

Mid-week Advent
Dec. 10, 2014
Isaiah 9:6-7

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

Our Advent theme this year is: **“Behold, your God!”** How often do you say “behold” or how often do you hear someone say “behold.” I’ll bet not often. It is not a word we use too often anymore. But it is one that was used over 300 times in the Old and New Testament.

It means more than just see, or look. It means “to look at intently, to inspect, to pay attention to, to carefully examine, to contemplate, to understand,.” So this Advent season we are encouraging you to pay attention to, to carefully examine, to look intently at your God.

What “Behold” passages come readily to mind? **BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL CONCEIVE AND BEAR A SON, AND SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL...BEHOLD! THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!... BEHOLD, THE SON OF MAN IS BEING BETRAYED INTO THE HANDS OF SINNERS...BEHOLD, I AM COMING QUICKLY!**

Well this evening as we look at our text from Isaiah we will **BEHOLD AND MARVEL!**

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 Moses, or King David, 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. Listen to them and marvel!

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 led 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 so that

He lays down His life 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 us sinners by paying the price of our sins and satisfying God's justice upon the cross. On Christmas Eve we will hear 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. Listen again and Marvel!: **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 behold 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 of us 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! **BEHOLD AND MARVEL!**

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; **a PEACE** that removes all sins and selfish thoughts and comforts and calms all of our fears and concerns.

Even though we know this lesson so very well it is still so amazing to **BEHOLD---**God the Son leaving 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!**

May that be the Advent and Christmas **PEACE** that is in your hearts and in mine this Christmas season and throughout out lives. Look at this lesson intently, pay careful attention to it, consider it well, contemplate on it, carefully examine it--**BEHOLD AND MARVEL!**

Amen.