

Meditation #12: Prophetic Paradox for the Prince of Peace

What does it say?

STUDY: Isaiah 9:1-7

GOLDEN TEXT: Isaiah 9:6 and 7 = *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

What does it mean?

The extraordinary paradox of Jesus' birth—fully human and fully divine—was prophesied dramatically by Isaiah some 400 years earlier. The child also would be Mighty God. The successor on David's throne would establish an eternal kingdom with unending peace. This mysterious prophecy was fulfilled at the first Christmas.

1. How did Isaiah identify the Creator as also the Redeemer? How did he see that the Mighty God is also to be the Prince of Peace?
2. If Jesus is the Prince of Peace and the king of all creation, then are we accountable to him? What can his humble birth in Bethlehem's stable teach us about what matters to him?
3. Why is it crucial that the promised Prince of Peace is a newborn baby? Is creation good enough to receive its Creator? What does the special baby's awesome future depend upon?
4. He is "Wonderful Counselor," meaning that he is *wonderful* at the double role of a "counselor": (1) as personal counselor guiding us and (2) as legal counselor representing us to the Father. How does Jesus (1) guide us in our lives, including the care of creation? How does he (2) represent us to the Creator and to others who care for his world?

What are we going to do about it?

5. Are you focused on pleasing the "Prince of Peace"? If so, how? The powerful Hebrew word for peace (*shalom*) includes our relationships with God, other people, and creation. How does *shalom* shape your service to Jesus now?
6. How do we honor Jesus as "Mighty God"? Do we recognize and respect his power in the creation? Do we do our part as faithful citizens of his kingdom?
7. How is the Infant of Christmas also the "Everlasting Father," the source of all births? What honor and thanks should we express to him? How do we speak of him and relate to him as the Everlasting Father?

Truth To Celebrate: *Isaiah boldly prophesied that the Creator—the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father—would become a human child, and to be called also the Wonderful Counselor and the Prince of Peace, a living part of his splendid but needy creation.*

Advent-Action: *Be accountable to the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace. Conduct a do-it-yourself energy audit for your home, Church, and work. You can learn how at www.eere.energy.gov.*

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