



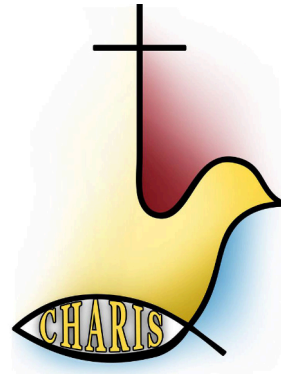
Prepare Your Heart for Christmas



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*For a child will be born for us, a
son will be given to us, and the
government will be on his
shoulders. He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty
God, Eternal Father, Prince of
Peace*

Isaiah 9:6



*For a child will be
born for us*

Day 1

For a child will be born for us

The birth of a child is such a wonderful moment in the life of any parent. The pain and labor are quickly forgotten when the mother holds her child for the first time. And no doubt, this would have been Mary's feelings as she held baby Jesus. This was an important moment not only for Mary, but for the entire world because this child was born for us, this child was given for us.

While for the original audience "us" meant the Kingdom of Judah, for us and for now we understand it as "us" - those who believe in God the Son's atoning sacrifice on the cross". John 3:16 tells us that that God loved us in this way: "He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." This child is God's way of showing His love for us, He is the Savior born for us (Luke 2:11), He is our Immanuel - God with us (Isaiah 7:14) and it is through Him that we can have everlasting life.



Prayer

We thank you, God, that in your sovereignty You chose the most fragile and vulnerable being, a baby, to bring the most wonderful and most powerful news for us: salvation in Jesus Christ. We thank you, Jesus, that You lowered Yourself and chose to dwell with us so that we may know You, believe in You and be reconciled with God the Father. We pray that we may cherish Your gift to us this Christmas and hold fast to our confession of faith: Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen!

Day 2

A son will be given to us

What is the most precious gift you've ever made? What is the gift in which you've invested the most of your time, money, resources, energy? In this time of the year, once again, we are searching to buy gifts for our loved ones: something that they need, that brings them joy, that makes them remember us.

In all this rush, let us not forget that for Christmas, humanity received the most valuable gift, Christ, the Son of God Himself. In a humble manger starts the story of this precious gift crossing continents and transcending time: Messiah, the Promised, made human, chooses to bear our sin at the cross so that we can be called sons of God. The Son of God took on a bodily form and gifts us with what we need most – salvation, gives us the opportunity to taste the joy of heaven, eternal life and reminds us that we received the Spirit of Adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father!” (Romans 8:14-17).



Prayer

Our Father in Heaven, thank you for giving us eternal life through your Son. Thank you for giving us the honor to be called your sons and daughters. Prepare our hearts this Christmas to receive this valuable gift, celebrate your coming more than anything else, looking at you, our God, from Whom we received abundant life. Amen!



*A son will be
given to us*

Day 3

And the government will be on his shoulders



It is the most extraordinary news that Isaiah utters in his prophecy about the Son of God. The baby born is not just anyone, He is the Lord. Peter says about Him: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know with certainty that God has made this Jesus [...] both Lord and Messiah.” (Acts 2:36). The angel told Mary that: “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end.” (Luke 1:32-33). His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). His kingdom is everlasting (Daniel 4:3). Christ - The Lord came into our world to make us humans part of His Kingdom (Hebrews 12:28). He came to place the Kingdom of God in us (Luke 17:21).

As King, He has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:16). Paul says about Him: “For this reason God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow – in heaven and on earth and under the earth – and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11). In this context, we are called to rest on His shoulder, to submit to Him in all areas of life, to sanctify Him in our hearts as Lord, to serve Him faithfully, and to value (at Christmas) the true meaning of His Kingdom (Romans 14:17).



*And the government
will be on his*

Prayer

Lord, Father, we thank You for making Christ the Lord of Your kingdom. We are grateful to You for making Him our Savior and Lord. Help us to be faithful to Him every day. Help us to give Him the control over our lives so that He may reign with authority on the throne of our hearts. Amen!

Day 4

He will be named: Wonderful Counselor

When a family is expecting a child, one of the most important concerns is how to name him. Parents usually name their child for what they would like them to be in the future. The name one bears is important. God himself calls each of us by name. When Isaiah brings the news that a child will be born who will be the Messiah, he utters his name. They will call him “Wonderful”. A name that fits Jesus Christ perfectly. Wonderful God - is the name that crosses eternity past, present and future. Wonderful Son of Man - a name out of the ordinary in appearance, qualities, beauty, character, supernatural attributes and which will definitively mark the world through His work. Wonderful through: His earthly life, way of living, teaching, ministry, death, resurrection, and glorious return. About Him, the psalmist states: “Lord, our Lord, how magnificent is your name throughout the earth! You have covered the heavens with your majesty” (Psalm 8:1).

They will call him “Counselor”. He is the Counselor who with His wisdom participated in the act of creation (John 1:3), in the establishment of divine providence (Colossians 1:17), and the work of saving grace (Ephesians 2:8,9; Hebrews 6:17,18) for the fallen man. He is the Counselor who makes God's plan known to us (Psalm 25:14). Jesus is our faithful Counselor (2 Thessalonians 3:3), cordial (Proverbs 27:9), who cares about our problems (Psalm 55:22) and who expects us to turn to Him in any situation (Matthew 11:28-30). In anticipation of the celebration of the Savior's birth: “Give thanks to the Lord; proclaim his name! Make his works known among the peoples. Declare that his name is exalted” (Isaiah 12:4).



Prayer

Lord Jesus, how wonderful is Your Name and how wonderful are Your works. Our hearts bow with gratitude and thanksgiving before You. Thank you for coming into our world to take us to Your Glory. We bless you and thank you that day by day you guide our steps and guide us on how to live our lives while waiting for Your return. Amen!



*He will be named:
Wonderful*

Day 5

He will be named: Mighty God



In Isaiah 9:6, the Holy Scripture tells us: “For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace”. Let us briefly discuss the concept of “Mighty God” starting from the etymology of the word “mighty” which is a translation of the Hebrew word “gibbor” which is defined as “strength, power, hero, warrior”. Isaiah 9:6 thus tells us that Jesus is El Gibbor: the strong God, the God of power, our hero and warrior God.

Do you need power in your life? Jesus is El Gibbor - Mighty God and what we need is to trust Him! Therefore, having a strong God, let us not forget that when times are hard for us, we can call on Him, we can ask Him for help, we can seek Him, we can knock on Heaven's gate for Him and He, being faithful, will come to our aid. Jesus Christ was born here on earth to be the lowest of the low, to be the servant of servants, because He loved us and wanted to give us an example of how we should serve others. But make no mistake: Jesus Christ is the Mighty and Almighty God, He is our Hero God, He is our Warrior God.



*He will be named:
Mighty God*

Prayer

Lord, our Strong and Almighty God, we thank You so much because we can rely on You whenever we need help, and we can call you Father. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for coming into this world, living a humble life and showing Your love till death on a cross. We thank You, Holy Spirit, that You remind us every year that a Savior has been born to us and that whoever believes in Him and receives Him in his heart will never perish, but will have eternal life. We want this Christmas to proclaim to the world about You and to tell You, with all our hearts, that we love You and are waiting for You to come back for us as You promised. To You be all glory, honor, and praise forever and ever! In the Name of the Lord Jesus, we pray. Amen!

Day 6

He will be named: Eternal Father

When we hear “Eternal Father”, we would be excused if we wondered if this means God the Father instead of God the Son – Jesus. But in this text, Isaiah is not attempting to explain the trinity, but rather the nature of the Messiah. And we are given two primary attributes: (1) Eternal and (2) Father.

This "child" is eternal or everlasting. The unending nature of this Son so far in Scripture has only been identified with the LORD God. Isaiah 9:7 (English Standard Bible) says: “Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom...” This child will be eternal like God and yet be of the genealogy of David.

This "child" is also called “Father.” In the historical context of Isaiah, Father is used to describe a good, kind protector (see Isaiah 22:20-21). This benevolent ruler is God’s ideal for a king. Furthermore, “Father” is also used of God Himself (Isaiah 63:16.) Once again, this child has a description given of both God and David. Like God, He will compassionately protect Israel and, like David, He will be her king.

In just two words, “Eternal Father,” we see both the divine and human in one everlasting King of Kings—Jesus Christ.



Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your kindness and provision of our perfect Savior. As the author of Hebrews says, Jesus remains forever and will save us completely since He always lives to intercede for us (Hebrews 7:24-25). We have all gone our own way into despair and anxiety, but you provide a “Father” to us who comforts us in our affliction and will deliver us fully in the age to come. This Christmas, we thank you for our “Eternal Father” in Christ Jesus. Amen!



*He will be named:
Eternal Father*



Day 7

He will be named: Prince of Peace

The title “Prince of Peace” communicates the type of reign this child will bring. Both earlier in Isaiah (2:2-4) and after (11:1-9), there is a communication of the “latter days” - the time of God’s Messiah. He will judge the nations and bring an everlasting peace where weapons are no more and even nature itself is made peaceful.

While it is true that this Messiah will bring about earthly peace, it is also imperative that we recognize that this child will bring about peace with God. Of this child, Isaiah 11:2 says, “The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him...” By this child’s life as God’s Servant, He will bring us peace with God (Isaiah 53:5).

These prophecies are fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Jesus was born in Bethlehem to the virgin Mary. He was fully God yet fully man. He lived a perfect, sinless life. He performed many miracles. But more than this, Jesus dealt with our biggest disruption to true peace – our sin which separates us from a perfect, holy God. Colossians 2:12-14 says: “...[God] made you alive with [Jesus] and forgave us all our trespasses...” and Romans 5:1-2 “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...”. These verses testify to the saving work that this “child” accomplished on our behalf to bring us to an everlasting peace with God.



Prayer

Lord God, to know Jesus as King and Savior is to truly know peace. We thank You that this Christmas we have hope for peace. We have hope in God for wars to cease, for selfishness to die, and for a life full of true peace that only You can bring. We thank You that You forgive us of our sins through Jesus’ sacrifice of atonement on our behalf. We thank You for Your Holy Spirit who empowers every follower of Jesus to forgive others and be messengers of peace. This Christmas, help us to remember and celebrate our Savior King Jesus who brings true and lasting peace. Amen!

*He will be named:
Prince of Peace*