



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 9:2-7

“The Messianic King: The Mighty God

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Well our subject for tonight as we continue our study of the messianic passages of the Old Testament is the “The Messianic King: The Mighty God.” And as you know, those of you who’ve been here week after week we have been studying in the prophecy of Isaiah and laying stress on the Messianic passages that are found within it and tonight we are again looking at one of the more familiar ones, Isaiah chapter 9 verse 1 through verse 7. So would you turn in your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 9 verse 1 through verse 7, and would you listen as I read these verses? In the Hebrew text, verse 1 is really part of chapter 8. In other words, in the Hebrew text, there are twenty-three verses in chapter 8 and verse 1 belongs to chapter 8.

In the version that we are reading, most of us are reading chapter 9 begins with chapter chapter 8 verse 23. The reason for this is that actually this text is something of a transitional verse and some of the editors put it with the preceding and some of the editors put it with the following chapter. Remember, chapter divisions are not inspired, and were added after the time of the prophets in order to give readers such as you and I an opportunity to read with more understanding since the thought sections would be made plainer to us. Of course just like anything, the editors disagree among themselves

over the thought at certain points, and that accounts for the difference. But we'll read verse 1 through verse 7 of our English translation.

“Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. (Now there are some differences of translation of that text, and I'm not sure that I think in some of my notes I had a notation of the way in which the New American Standard Bible for example renders that opening verse but I may have forgotten to bring it or something like that, so some of you who notice as you're looking at your text a slight difference from that which I've read, that accounts for it. The second verse begins,) the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, and increased the joy: (Now let me for some of you, who have the Authorized Version, you'll notice a negative before increased and I have omitted that and the reason I've omitted it is lodged in some technical things which you may not understand, but let me simply explain it because there may be some in the audience who would understand. In the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, there were variant readings just as there are in any ancient writing. And scribes had a tendency to make mistakes just as anybody does who copies a document in nineteen hundred and eighty-four. You don't have to copy many documents to know that it's very difficult to copy one perfectly and when the same words appear in the same general context it's easy for the eye to leave the page of the document and then as you're writing and then as you look back to pick up the copy and to pick up another occurrence of the same word that you just read and go on from there, and either copy something twice, or omit a section. And then of course, errors of the ear were made. The sound of certain things was identical and so the tendency is to read and to read with the sound in your mind, and when things sound exactly the same to write down a

different word. For example, I grade papers quite frequently and people will sometimes spell there the adverb T-H-E-R-E as if it were a pronoun, T-H-E-I-R and vice versa. Well it so happens in Hebrew, the little word preposition which means to or for him, is the same sound and the Hebrew negative, lo. And so the scribes differ at this point, the text reads Lo, that is what was written, but what was pronounced when the Hebrews themselves read it was Lo, to him or for him, in this case the nation. So that accounts for the fact that we read this) Thou has multiplied the nation and increased joy. They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the days of Midian. For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (and again, in my version, there is a comma after the word wonderful, the commentators taking these to be two different names where as probably exegetically, they should be treated as one and we should have wonderful as an adjective in the translation and translated Wonderful Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace, in other words, four names instead of five. And finally, verse 7,)of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. (And the important last sentence of that verse,)The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform it.”

One of the most famous statements that Shakespeare has written appeared in Romeo and Juliet, and it goes something like this, “What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” It’s true; there is often not much in a name. One only has to think of the names of the products that we buy when we go into

the super store to realize that the names do not really mean anything. I don't know what kind of cleansers they have in the stores at the present moment, they constantly change, but at one point, there was Cheer and then Joy. So far as I know, I never saw any house wife become cheerful from using Cheer or Joy from using Joy. And then Cold Power, Grease Relief, Miracle White, White Magic and such names only convince us that there really isn't much in a name.

Well, in the Bible, names are very significant and they are significant in other cultures as well. Many years ago, I went to Mexico for some meetings under the auspices of the Mexican Indian Mission. And John Dale, who was the head of the mission, was with me, he was an old friend, a very well educated man who gave his life for the ministry of the word of God among the Mexican Indians. He was a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary had excellent training, but nevertheless, he, like his father, gave his life for that ministry. We were talking about the Mexican Indians, and somehow or another something of their culture came up, and I remember him telling him that face was very important to an Indian, just as it is in the Orient, we know of course that face is very important. In other words, a person is really humiliated if he has to lose face. And so face is important among them. And Dr. Dale went on to say that a child is regarded as being born with no face, and what he does is build up his face through the years as his character develops and as his experiences unfold, one gains an idea of what his face really is. I asked him at that point, “Well face sounds very much like the biblical term name.” And he said, “Yes, to my mind, they are almost identical, so that a name is the revelation of a person's character.

That I think is why so often in the Bible, the names that individuals had were reflective of their character. And as you know, take a name like Isaiah you can recognize by the end of his name the word yah in it. And so his name which is related to the term for salvation, Yashah in Hebrew means to save, so Isaiah's name is a name that expresses the salvation of God and it's in his prophecy that we find probably the finest and fullest

revelation of the salvation of God in the Old Testament. And the name then represents the character. Now we often speak of name ourselves, and in our hymns you will often find that expressed, for example, “my gracious master and my God assist me to proclaim to spread through all the earth abroad the honors of Thy name.” That’s from “O for a Thousand Tongues.” So the term in the Bible is reflective of the character of an individual and interesting things are said about name. For example, a name may come and go in this very prophecy, in Isaiah chapter 30 and verse 27, the prophet says, “Behold the name of the Lord cometh from afar burning with his anger and the burden thereof is heavy. His lips are full of indignation and his tongue as a devouring fire.” So the term name is synonymous with the presence of God.

Well, I know you’re interested in what my name means, Lewis is of course very revealing of me because it means “mighty warrior” so I’m told. Well I know that’s probably convinced you that there’s nothing in a name and it would convince me too. Fortunately in our society our names do not mean too much. Well in this section, you can see from the passage that we read in verse 6 and verse 7 we have a magnificent messianic prophecy. And we have more names of our Lord Jesus is one brief section then we have probably in any other passage of the Bible. And together they tell us a tremendous amount concerning the person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Listen to them, his name is “Wonderful Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

Now remember the context that we’ve been looking at. In chapter 7 we have the prophecy of the virgin birth of the Messiah and there he is given a very significant name, Emmanuel, or as we say, Emmanuel which means, “God with us.” Remember that Judah was in a very serious situation, King Ahaz had some problems, in the north the Syrians were very anxious to attack Judah and so they made a little confederacy with the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and Pekah and Rezin determined that they were going to attack Judah. And so Ahaz, instead of leaning on the arm of the Lord, feels that it is best

for Judah to make a covenant with Assyria, and of course by so doing, that led ultimately not only to the overthrow of the Northern Kingdom, but ultimately to the overthrow of the Southern Kingdom as well. Well Isaiah was given a commission, commissioned by the Lord to go and warn Ahaz of the problem of what he was doing. And he went out according to the 7th chapter and he found Ahaz out near the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the Highway of the fullers field, he was checking on the water supply because, you must remember that Israel didn't really have much water. And Jerusalem of all places, the capital of the kingdom did not have much water either, it was just a small hill and it was cut by about three valleys and in fact there was only one spring and that was related to the Waters of Shiloh. And on the other hand, think of Assyria, why Assyria was known as the country of the two rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, and Syria had the Abana and the Pharpar rivers, but all that Israel had were a few springs, a few springs and the Jordan River. Their water situation was always desperate and if there is going to be war, there is going to be difficulty and so Isaiah is told, go out and give my message to Ahaz. So he went out, and he said unto him,

“Take heed and be quiet, fear not, neither be faint hearted for the two tails of these smoking fire brands for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria and of the son of Remaliah because (Isaiah continues) Syria, Ephraim and the son of Remaliah have taken evil council against thee saying, let us go up against Judah and vex it and let us make a breach thereon for us and set a king in the midst of it even the son of Tabeal, Thus saith the Lord GOD, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. For the head of Syria is Damascus and the head of Damascus is Rezin; and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people. And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. (And then Isaiah is given the climactic statement which he was not to forget) If ye will not believe, surely you shall not be established.”

We commented upon the fact that that is written in the Hebrew text with a lot of play on the Hebrew words, *Im lo tha amen nu, kiy lo thay amen nu*. The word amen is the word from which we get the English word amen really, it's come over into the English language through the Greek and Hebrew. And it is a word that means to believe but it has the idea of steadfastness and trust and so he is told “If you will not believe surely you shall not be established.” It's hard to translate that play on words. And then when it became evident that Ahaz was not going to respond, the Lord Said, “Ahaz, since you will not ask for a sign, I'm going to give you a sign,” and so he gave him the sign of the virgin born Messiah who would come. But it becomes evident as you read the rest of chapter 7 that judgment must come because of the unbelief of the king, and the generally poor spiritual condition of Judah and Israel at this time.

Now chapter 8 follows and in chapter 8 the prophet continues his ministry to the nation saying to them in effect, since you are not responding to the message of the Lord God, departing from him, not returning to him it is necessary that judgment come. And I think that there are some very interesting things that are said. For example in verse 6 of chapter 8 he says, “For as much as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloh that go softly.” Now Shiloh was the spring, the only spring that Jerusalem had inside the city, and so they were rejecting and despising the waters of Shiloh and attracted to the Assyrian Tigris and Euphrates and the Syrian Abana and Pharpar and fearful of those other things. Then the prophet is told to tell them, “Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks” In other words, in a figurative way he says, since you will not lean upon me and trust me and trust what you have, then and you want to lean upon the king of Assyria with all the water that he has and even the Syrians with the Abana and Pharpar, then in figurative language he says, they're going to come down, the Assyrians are going to come down, and they're going to overflow and you're going to be destroyed. And with Judah he says the water is to come,

8th verse of the 8th chapter, “he shall pass through Judah, he shall overflow, he shall go over he shall reach even to the neck and the stretching out of the wings shall fill the breadth of the land, O Emmanuel. In other words, the whole of Judah shall come under siege and the only thing left will be Jerusalem. And we commented upon the fact that in that verse, the 8th verse, he addresses the owner of the land as, “oh Emmanuel,” the term that is used of the messianic king.

Now the rest of the chapter is a chapter that details the coming destruction of Israel and Judah. And then in the 9th chapter, he comments upon the fact that there is however a better day ultimately coming. He passes from the sarcasm of chapter 8 and the pity of chapter 8 and now in chapter 9 verse 1 to a hope of an ultimate victory and then the triumph is described in verse 2 through verse 5, the mutilated nation is to ultimately become a multiplied one. Now the announcement of it is given in verse 1 and verse 2. Notice verse 2 again, “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.” In other words, he points to the fact that there is a time coming even though the immediate future is very black indeed, when a light will shine upon Galilee of the nations.

Now if you remember the New Testament, you remember that the Gospel of Matthew in the 4th chapter describes the beginning of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and this specific passage is used by the gospel writer, the evangelist to lay stress upon the fact that in the coming of the ministry of the Lord Jesus, there has come the light that Isaiah promised hundreds of years ago.

It’s almost as if a prophet was having an experience very much like Mr. Spurgeon describes in one of his writings. He said that, one night in the midst of a storm by the side of a sea shore he just suddenly got the feeling that he didn’t want to stay in the house, he wanted to go out and see that storm. He was on the sea shore at the time and so in England he walked out of his house, he walked down to the sea shore and he said, “I looked out and I saw the lightning flashing and the thunder crashing about me and

everything was black and swirling we're in the midst of the storm but way out in the distance over the water there was a light shining on the water which came from the moon” which was off in a distance and hidden from him by the clouds that were in the midst of the storm. And his thoughts he said went to this particular prophecy, the prophet looking out seeing a great struggle in the future, great catastrophe, great battles, but ultimately in the prophecy of the Emmanuel who is to come like the light of the moon over Galilee of the nations.

Now you'll notice too, that in the 4th verse this victory that is described is described in the language of Gideon's conflict and his victory because in the 4th verse we read from “for thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.” Now your mind goes back, you know to understand the prophets, you have to understand the Bible, their language is the language of Scripture. And so he describes this future coming of the messianic king and his victory in the language of Old Testament events. And what he goes back to is the triumph that Israel experienced in the days of Gideon the judge. How he took the three hundred and with the three hundred overcame the thirty-two thousand, well really more than that, a hundred and seventy thousand I believe of the Midianites. It was a magnificent victory, a supernatural victory by the power of God. And so in the future, Isaiah says, when the time comes for God to reverse things and fulfill his promises that he has made to the nation, he will do it like he did when Gideon overcame the Midianites with the three hundred who would not get down upon their knees to drink out of the brook, but kept their eyes upon the enemies signifying they wanted to fight and were ready to fight and sipped of the water.

Now having said that, he describes the battle in the 5th verse, and then in verse 6 and 7 he explains how this restoration of the authority of the nation is going to come to pass. He describes the coming governor in the opening clauses of verse 6, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder.”

Now notice that little for that begins verse 6, because this is the key to the victory that he's just described. So that Israel is going to have its victory because of the ministry of this child and this son. And there can be little doubt about what our prophet is talking because in chapter 7 and verse 14, he has said with reference to the virgin, the Lord himself Ahaz is going to give you a sign “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel .” There's little doubt that the son who is to be born to the virgin is the son of whom Isaiah speaks in chapter 9, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.” And he goes on to say that the Davidic son is to rest upon his shoulder, notice the 7th verse, “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom,” so the Lord Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of this prophecy, he is the son of David, he's the virgin born son and this is a victory that is wrought by virtue of what he has done.

Now let's look carefully at these words. Did you notice that in the 9th verse and in that clause it says, “For unto us a child is born.” Now that is a reference to the human nature of our Lord. Our Lord was a divine person who possessed from a point in time, his conception, a human nature. He was ultimately born as we are born and he possessed a complete and full human nature apart from sin. So a perfect human nature is our Lord's. He is the child who is born. I've often commented upon the fact in the teaching of the New Testament and particularly in the gospels when our Lord is talking about his origin, his characteristic words are, “I have come” and “I was sent.” Only once does he ever say that he was born. And he says he was born to Pilate and then quickly adds that he came. It's almost as if to say, “You wouldn't understand it Pilate if I say I was born, but in the language of Scripture, I came.” And we don't deny as Christians that our Lord had a perfect human nature. He has to have a perfect human nature in order to be our substitute and Savior. He must be able to take our place. And so he having a perfect human nature is a legitimate sacrifice, but a perfect human being could not save a

multitude of the people of God. He must also be a divine person so that his sacrifice has infinite value; he must be an infinite being.

Now the Scriptures reveal that the Lord Jesus is the divine Son that he existed before he took to himself the human nature. And notice how these clauses perfectly fit that, he says, “For unto us a child is born.” That is our Lord’s taking to himself a human nature. But then he says, “Unto us a son is given.” So you can see that the divine side of our Lord is preserved by this statement, “A son is given.” The implications which are spelled out in detail in the New Testament are that this Son who is given exists by the side of the Father, and we know the Scriptures teach that. So in the expression, “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,” we have the two natures of our Lord and the one divine personality. You see even in the Old Testament the words of Scripture are carefully chosen. We do not read, “Unto us a child is given, unto us a son is born.” That would not make sense. But the prophet is given precision language to express the truth concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now isn’t it striking that this person who is born of a virgin and who is called here a child and a son, is the person upon whom shall rest the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even forever. In other words the eternal throne of David and the government of this eternal kingdom rests upon the shoulders of a child, a son. Now we read in the New Testament in the climactic battles of the Book of Revelation that the Lamb fights against the beast and the beast of course is the figure, the antichrist, the person who rules over the kingdoms of the earth. But in the language of John and the visions that he sees, he sees a lamb. Now of course in another passage, he sees our Lord as a Lion of the tribe of Judah, but he also sees him as a lamb. And in that 17th chapter of the Book of Revelation, the Lamb fights the beast who is always by the way in the Book of Revelation described as a wild beast. The Greek term therion is a term that refers to a wild beast, not a beast who chews cud out on the side of the hill, but a wild beast. And the Lamb overcomes the wild

beast, because he is of course the Lamb of God. So the government rests upon the shoulders of the child, but this child is the eternal Son of God. No wonder that he has the power, for he has infinite power, omnipotence to order this kingdom from henceforth and forever. Now if you have any doubt that that is what is going to come to pass, those last words of verse seven spell it out in detail, “The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” So it’s going to be done because it is the intent of the sovereign God to accomplish it.

Now I want to come back for the remainder of our time and talk about these names that are given to this child and to this son. And the first of them is the name, Wonderful Counselor. Now I don’t have time to argue why this passage probably is to be understood as teaching that there are four names for the Messiah given here rather than five. This has to do with a rather technical treatment of the Hebrew text involving the accentuation of the Hebrew text and the order of the words and things like that. If you are interested, you can go to commentaries such as Edward J. Young’s commentary on the New International Commentary series, a very fine commentary by an orthodox scholar in which he argues the point in some detail and I think Professor Young is right. So we’re going to treat the first name as Wonderful Counselor, not simply wonderful, and not simply counselor but Wonderful Counselor. Now of course he is wonderful because he is wonderful in all of his ministry. He is wonderful in the past, after all, as our text suggests, he has eternal existence, no wonder he is the wonderful counselor when he has eternal existence. So he has eternal existence. He is wonderful in the past so far as we are concerned because he is also the incarnate Son of God. Just think, when Mary brought forth her firstborn son, the eternal was an infant; the infant was the infinite Son. Think of it. No wonder he is wonderful, no wonder he is given the name Wonderful Counselor. Incidentally the word wonderful, *pele’* which is used here is a word that is very frequently associated with the miraculous. When for example, Gideon was given the vision of the angel of the Lord and he performed miraculously and went to Heaven, Gideon said that

he had seen the Lord and therefore thought he was going to lose his life. That's the term that is used, wonderful, says his name is Wonderful. So he's wonderful in the past, he is the eternal who exists in time.

He became an infant and he is wonderful even more so because of what he accomplished in his death, because in his death he was able to bring into peace the judgment and holiness of God and the mercy of God. Only in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ can there be peace between these attributes of the Lord God. And so the Lord Jesus dying under the judgment of God satisfies the justice and holiness of God bears the penalty for the people of God and at the same time by being provided by the Father for the people of God, he satisfies the love and mercy of God. So the love of God and the mercy of God join together with the holiness of God and the justice of God in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when he cried out, “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” he was as the eternal sacrifice, the infinite sacrifice, bearing the judgment of God and in a moment he is able to say, “It is finished.” And so mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other in the death of Jesus Christ. It is the magnificent wisdom of God by which he satisfies his own requirements in the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ. No wonder he's called wonderful. He's wonderful also in his resurrection. For being the Son of God and the one who perfectly did the will of the Father, it was not possible, Peter said, that he should beholden of death.

And he's not only wonderful because of his past ministry; he's wonderful in the present as well. All of the saints of God can tell you when they rely upon him in their troubles and experiences and in the tragedies of life; they discover that the Lord Jesus is sufficient for them in them.

And of course he is wonderful in the future, and we look forward to the day when he shall come again. And we look forward also to the day when he will just as he did with Gideon, accomplish his great victory and men shall be forced to say and we shall

look forward to saying, “The kingdoms of the world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ and he shall reign forever and ever.

Now he’s called Wonderful Counselor, and we don’t want to pass by that word counselor. The reason for this is that he sits in the cabinet council. And in the affairs of the Lord God, Jesus Christ has his part. And in the eternal councils, when the Father and the Son and the Spirit planned the plan of redemption, of which we are a part, it was the Son of God who was there. And so in that mystic conclave of ages past, the Lord Jesus was there. He was a wonderful counselor for the saints of God in the Old Testament too. Think of Jacob who had all of those experiences and who said, “All these things are against me,” finally is forced by the experiences of life that he was the Lord God who had led him all the days of his life. I like Jacob for that reason because so often we think in the midst of our experiences that everything seems to be against us, but then as he comes to the end of his life, he looks back and says, “Ah, I can see it now, the hand of God was with me and he has shepherded me all the days of my life.”

He’s the marvelous counselor who has worked out this plan of salvation how God can be just and the justifier of the ungodly. He has worked out this marvelous plan of divine election and also divine providence. The Greek translation of the Old Testament at this particular point veers a little bit from the sense of the Hebrew and calls him the angel of the great council. It may be translated an angel or a messenger of great counsel, or it may be of the great council. Both of these ideas are true, of course he is a messenger of great counsel, the wisdom of God, but he is also part and parcel of the great council by which the affairs of this universe have been determined. He is the Wonderful Counselor because he reveals God’s will for us through the Holy Spirit. He is our counselor, and through the Holy Spirit he teaches us today. That’s what he said to the apostles; he said, “it is expedient for you that I go away, if I do not go away, the Holy Spirit would not come to each of you, but since I’m going away he is going to come and he will guide you

in all truth.” And so the Spirit has come to guide us in all truth. What a magnificent thing it is to have a Wonderful Counselor who is eternal.

You know as a young Christian man I used to love to get in the presence of some of the older saints and Bible teachers and preachers and listen to their counsel because it was of great benefit to me. I was very immature in the things of the Lord. Some people think I still am. But I was more immature then, if you think I’m immature now, well then I was more immature in those days, and it was always good to be in the presence of a person who was old. It’s nice to be in the presence of an old man. You think of an old man well you can think of an individual who may be, well thirty-five is middle aged, so anything beyond thirty-five is going on to the end of life you know. And there are things that are older than men, like a tree. If you could talk to a tree, you could learn a great deal, because trees have been here longer than we have. Trees could tell us some interesting stories if they could talk. And actually, the soil is older than the trees probably, because trees do die, but the soil is still there.

Wouldn’t it be nice if you could talk to the soil and they could tell you the soil could tell you the things that the soil has experienced? Go up in Virginia for example, and talk to the soil there and the soil could tell you about George Washington and some of the other men of that day. And then of course, the rock underneath the soil, that could tell you quite a bit also. And then think of the Heavens, for the Heavens have been there from the time of the creation, and the angelic hosts. But not any of these things can compare with the adage of our counselor, our Wonderful Counselor; he is the infinite eternal Son of God. Why shouldn’t we go to him in the experiences of life? Why shouldn’t we go to him with his word before us, and ask him to give us direction in the affairs of life?

Why did old Ahaz, the king of no faith, prefer the Assyrians to the Lord God? That’s one of the mysteries of humanity only solved by the Calvinists who teach us that man is utterly depraved. It’s one of those beautiful illustrations of what we are by nature.

Wonderful Counselor, well, the world needs a counselor. The trouble with the world and the trouble with all of us as part of the world is that we listened to counseling at one time in time past. There was a counselor who came along, a very religious person, he came along to Eve in the Garden of Eden and he said, “Let’s have a little seminar Eve, and let’s have a little seminar on God, and furthermore Eve, I won’t charge you a fee, like later on they’ll be charging for seminars. We’ll just have a little seminar between the two of us on God.” And so he said, “Yea hath God said you shall not eat of every tree which is in the garden?” Well you know the story; man fell by counsel, the counsel of Satan, the counsel of an angelic being, the counsel of the head of the angelic hosts at one time. How wonderful to have this Wonderful Counselor, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well not only that, my you could talk forever on these things couldn’t you? I don’t know whether you could listen forever but I could talk forever. Now the next one, Mighty God, the Mighty God. Well, there are people who do not like to think that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Mighty God, they like to think of him as just a man, perhaps a little better than most of us men, some have rendered this by the way, “A God of a hero.” But the term El which is found here is a term in the Book of Isaiah that is never used of anyone but God. And so this expression is an expression that means the Mighty God.

Unitarians of course when they say that Jesus Christ is not God, and when they deny the trinity, they actually deny the Christian faith. They like to be called the Unitarian Church, because they like to lean on Christianity, they’re parasitical. All those organizations like the Mormons and the Unitarians and others that affirm their Christianity are really parasites; they would never exist were it not for the Christian faith. And so they like to use terms that are similar to the Christian faith and in fact they will even say to Christians, “We’re broadminded, you’re narrow minded, why should you not receive us? We are Christians.” Of course talking to me, “Why should you not receive us? As a matter of fact Dr. Johnson the majority of the professing Christians today receive us as Christians, why don’t you? Because you’re narrow minded, because you’re arrogant.” No,

it's something more fundamental than that. I don't deny that I may appear to be arrogant and I do not deny that I may have some arrogance, and I consider it to be a sin and I would like to be free of it. I do not feel like John Kenneth Galbraith who said that “Modesty is a vastly overrated virtue.” I do not think that that is true. I think a person should be modest, but there is something more serious here which people have never thought about because you see I believe the Bible teaches that Jesus Christ was God, and furthermore, I worship the Lord Jesus Christ I worship the Father, I worship the Spirit, I worship the Son, now if I am worshipping an individual who is not God, as he says he is God, then I am an idolater. And if I am an idolater, then I have committed one of the worst sins, the sin that offends the Lord God in Heaven. When I say that Jesus Christ is God and when someone says he is not God, this is a serious, divisive thing. It's not arrogance, it's truth that is at stake.

And furthermore, not only am I an idolater, guilty of the worst affront against God for he said in the Ten Commandments, “Thou shall have no other gods before me.” And if I worship Jesus Christ, I've broken the first and foremost of the commandments, that's why it's serious. And then in addition, if Jesus Christ said he was God, and the New Testament plainly supports that, if he said he was God and if the apostles affirm that he was God and he was not God, then he is a liar. And in fact, it would be better to worship Mohammad, who at least didn't claim to be God then to worship Christ. So you can see why it's a serious matter and therefore when the Unitarians charge us with affirming that Jesus Christ is God and rejecting them, it's a much more serious thing than they ever thought about. And Jesus Christ, furthermore, is not only not worthy of our worship, then he richly deserved his death that he died if he was not what he said that he was. Of course he proved in his death and resurrection that what he said was the truth of God and the Father honored him, raising him from the dead. So you see, it's a serious matter, it's not a question of arrogance, it's not a question of narrow mindedness it's a simple question of truth, truth. Now I feel for the Mormons, and I feel for the Unitarians, I wish

that they would see the truth, and I would certainly pray for them as for all lost men that they see the truth and respond to the gospel. But we will not for one moment furl our flags.

Well he's called the Everlasting Father, the Father of eternity literally. The infant is the infinite; the little child is the parent of eternity. In the ancient east, when an individual was known for something in a special way he was called for example the father of wisdom. That meant that he was characterized by the greatest of wisdom and in fact was the greatest in wisdom, the father of wisdom. I guess you could call Abner Doubleday the father of baseball that is he is the source of it all. Well our Lord is called the Father of eternity, marks him out as the infinite God, the parent of eternity. And if he's the parent of eternity he is well able to confer eternal life, "I give unto them eternal life." The eternal God, "I give unto them eternal life and they shall by no means ever perish." Think of that, who can give eternal life but the one who has eternal life and infinite power. He says in the New Testament he never loses his children. He gives them life and he'll raise them up in the last day, every one of them. If you've believed in Christ, you'll be there, and I'll see you and you'll see me because he'll not lose a single one of them.

And finally of course he's called the Prince of Peace, and I can I think not say much about this because that's our next study in Isaiah chapter 11 where we read the next chapter in the story of the book of Emmanuel. In chapter 11 and verse 1 we read, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse and a branch shall grow out of his roots." And then our Lord's kingly ministry is described there. Well our Lord has a righteous reign, it's perpetual, it is also progressive for it will be eternal. And the prophet concludes this particular aspect of the prophecy by that magnificently comforting and assuring statement "The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." The principdom of the Prince of Peace is guaranteed by the Lord.

What’s in a name then? Well a lot is in some names, and in these names there is a lot. There is enough to break the charms of earth, to loose our wings to fly upwards to the eternal God to be forever joyous in the truth of the word of God, enough to make us worship the Lord Jesus Christ as my gracious master and my God. Well the counsel of this Wonderful counselor is for the tried, for the young, for the backsliding and above all, it’s for the sinner, and he himself in one of his greatest utterances near a climactic time in his ministry as recorded by the first evangelist at the end of his 11th chapter says, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

Now Sunday night, one of the men who stood up at our meeting said, and there is a sense in which this is true and I’m not trying to be overly critical, but quoted another very good friend of mind who I greatly respect as saying, something like all of the decisions in life or the important decisions in life are very hard. There flashed into my mind the statement of the Lord Jesus, “My yoke is easy, my burden is light.” The decisions of life that are hard are hard because we’re not leaning on him. But the life that Christ gives is this life, “My yoke is easy, my burden is light.” May God help us to come to him, take his yoke upon us and we’ll find that life, we’ll have our trials and our struggles and our difficulties and if we look at them we can say they’re tough and hard but if we will take a lesson from King Ahaz, king no faith, and rest our burdens upon the Lord, we’ll find he’ll take us through the deepest experiences of life and we’ll be able to say, “Yes Lord you’re right, your yoke is easy and your burden is light.” May God help us to hear him and respond. Let’s close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee for these marvelous prophecies from the Prophet Isaiah.

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[AUDIO ENDS ABRUPTLY]