

## December 24

**Scriptures:** Read Isaiah 9:1-7 (Special Christmas Reading)

**Key Verse:** “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.” (Isaiah 9:6)

### Overview

The Lord Jesus is not only the central figure in the New Testament, but He is also central in the Old Testament. Isaiah 9 begins with a beautiful Messianic prophecy about the advent of our Lord Jesus, as well as His ministry, reign, deity and sovereignty. How amazing it is that the prophet Isaiah could give so many specific predictions nearly seven hundred years before the advent of the Messiah Jesus! His prophecies tell us so much about Jesus that if they do not point one to Jesus as the Messiah, then that one is truly spiritually blind.

The plan of God before the foundation of the world was to send His Son as a child upon the earth, so that through His sacrificial death we might be redeemed by the price He paid in shedding His own blood. What a magnificent plan God had for that little baby born in Bethlehem! What wonderful love God has for us! He sent Jesus into a land darkened with sin and hopelessness, just as were our own souls before Jesus came and shone His light upon us (2 Cor. 4:6).

The miracle of Christmas began in the darkest part of Israel, the Galilee region, where the virgin Mary miraculously conceived Jesus. That most gracious visitation and manifestation of God took place in the tribal territory of Zebulun and Naphtali. This territory was where the first Israelite tribes were oppressed and taken into the Assyrian Captivity. However, in the mercy of God, they were the first to witness the Light of the world, for it was in Galilee that Jesus grew and began His public ministry (v.1,2).

Isaiah describes the wonderful joy, peace, and deliverance that Jesus’ ministry would bring to the world (v. 3-5), but all these joys would not have happened had it not been for the incarnation of Jesus Christ, wherein deity and humanity met in perfect union. He was born as a human child: “For unto us a Child is born”, but He was sent to us from God as a divine gift: “Unto us a Son is given”. He is truly “the Son of the Highest” (Luke 1:32).

The significance of this unique Gift-Child is further attested to by His four descriptive names.

He will be called “Wonderful Counselor”, which may be rendered “a wonder of a Counselor”. The Hebrew concept of “wonder” refers to that which is miraculously accomplished by God. The term “counselor” often denotes a wise king (cf. Micah 4:9). The Son of God was to come as the King through the direct intervention of the Father. As a “Counselor”, Jesus reveals to us the will of the Father, leads us to the Father (cf. John 14:6-11), and counsels us in the way of eternal life.

The promised Child/Messiah is also given names that clearly indicate His deity.

“Mighty God” signifies that He is the all-powerful, undefeated and eternal Victor. “Everlasting Father” is literally rendered “the Father of eternity”, for the Messiah Jesus, as one with the Father,

is not only the Author but also the Giver of eternal life to the redeemed. It is hard for our limited minds to fathom how the meek, little, helpless baby, born naturally in a humble stable, could have had all these inherent attributes. This is the mystery of the incarnation.

Lastly, the final title given to the Messiah is “Prince of Peace”. Jesus brings true peace into the hearts of all those who believe in Him. One day He will bring universal peace when He returns as a mighty, conquering King to establish His righteous reign on the throne of David forever (v. 7). Before we can enjoy this ultimate peace, however, we must first have peace with God in our souls. So this Christmas season, let the “Prince of Peace” reign in your heart!

### **Prayer**

Loving Father, You made ‘Your great love known to us in the sending of Your Son Jesus. Teach us to reflect Your love in all we say and do, that we may be pleasing children to You, bringing honour and glory to the name of Jesus.