER HIS KINGDOM, TO ORDER IT AND ESTABLISH IT WITH JUDGMENT AND JUSTICE FROM THAT TIME FORWARD, EVEN FOREVER. THE ZEAL OF THE LORD OF HOSTS WILL PERFORM THIS.**

The people of Isaiah's day who lived under bondage and oppression had all of this to look forward to. We, who also lived under the bondage and slavery of our sinful flesh, the fear of death and the oppression of Satan, have the same Child to look back to in faith. We see Jesus, the God-Man who has established justice and righteousness, who has established His kingdom, His rule in our hearts through His Word.

He endured God's judgment of damnation which was upon all sinful people. The guilt and punishment of our sins was placed upon Him and through His willing suffering and death He satisfied God's justice forever. Jesus' perfect obedient life of love and His perfect sacrificial death is the very foundation upon which His kingdom is built. His kingdom, the Church of believers, is established by God's justice, which is satisfied not by what we can do for Him, but by what the Child-King did for us. God cannot punish us for our sins because He already punished His Son, Jesus. That is why the Cross must be proclaimed every time the Cradle is shown! For the Cradle without the Cross means nothing!

What a joy for everyone of us, His subjects, to know that **THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IS THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST TO ALL AND ON ALL WHO BELIEVE. FOR THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE; FOR ALL HAVE SINNED AND FALL SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD, BEING JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE THROUGH THE REDEMPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS.**

The Divine Judge's gavel has come down with the verdict. Because of the crucified and resurrected victorious King the declaration is **NOT GUILTY!** There is now Peace with God!

What a blessing that is as we look around in this world of trouble, violence, suffering, evil, wickedness, turmoil, war and strife, immorality, murder, hatred, deceit, cruelty, injustice and sadness. There is One to whom we can turn to for **PEACE, a PEACE** that speaks to our hearts and minds, removes all sins and selfish thoughts and comforts and calms all of our fears and concerns. The **VICTORIOUS KING FOREVER** has given us that Peace!

May that be the Christmas **PEACE** that is in your hearts and in mine this Christmas season and throughout our lives.

Amen.