

CONNECTION CARD

Good morning Cornerstone! It is good to be with you this morning. We are going to be continuing our sermon series for the Christmas season called 'What Child is This?'. Where we are focusing on the Passage in Isaiah 9 in the 4 roles and titles that are given in the prophecy for the coming Messiah.

Today our scripture is going to be found in Isaiah 9:6. Go ahead and turn in your Bibles if you would like to follow along with us there. If you do not have a paper bible and would like one, we have some available for you in the back. You can also follow along with us today on the app with the scripture and our sermon notes available to you there.

But before we dive in the teaching today, lets read a part of our passage this morning together which comes from Isaiah 9:6. Let's stand together out of reverence for God's word, as we proclaim the truth in this passage from the word of God.

[1] SCRIPTURE Isaiah 9:6

*"For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

INTRO

[2] Last week we started this passage in Isaiah to see the savior that God had planned to come through the nation of Israel. This is the same savior that we celebrate his birth at Christmas. I want to take you on a little journey through my curiosity with me for just a minute. Some of you may know this about me but I can be a little nerdy sometimes and I don't mean just Star Wars and Lord of the Rings, I like those things too, but I also like studying Hebrew or reading medical journals and I like numbers and survey studies. I find them super interesting, and I want to share this with you because I found this super interesting and honestly my curiosity was a little depressing this week.

[3] It started with wondering of the U.S. population what percentage of people celebrate Christmas. A study done in 2019 says that 93% of Americans claim to celebrate Christmas in December¹. Celebrating Christmas, however is not an indication of an acknowledgment of Christ birth sadly. In that same study 70% of the people in the survey said that it is a holiday that is strongly or somewhat of religious holiday. Which means that 23% of the people celebrating Christmas do not see it as a religious holiday. And the vast majority only see it as loosely connection to Christian values. So that led me to wonder about the percentage of Americans are religiously affiliated. This is where it gets depressing.

[4] In another study done surveying religious affiliation, says that 3 out of 10 Americans are religiously unaffiliated. Christianity has been in a steady decline over the last 15 years. In 2007 78% of Americans

¹ <https://news.gallup.com/poll/272357/percentage-americans-celebrate-christmas.aspx>

claimed to be affiliated with Christianity and in 2021 is reported to be only 63%². That is just people surveyed that claim to be “Christian” it does not take into account if their lives reflect Christian values that is just their claimed affiliation. That means in the US there are about 122.8 million people that claim to be unaffiliated or affiliated with a religion other than Christianity. Hold on it gets worse.

[5] Of those that claim a ‘Christian’ affiliation, only 40% say that they are protestant, and of those that are protestant affiliation, only 60% of those say that they are born again evangelical Christians. Roughly that means in the US there are 50 million people that claim to be a born again Christian. Which sounds like a lot but lets look at the percentages.

[6] By comparison the current U.S. population is roughly 332 million people³, those that claim to be ‘born-again evangelical Christians’, are only 15% percent of Americans claim to be born again evangelical Christians. Somehow in the same survey 103 million people claim to attend religious services monthly or more, 19 times the amount that claim to be born-again.

[7] I bring all of this up to point out that we have to see what we do as believers, how we live in everyday ordinary life is a mission field. Even just in our town here locally if we were to talk the national average and apply it to our little town of Auburn. Our town is a population of about 5,000 people, calculating again based on the national average only 15% of our town would claim to be born again Christians about 750 out of that 5,000.

[8] As Christians, if we truly believe this time of year is the celebration of the birth of God in flesh as the most important moment in human history, we should be devoting every waking moment of our lives to share the message. With the hope that those numbers would increase and we would see more and more people coming to the saving knowledge of Jesus.

As we are studying our passage through this series, we have to continue, not only in our understanding of who God is, but we have to also see the growing understanding of people’s need to know him as their Lord and savior.

These roles that Isaiah outlines in this passage are revolutionary to our understanding of all that Christ has done and continues to do in the life of the believer. As we are going to see today, our God is a mighty God, but how we interact with that mighty God in this life determines where we spend eternity.

My hope today as we study this passage is not that you walk away full of head knowledge about the words of Isaiah, or even a deeper understanding of Jesus, but that you will be invigorated for how deep the need is for all of the world around you to experience this Mighty God. That your desire to share him with the world will be an unquenchable fire. We have to leave her today knowing that people need Jesus, and he is calling you to be the ones to tell people about him.

BODY

The Christmas season is to celebrate the birth of Christ. This prophecy in Isaiah is about this coming Messiah. Let’s look at our passage again to see what God said through the prophet Isaiah.

² <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/12/14/about-three-in-ten-u-s-adults-are-now-religiously-unaffiliated/>

³ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045222>

[9] Isaiah 9:6

*“For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”*

The Messiah was to come as a child which points to the humanity of Christ. This would have indicated lineage. Back then someone coming as a king, would have to come from a noble bloodline. For his kingship to be honored by the people it would have to be born in that bloodline.

David, in the Jewish culture was seen as the greatest king that Israel ever had. He was in-tune with God and advocated for the people. He was revered and honored even today in the Jewish Culture. For this Messiah to come in the line of David, was an important detail. He would have come into power with the reputation and expectation of a similar reign as David.

The Messiah coming as a new king would not only follow the reputation of David, but he was to exceed it, being better king than David which was a high and lofty goal. Isaiah describes the Messiah as king with the 4 roles Wise Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

Wise Counselor we talked about last week. This new King was to be an advocate for the people to be able to give and operate in wisdom as an embodiment of grace and truth with empathy for the people.

This week we are talking about the title and role of Mighty God. This title, as we will learn today, was an implication of Divinity. The Messiah being born as a child indicated his humanity and this title of mighty God implied his divine nature.

As we talk about this, we know now being 2,000 years after Christ, we know that Jesus was the fulfillment of these things. It is important to understand how and why. This morning, I will go back and forth talking about the perspective of 1st century Jewish people and our perspective in Christ. Let's talk first about this humanity. Looking at the couple of verse before our passage it described the Messiah as King in his reign.

[10] Isaiah 9:3-5

*“You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.*

*⁴For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.*

*⁵For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.”*

Now the people of Israel reading this would have seen the type of king the Messiah, would be. Clearly from this passage it is describing a military king. They would have seen in this passage that he would conquer the enemies of Israel.

One of the biggest reasons that people rejected Jesus as Messiah is on this premise. They would have interpreted this king would come to conquer their earthly and political oppression. It would have been a political and physical deliverance as a nation and as a people. We know that Jesus didn't do that. He did not go to war with Rome. He did not politically take over the nation and deliver them from the political oppression, as they were a conquered nation in the Romans Empire.

However, Jesus did fulfill this passage. He came and conquered their greatest oppression which was a spiritual deliverance. Through his death he conquered the enemy of Israel. The one that had been their enemy from the garden, that is Satan. Jesus delivered us from the oppression of our sin. He is king and reigning in a spiritual kingdom and later, the book of revelation shows us there will be a physical kingdom in the new heaven and new earth in the new Jerusalem, which is the restored Garden of Eden.

What fueled the rejection of Christ is actually the verses after our passage where the Messiah is described as sitting on the throne of David.

[11] Isaiah 9:7

*"Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this."*

They see Jesus' lack of an earthly political take over, as him not fulfilling this passage and not taking on sitting on the throne of David. They saw it again as a physical throne. The one that is in the palace of Jerusalem. The throne that David would have sat on, a sign of him as the king over the physical nation of Israel.

What they failed to see is that the Messiah was not only supposed to meet the expectations of David, but he was to far exceed them. Jesus was and is far greater and cannot be reserved to something as simple as the throne in Jerusalem. In this section of the book of Isaiah, he describes the kingdom of the Messiah. It is not reserved for the small nation of Israel. He was to gather all the nations and transform creation itself and bring peace⁴.

Jesus was not just a man, he was God himself in flesh and was destined to be greater than just the physical throne of David. Isaiah in verse 7 isn't talking about the physical throne but he is talking about the throne of the promise that was given to David.

[12] 2 Samuel 7:16

"And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever."

⁴ Isaiah 7-12

Physical kingdoms never last forever. Looking at David's physical throne specifically. Solomon, David's son, and the next king of Israel after David, fell into idolatry and abandoned the God of this promise. From there the nation of Israel became divided into a northern kingdom and southern kingdom. In Isaiah's lifetime the nation is going to be conquered by 2 different nations and the kingship over Israel has been in shambles ever since.

So, either God lied to David and his throne was actually ever going to last forever, seeing as how it was destroyed in the following generation. Now God could have removed the promise as a judgement of Solomon's idolatry, however there is nothing in scripture to indicate that. The third and most logical understanding, is that the throne that is in the promise is not a physical one. The throne that is to last forever was always meant to be a kingdom that is beyond our world.

This is where this title of 'Mighty God' and Jesus' divinity come into play. Where the biggest criticism for Jesus not being the Messiah is in the understanding and translation of this title. As I said last week the Hebrew words that Isaiah used would have been self-explanatory. What he meant to the Israelites reading this should have been obvious because of his word choice. To gain that understanding, we have to look at the original Hebrew words that are used.

[13] This title of 'Mighty God' is the word "el gibbor'.

The word 'el' in the Hebrew is derived from the word 'elohim'. In scripture it is used to describe God, angels and supernatural beings⁵. Psalms 29:1 called on supernatural beings, 'elohim', to give glory to the Lord. The distinction between being used to describe God or just supernatural beings depends on if it is used as an adjective or a noun.

Whenever the term 'elohim' is used to describe supernatural beings, it is an adjective. We know from our high school language arts classes that an adjective is a word or phrase that names the attributes related to a noun. It modifies or describes the noun it is attached to. Examples of this would be in Psalm 36:6 which describes the 'mountain of God' being a description of the mountain. Or Psalm 82:1 that talks about the council of God, describing or modifying the entities that are God's council.

If the passage in Isaiah were to use this word 'el' as an adjective then it would not be translated as Mighty God and would be more like the Messiah being a 'strong god-like warrior'. However, that is not the case here. In other identical sentence structure as Isaiah 9 'el' is used as a noun but if followed by a qualifying noun it always refers to God himself⁶. This child that is born in the line of David was not going to be just a human king, he was to be God himself in flesh.

Which brings us to the word 'gibbor'. This is the noun that qualifies the previous noun. Of the 146 times this word is used, 126 of them are used with the word 'el' to describe God himself as mighty⁷. Daniel 11:3 is a great example, it is an identical formation as Isaiah 9.

[14] Daniel 11:3

"Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills"

⁵ Ex 15:11, 34:14

⁶ Gen 21:33; Dt 32:4; Ps 31:5, 68:19-20

⁷ Dt 10:17, Ps 24:8; Jer 20:11, 32:18, Zep 3:17)

Looking at this passage it could never be translated as anything less than a reference to God himself. Isaiah knew this title of 'el gibbor; would and should be understood in its plain meaning of 'God who is mighty'. He left no room for anything otherwise when he uses it again in Isaiah 10:21

[15] Isaiah 10:21

"A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God."

GOSPEL

Jesus was God in flesh and he made it clear that he was God multiple times. In his transfiguration, in his words, and his deeds.

[16] In his transfiguration, Jesus removed the veil of his humanity and had his full glory on display. He did this with witnesses, which was 3 of his disciples, Peter James and John. Jesus presented himself with the prophet Elijah and Moses in a glorified spectacle. This was evidence of him superseding the ministry of Moses as the leader of the people of Israel and him being greater in his ministry as prophet in the presentation of Elijah.

[17] In his ministry, Jesus claimed to be God twice. In John 8:58 and John 10:30. Both times Jesus left no room for misunderstanding. Both times He claimed to be YHWH, the God of Israel. In John 8 he said 'before Abraham was, I am' using YHWH as a state of being. His claim was that he exists in eternity and that he always was and always will be.

In John 10, he said that 'he and the father are one'. He said that He is synonymous with YHWH He is Himself, YHWH. The Jews listening to Jesus words knew exactly what he was saying. Both times when Jesus made these claims, they picked up stones in an attempt to kill him for blasphemy.

He not only claimed to be God in his transfiguration and his words, but he also did it in his deeds. In Mark 2, Jesus was teaching, and a paralyzed man is lowered through the roof of the house he was in.

[18] Mark 2:1-5

"And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ² And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. ³ And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. ⁴ And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. ⁵ And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

Jesus in that moment knew the people expected him to heal him as he was known for doing, instead he forgives the man of his sins. This was done with people and the religious leaders present.

[19] Mark 2:6-7

"Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, ⁷ "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Make note of this. They were questioning these things in their hearts. Mark is saying that they did not express these concerns or questions out loud. This was the internal dialogue they were having with

themselves. Jesus knew what is in their hearts and addresses why he has done this as opposed to simply healing the lame man.

[20] Mark 2:8-11

“And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, ‘Why do you question these things in your hearts?’⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk?’¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic—¹¹ ‘I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.’”

Jesus not only heals this man which is miraculous, but Jesus answered their questions about how he can forgive sins. The questions that they didn't even say out loud. They know that God is the only one capable of forgiving sins. Jesus says that it was more miraculous for Him to forgive sins than it is to heal him because only God can forgive sins, and since He is the Son of Man, He has the power to forgive sins.

This points back to a passage in Isaiah in the section talking about the coming king...

[21] Isaiah 12:2

*“Behold, God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid;
for the Lord God is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation.”*

God is Isaiah's salvation, Jesus could be nothing less than God in order to be our salvation as He is to Isaiah. Salvation can only come from God himself. Jesus is the Mighty God of our salvation because he is the only one qualified to do so.

[22] Matthew Henry in his bible commentary said this,

“He [Jesus] is the mighty God. As he has wisdom, so he has strength, to go through with his undertaking; he is able to save to the utmost; and such is the work of the Mediator, that no less a power than that of the mighty God could accomplish it.”⁸

Jesus possesses the wisdom as the Wonderful Counselor. He has his strength because he is Mighty God. The salvation that we have in Christ, this salvation to the utmost, is a full and complete salvation. It is because it has to be.

[23] Hebrews 7:25

“Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.”

A lesser salvation than one to the utmost, does not require a Mighty God. This salvation is full and complete. There is no hope for salvation by any other⁹ and salvation cannot be found in any other.

[24] John Owen, talking about this 'Might God' said this,

⁸ Albert Barnes et al. with Franz Delitzsch, Calvin, [“The Bible: Text of the Month,”](#) *Christianity Today* (Washington, D.C.: Christianity Today, 1956), 18.

⁹ Jon 15:5, 14:6; Rm 7:8; 1 Cor 15:17-19

“That the same person should be “the mighty God” and a “child born,” is neither conceivable nor possible, nor can be done, but by the union of the divine and human natures in the same person”¹⁰

This child that Isaiah described cannot be conceived of by human understanding. To do the things that He would. To do the things that Jesus accomplished, He would have to be this indescribable union between human nature and divinity.

APPLICATION

[25] Jesus is Mighty God

When we understand this about Jesus our need and desire to share the good news and the gospel with anyone and everyone is not just a hobby, it is not just when it is convenient, it has to be a passion and a desire of our inner most parts. Jesus came to be the mighty God that conquered the enemy that is oppressing and overtaking every person on the face of this earth.

Just thinking about the numbers, the people that are being ruled and oppressed by a being that is not their God is astounding. Those that are lost in sin and who are doomed to an eternity in hell, should make us sick to our stomachs. We can't just sit idly by and do nothing. We should be a people on fire for the good news that is the gospel.

We should be doing everything we can to drag people out of the burning building, that is the life of their sin, and into the safety of his salvation. The church should be bursting at the seams because we know how deep our need is for the salvation in Jesus, and we convey that desperation for that salvation with great passion.

[26] Romans 5:10

“For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.”

[27] That salvation that is full and complete in Christ. It is **Redemption and Life** beyond our understanding

We are redeemed back to a Mighty God. Jesus bought our redemption in his death. We who were rebels against God¹¹. We were dead in our sin¹². God sent his son to die a horrible and brutal death as an atoning sacrifice for the propitiation of our sins¹³. While we were still sinners God sent the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace to die for us¹⁴ to gather all the nations to himself and transform creation.

As a child he came to provide salvation by grace through faith, not based on anything you can or could do for him, he saved you and me¹⁵. There is a world out there that is walking around every day and has

¹⁰ Albert Barnes et al. with Franz Delitzsch, Calvin, [“The Bible: Text of the Month,”](#) *Christianity Today* (Washington, D.C.: Christianity Today, 1956), 18.

¹¹ Rm 8:7

¹² Eph 2:1

¹³ Jn 1:29, 3:16, 4:42; 1 Jn 2:2, 4:14; 1 Tim 4:10

¹⁴ Rm 5:8

¹⁵ Eph 2:8-9

no idea. This salvation is sufficient to save them too, but it is not applied to them unless they repent and believe¹⁶. Without Christ there is no way to earn salvation¹⁷.

Salvation is a point, a moment of repentance and belief, but it is also a process¹⁸. It is only completed through the work of a Mighty God¹⁹ as he reveals himself to them²⁰ and draws people to himself²¹.

That is not an out, or a way to avoid sharing the gospel. It is not an excuse to do nothing. We cannot say, I don't need to share because God is revealing himself to them and he is the one drawing people in. God may be using you to reveal himself to others. The words and invitation to others, is how he is drawing them to himself.

The process of salvation is the creation of new life in the believer that is done in the Holy Spirit²². In our new life, we both reveal God to the world and we have the ability to fight against our enemy, Satan, and the work of his armies.

[28] John Calvin said,

“For if we find in Christ nothing but the flesh and nature of man, our glorifying will be foolish and vain, and our hope will rest on an uncertain and insecure foundation; but if he shows himself to be to us God and the mighty God, we may now rely on him with safety. With good reason does he call him strong or mighty, because our contest is with the devil, death, and sin, enemies too powerful and strong, by whom we would be immediately vanquished, if the strength of Christ had not rendered us invincible.”²³

In Christ we find safety²⁴ and without him we would be vanquished and conquered by our enemy²⁵. Something that is a reality to those that are not born again through Christ into salvation even if they don't know it. They are being vanquished and they don't have a clue.

For the believer, because God is a Mighty God, and through the work of Christ, we are able to withstand against the enemy.

[29] Ephesians 6:10-20

*“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, **[30]** ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all*

¹⁶ Mk 1:15

¹⁷ Jn 14:6, 15:15; Rom 7:8; 1 Cor. 15:17-19

¹⁸ Phil 2:12-13

¹⁹ Rm 3:11; Eph 2:1; Jn 1:29, 3:16, 4:42; 1 Jn 2:2; 1 Tim 4:10

²⁰ Rm 10:14

²¹ Jn 6:44

²² Isa 64:8, Jn 17:15-18; Heb 10:10; Phil 2:5-11; Rm 8:36

²³ Albert Barnes et al. with Franz Delitzsch, Calvin, [“The Bible: Text of the Month,”](#) *Christianity Today* (Washington, D.C.: Christianity Today, 1956), 18.

²⁴ Ps 91

²⁵ Jn 15:1-5; 2 Cor 4:4

circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,¹⁹ and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.”

[31] The world out there is waging the same battle that we face against our enemy from the garden. As believers we have been equipped with the tools and the salvation needed to fight that battle. Those that are not born again fight the same battle and they are losing. They do not have the Mighty God that is their salvation or their safety. They are being decimated by the flaming arrows of Satan. They cannot withstand the onslaught of evil and they have no idea why they are losing. What is worse is that the church, the bride of Christ, is losing ground at an astonishing rate.

This is a call to action. With this Christmas season that is upon us, as Jesus said, the Harvest is plentiful but the workers are few²⁶. As you celebrate with those you are close to, the birth of your savior. The child born as Wonderful Counselor and Mighty God, that came to die to bring you redemption and new life. Do not squander this opportunity. Do not just focus internally on your own salvation.

This season is a time to share the love and work of Jesus who not only came to set you free but died for the freedom of your children, your spouse, your parents, your siblings, your neighbors and your co-workers. You are the workers, do not squander the Harvest this season that celebrates the birth of the savior of the world. Do not be satisfied or lazy when only 15% of your community and nation knows the Christ of your salvation.

Go out into the world with passion and fervor with a shoulder to the plow and tell a dying world about the God that came to save because he is wonderful and he is mighty!

PRAYER AND REFLECTION

COMMUNION

²⁶ Matt 9:37-38