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## THE PROPHECY

“ The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.

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, ETERNAL FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

# The Coming King

The passage, Isaiah 9:2, 6-7, is the foundational Scripture for this message entitled, “...And His Name Will Be Called...”. This passage is actually a messianic prophecy about the coming of a child, a son, one from the lineage of David, who would reign as a King; but One Who would reign over, not only the entire earth, but also the heavens; One Who would reign forever, and One Who would reign, O, so very differently than any other king in human history. His would be a reign of true justice, righteousness, and peace.

There are some things about the coming of this King that are marvelously unique, even miraculously unique, yet appropriately unique: He would be born to a teenage virgin. This is announced about 740 years before it happens. And something which may be more difficult for us to appreciate than the people in that region at that time: This King would be born in a stable in Bethlehem<sup>1</sup>, and grow up in the tiny, obscure village of Nazareth.<sup>2</sup>

But, probably the best way to explain why this King is so unique and different, is that He wasn't arising from the ranks of humanity, being promoted to the throne through economic and political power; He was Divine, of heavenly origin - coming to exercise His lordship on the earth – a

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<sup>1</sup> Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:2

<sup>2</sup> John 1:46

lordship that had always been His - “from before the foundation of the world”.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Matthew 13:35, 25:34, John 17:24, Hebrews 4:3, I Peter 1:20

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“... And His Name Will Be Called ....”

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# A People

## ... who are not unlike ourselves

But our main focus in this message will be the names that Isaiah has used to describe this King. And the key to understanding these names is the historical context of the people he is speaking to. Basically, he was telling these people that this coming King was the only One Who had solutions to the situations in which they found themselves. So, we will look at these names – each one a combination of an adjective and a noun – and interpret them in the context of these people, who are not unlike ourselves.

Let's set the scene, that is, let's look at the historical context:

- ❖ After the death of King Solomon, the Hebrews were divided into two kingdoms – the northern kingdom known as Israel and the southern kingdom known as Judah.<sup>4</sup>
- ❖ Uzziah, a godly king, had just died. It was a time of turmoil, and God's peace was taken from the Hebrews.
- ❖ Ahaz, the new king in Judah, is actually the one this prophecy was spoken to. He was not a good king and Judah was in a mess, physically and spiritually.
- ❖ The Assyrians were threatening to invade and conquer both Judah and Israel.

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<sup>4</sup> For a history of why and how the Hebrew nation became divided, one can begin reading in I Kings 12 or II Chronicles 10.

- ❖ Israel and Syria, being threatened by Assyria, formed a coalition, and asked Judah to also align with them.
- ❖ Yet at the same time, Israel and Syria were conspiring to take over Judah.
- ❖ What would be a good strategy for King Ahaz to pursue for Judah? Should he trust Israel and join their coalition with Syria in order to try to withstand the Assyrian invasion? Should he rather concede to Assyria, join the “big guns”, and have his brothers in Israel as enemies? Or, as the prophecy advises, should he do nothing and trust God?
- ❖ Ahaz was “between a rock and a hard place”. He decided to join with Assyria, and in 722 B.C. they defeated Israel. But then in 586 B.C., when Babylon defeated Assyria, they also turned on Judah and defeated them.
- ❖ They had received wise counsel – “trust and obey God”. But because of their sin and lack of faith, God’s people experienced God’s judgment at the hands of the Assyrians, and then the Babylonians.
- ❖ It is important to understand that the purpose of God’s judgment is always and only to bring people into a place of God’s blessing. Any good parent understands that a spoiled child will always squander his blessings, and will never be happy. A child must be disciplined in order to be able to appreciate, receive and maintain blessings and happiness. God raises His children this way. In fact, this is quite clear in the book of Isaiah: from chapters 1 through 39 we read of God’s

judgment upon Israel and Judah, as well as, all the other pagan nations, including Assyria and Babylon. And then in chapters 40 through to 66, the last chapter, we read of God's blessings on His people.

But what can we learn from this piece of history? What can we learn from their mistakes? God had provided the wise counsel – the right strategy - but His people didn't have the faith to go with it. The same is true for ourselves: We are much more inclined to look to human provision – it is just the “natural” thing to do – it even seems more sensible. But typically, as in Judah's case with Assyria, the human provision has a “price tag” and/or a “backlash”. Proverbs 16:25 says: **“There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end, it leads to death.”**<sup>5</sup>

The Lord also spoke through the prophet Jeremiah about Judah's situation, making three very salient points:

- ❖ **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.”**<sup>6</sup>
- ❖ **“Cursed is the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord.”**<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *New International Version*

<sup>6</sup> *Jeremiah 17:9-10 New King James Version*

<sup>7</sup> *Jeremiah 17:5 NKJV*



❖ “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is in the Lord.”<sup>8</sup>

It’s true, Ahaz was “between a rock and a hard place” – he and Judah were in a mess – physically and spiritually. But God was on the scene and He provided wise counsel – the perfect strategy. Ahaz’s decision to not accept God’s plan was not his first mistake, it was closer to being his last mistake. What I mean is this: Throughout his life, Ahaz had continually messed up – ignoring God, making the wrong choices, ending up in a hopeless situation – with no way out. It is right there – at that point - that the prophet Isaiah introduces the names of the coming Messiah.

It’s the same in our lives, when we have continually messed up – ignoring God, making the wrong choices, ending up in the darkness and despair of a hopeless situation – with no way out, God has a Light for those who are “walking in darkness” – for those who are living “in the shadow of death”. God has a perfect strategy. God has a Wonderful Counselor.

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<sup>8</sup> Jeremiah 17:7 NKJV



“ ... and His Name Will Be Called .... ”

WONDERFUL COUNSELOR



So, let's look at this first name which Isaiah attributes to the coming Messiah. The Hebrew word translated "wonderful" is *pele*.<sup>9</sup> It can also be translated "marvelous" or "extra-ordinary". The origins of both the Hebrew and English words contain the meaning of "supernatural" and "miraculous".<sup>10</sup> Isaiah was introducing this "Wonderful Counselor" as the solution to Judah's desperate situation. Christ, the Messiah, is God's solution to the desperate human condition. And because it is God's solution, it is by nature of the case, a super-natural, miraculous solution. True wisdom is coming to the realization that natural, human solutions fall far short, and, in fact, are without any hope of rectifying the human condition. Only the supernatural power of God working through the Word and Spirit of God can actually change a human heart and mind, and thus change the factors that create the "dead-ends" we experience in human relationships and situations.

The Hebrew word translated "Counselor" is *yaats*.<sup>11</sup> In its verb form, the word means *to advise, counsel, devise, or plan*. It has a much wider meaning than our modern applications of the words "advisor" or "counselor". In this, and in other places in the Scriptures, it refers specifically to One Who has the ability to create and carry out a plan of government – specifically, in this situation, a military plan. Again, the nature of this plan or strategy would not be natural or human, but divine,

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<sup>9</sup> Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, James Strong, #6382

<sup>10</sup> Brown, Driver, Briggs, Genenius Lexicon keyed to The Theological Word Book of the Old Testament and Dictionary.com

<sup>11</sup> Strong's #3289

supernatural - even miraculous. And again, this is what is required to affect change in human lives and situations – a spiritual plan, even spiritual warfare, in order to accomplish what is humanly impossible. Putting the two words together, we have someone who is a “Miracle-working Strategist” – One Who has been “made unto us wisdom from God”.<sup>12</sup>

Jesus is the Miracle-working Strategist Who can deal with all our problems – even problems we have made on our own, but can’t solve on our own. He is not surprised by our problems or the messes we get ourselves into. He specializes in hopeless situations. He doesn’t necessarily choose to eliminate all our problems – He may choose to use some of our problems for His purposes. But He will always give us His strength and wisdom to deal with even the situations we find most hopeless.

Jesus is the Miracle-working Strategist Who can deal with our immediate problems – those problems that keep us up at night – finances, health, job security, family and relationship problems.

Jesus doesn’t just deal with our immediate problems – He is also able to deal with our ultimate problems – problems we may not know that we have – root problems. He sees all the problems we can see, but can also see problems we can’t see – problems in our hearts. Ahaz and Judah were conscious only of the immediate, visible problem of Assyria. But God knew that their ultimate problem was in their relationship with Him – they did

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<sup>12</sup> I Corinthians 1:30, Colossians 2:3

not really trust Him. Isaiah counseled Judah to trust in God alone, but they devised their own plan to trust in themselves and something or someone other than God.

Jesus is the Miracle-working Strategist Who can deal with our deeper problems. We were created by God to have relationship with God, but we try to fulfill this innate desire for relationship with God by substituting everything else. We are hungry for relationship with God, but look everywhere else to be filled. Like Israel and Judah, we follow after idols. But our Heavenly Father and Jesus strategized this eternal plan which is revealed in Paul's letter to the Ephesians where he writes: "Long ago, even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave him great pleasure."<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, let's pray what Isaiah prayed: "O LORD, You are my God. I will highly honor You (as a Miracle-working Strategist); I will praise Your name (Wonderful Counselor). You have done miraculous things. You have been completely reliable in carrying out your plans from long ago."<sup>14</sup>

**REVIEW:** We've seen that the first name given, "Wonderful Counselor", can be understood in the context to mean "Miracle-working Strategist". Jesus - the "Child born", the "Son given" - is the "Miracle-working Strategist" Who

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<sup>13</sup> Ephesians 1:4-5 *New Living Translation*

<sup>14</sup> Isaiah 25:1 *God's Word Translation*

can create and carry out a supernatural plan to solve all the problems arising out of our desperate human condition.



“ ... and His Name Will Be Called .... ”

MIGHTY GOD



The second name given is: “Mighty God”. A little earlier in the prophecy, Isaiah had revealed the astonishing fact to Ahaz that the coming Messiah would be born a human being, that is, born of a woman – a virgin woman at that: **“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel”**<sup>15</sup>, which means “God with us”. This is to say that Jesus is God. Isaiah also told Ahaz that the Messiah would be **“... a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense...”**.<sup>16</sup> I believe part of the reason for his saying this has to do with the fact that the Messiah is God, and this is a fact that must be reckoned with – one cannot ignore it or side-step it. In His day, as it is in our day, the deity of Jesus Christ was “up for debate”. But the fact remains that God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, as well as Christ’s apostles, all make the claim that He is God.<sup>17</sup> As far as Jesus is concerned, that is “not up for debate”. This is how C.S. Lewis put it:

*“I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: “I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.” That is the one thing we must not say. A man who said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit*

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<sup>15</sup> Isaiah 7:14

<sup>16</sup> Isaiah 8:14, I Pater 2:8

<sup>17</sup> Matthew 3:17, 14:33, 16:13-18, 17:5, 26:63-66, John 1:1-3, 29, 34, 49, 4:25-26, 8:58 (Exodus 3:13-15), 9:35-37, 11:27, 20:28-29, Hebrews 1:8 (Psalm 45:6-7)



*at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”*<sup>18</sup>

So, that will suffice for the “God” part of the name “Mighty God”. The Messiah, Jesus Christ, is God.

The Hebrew word translated *mighty* is *gibbor*.<sup>19</sup> It is the intensive form of the root word *geber*,<sup>20</sup> meaning *valiant warrior*. So, in its intensive form, we could say that this word means *a most, or The Most Valiant Warrior*. The concept of God as warrior is first mentioned in the Scriptures in what we refer to as “The Song of Moses”. The Lord had just miraculously delivered the Hebrews from Pharaoh and the Egyptians at the Red Sea, and the people broke out into a song. The song spans the first 18 verses of Exodus 15. Here are some select verses:

**“1 Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and said, “I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; the horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea. 2The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise Him; my father's God, and I will extol Him. 3The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is His name.”**

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<sup>18</sup> From *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis

<sup>19</sup> Strong's # 1368

<sup>20</sup> Strong's # 1397

6 "Your right hand, O LORD, is majestic in power, Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy. 7 And in the greatness of Your excellence You overthrow those who rise up against You."

11 "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders? 12 You stretched out Your right hand, the earth swallowed them. 13 In Your loving-kindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; in Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation."

18 "The LORD shall reign forever and ever."<sup>21</sup>

A psalm of David's contains these lyrics:

"Lift your heads, you gates. Be lifted, you ancient doors, so that the king of glory may come in. Who is this king of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty! The LORD, heroic in

battle! Lift your heads, you gates. Be lifted, you ancient doors, so that the king of glory may come in. Who, then, is this king of glory? The LORD of Armies is the king of glory!"<sup>22</sup>

In the verses just prior to Isaiah ascribing the name "Mighty God" to the Messiah, he made reference to His being valiant and victorious in battle.<sup>23</sup> Someone might say: "But, wait a minute! When Jesus came to

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<sup>21</sup> Exodus 15:1-3, 6-7, 11-13, 18 *New American Standard Bible*

<sup>22</sup> Psalm 24:7-10 *God's Word Translation*

<sup>23</sup> Isaiah 9:3-5

earth, he was not a Valiant Warrior; He was more like “a lamb being led to the slaughter”. This is true in one sense, but in another sense, He did conduct battle as a Valiant Warrior. It is a must that we understand this “other sense” – a “spiritual sense”- because misunderstanding this caused His first disciples to stumble, particularly in Peter’s denial and Judas’ betrayal. We must understand two things:

Firstly, the Lord’s way of doing battle looks very different from the human way – it’s SPIRITUAL.<sup>24</sup> The apostle Paul said that the Lord defeated the powers of darkness THROUGH THE CROSS.<sup>25</sup> Isaiah poignantly describes this SPIRITUALLY Valiant Warrior as being “like a lamb that is led to slaughter”: “He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth.”<sup>26</sup> And then goes on to say: “I will give Him the honors of a victorious soldier, because He exposed Himself to death. He was counted among the rebels. He bore the sins of many and interceded for rebels.”<sup>27</sup>

Secondly, we need to understand that Jesus’ first advent had a different look and a different purpose to His second advent. This also was not understood by His first disciples. The writer to the Hebrews says: “Even so it is that Christ, having been offered to take upon Himself and bear as a burden the sins of many once and once for all, will appear a second time,

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<sup>24</sup> See II Corinthians 10:3-6

<sup>25</sup> Colossians 2:14-15

<sup>26</sup> Isaiah 53:7. See the whole chapter.

<sup>27</sup> Isaiah 53:12

not to carry any burden of sin nor to deal with sin, but to bring to full salvation those who are [eagerly, constantly, and patiently] waiting for and expecting Him.”<sup>28</sup> And the apostle John’s description of Jesus at His second advent looks quite different from “a lamb that is led to slaughter” – he writes: “I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice He judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on His head are many crowns. He has a name written on Him that no one knows but He Himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and His name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following Him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On His robe and on His thigh He has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”<sup>29</sup>

As it was sated, at a time when pressure from Rome and the Jews was on Jesus’ disciples, they lost their conviction that He was, in fact, the “Mighty God” - the Valiant Warrior; and this caused them to stumble. Also, as we noted before, while Isaiah was prophesying to Ahaz, king of Judah, about the Messiah coming as the “Wonderful Counselor” – a Miracle-working Strategist”, and the “Mighty God” – a Valiant Warrior, he too stumbled in unbelief and gave his allegiance to Assyria instead.

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<sup>28</sup> Hebrews 9:28 *The Amplified Bible*

<sup>29</sup> Revelation 19:11-16 *New International Version*

I think the problem for us human beings can be found hidden in Isaiah's phrase: **"Unto us a Child is born..."**. A "Child" – even the Christ Child born in a stable – just doesn't look like a Miracle-working Strategist or a Valiant Warrior. But the Lord spoke through Isaiah in another place explaining -

**"My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.**"<sup>30</sup> Simply put: **"God is Spirit"**<sup>31</sup> – He's different! His strategies are different – they're SPIRITUAL.<sup>32</sup> His way of doing battle is different – it's SPIRITUAL.<sup>33</sup> But, for Ahaz, the "big guns" of Assyria looked more sensible than the "Unto us a Child is born..." prospect. We usually assess a problematic situation just like Ahaz did. It's not that it is difficult to believe that God is mighty. After all, if there is a God, then for sure, He's going to be a Mighty One. I think the problem for us is believing God – that is, trusting in, depending upon, leaning upon God,<sup>34</sup> Who is Spirit. It's the "Spirit" part that's difficult. We are more inclined to trust, depend and lean upon something or someone in the natural realm.

God wants to bring us to a place – a spiritual place – a place in our faith where we can see the Miracle-working Strategist and Valiant

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<sup>30</sup> Isaiah 55:8-9

<sup>31</sup> John 4:24

<sup>32</sup> See I Corinthians 1:30, Colossians 2:3

<sup>33</sup> See II Corinthians 10:3-6, Colossians 2:14-15

<sup>34</sup> This is the meaning of the Greek word, *pistis*, usually translated "faith".

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**"... And His Name Will Be Called ...."**

Warrior in the face of the Christ Child born in a stable. There is a place mentioned only twice in the Scriptures which correlates with this place in faith. It is in Jerusalem at “the end of the aqueduct of the Upper pool, on the road to the Washerman’s Field”. God called two kings there for the testing of their faith. One failed the test, the other past the test. We read in Isaiah 7:3 **“Then the LORD said to Isaiah, “Go out, you and your son Shear-Jashub, to meet Ahaz at the end of the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Washerman's Field.”**<sup>35</sup> Isaiah’s son’s name, Shear-Jashub, means “A remnant will return”. This represents a people of faith that God has “formed for Himself”.<sup>36</sup> In this place, the Lord had Isaiah tell Ahaz to trust God, rather than Israel and Syria; trust God rather than Assyria; trust Immanuel, “God with us”; trust the “Wonderful Counselor”, the Miracle-working Strategist; trust the “Mighty God”, the Valiant Warrior; trust the Christ Child born in a stable. But Ahaz chose to trust in and pledge allegiance to Assyria. He became a vassal to the king of Assyria and fell into idolatry.

Now we fast-forward 33 years to another king of Judah – Hezekiah. Assyria had promised to protect Judah, but had now turned on them, threatening to defeat them. Hezekiah faced the same problematic situation as Ahaz did earlier. And the Lord brought him to the same place in Jerusalem. II Kings 18:17 reads: **“The king of Assyria sent his supreme commander, his chief officer and his field commander with a large army,**

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<sup>35</sup> *New International Version*

<sup>36</sup> Isaiah 43:21

from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. They came up to Jerusalem and stopped at the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Washerman's Field. They called for the king.” This situation was even worse. There were more than 185,000 Assyrians right there surrounding Jerusalem. A messenger from the Assyrian army challenged Hezekiah’s belief in God and intimidated the people of Judah by trying to discredit the Lord.<sup>37</sup> But Hezekiah’s response to the situation was very different from Ahaz’s – he instead chose to trust in the Mighty God and turned to the Lord in prayer. We read his prayer in II Kings 19:14-19: “Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the temple of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD. And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD: "O LORD, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. Give ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; listen to the words Sennacherib has sent to insult the living God. It is true, O LORD, that the Assyrian kings have laid waste these nations and their lands. They have thrown their gods into the fire and destroyed them, for they were not gods but only wood and stone, fashioned by men's hands. Now, O LORD our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all kingdoms on earth may know that you alone, O LORD, are God."

In response to Hezekiah’s prayer, the Lord sent an angel into the camp of the Assyrians and killed 185,000 of them, and the remaining troops

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<sup>37</sup> II Kings 18:19-35, 19:10-13



ran back home to Assyria. A little later the king of Assyria was murdered by his own sons.<sup>38</sup>

We may not be facing the Assyrian army itself, but we all face sometimes overwhelming pressures on our health, our finances or our families. In these times, we may go through the motions of praying to God, while we are actually looking to something or someone else to really “come to the rescue”. As I said, God wants to bring us to a place – a spiritual place – a place in our faith where we can see the Miracle-working Strategist and Valiant Warrior in the face of the Christ Child born in a stable. He calls us to that place – at “the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Washerman's Field”. We turn in one direction to see that we are surrounded by “185,000 Assyrians”. We turn in the other direction and we can see the Christ Child born in a stable, who is actually the “Wonderful Counselor”, a Miracle-working Strategist, the “Mighty God”, a Valiant Warrior. We will choose which we will trust in, depend upon, lean upon. Where will we place our trust? Where will we pledge our allegiance? Will we become vassals of the god of this world?<sup>39</sup> Will we choose to serve and love Mammon instead of God? Or will we identify with the son of the prophet - Shear-Jashub, being numbered among “the remnant who will return”? May we be “a people God is forming for Himself”.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> II Kings 19:35-37

<sup>39</sup> II Corinthians 4:4

<sup>40</sup> Isaiah 43:21



**REVIEW:** We've seen this "Most Valiant Warrior" appearing throughout the Scriptures: "... the Lord (Who) is a Warrior" in "The Song of Moses"<sup>41</sup>, "the King of Glory – the Lord of Armies" in David's psalm<sup>42</sup>, receiving from Isaiah "the honors of a victorious soldier"<sup>43</sup>, called by the apostle John "the Faithful and True, King of Kings and Lord of Lords", "Who is and Who was and Who is to come... the Ruler over the kings of the earth"<sup>44</sup>, "judging and making war" with "a sharp sword and iron scepter", as He rides a white horse with "the armies of heaven following Him"<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> Exodus 15:1-3, 6-7, 11-13, 18

<sup>42</sup> Psalm 24:7-10 *God's Word Translation*

<sup>43</sup> Isaiah 53:12

<sup>44</sup> Revelation 1:4-5, 4:8

<sup>45</sup> Revelation 19:11-16



“ ... and His Name Will Be Called .... ”

ETERNAL FATHER



Now, the third name given is: “Eternal Father”. This is, admittedly, the most enigmatic of the names Isaiah attributed to the coming Messiah. We don’t usually think of Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, in terms of “Father”. This is a title we usually reserve for the first Person of the Trinity. The idea of Jesus Christ being in some way a “Father”, is not something lying on the surface of the Scriptures, as it were. We need to investigate deeper in order to understand what Isaiah could have possibly meant by this, and what the relationship is between this “Eternal Father” and those who are His children. ONLY HIS CHILDREN CAN KNOW HIM AS “FATHER” – and to know Him as such, we must BELIEVE AND RECEIVE HIM as such. To explain what I just said, we will look at a passage of Scripture now, and then will return to it again later. Let’s consider John 1:12-13:

**“12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”<sup>46</sup>**

Let’s look at it in the *Amplified Bible*<sup>47</sup>:

**“12 But to as many as did receive and welcome Him, He gave the authority (power, privilege, right) to become the children of God, that is, to those who**

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<sup>46</sup> *New American Standard Bible*

<sup>47</sup> *The Amplified Bible* was the first Bible project of The Lockman Foundation, the translation committee of the *New American Standard Bible*. *The Amplified Bible* attempts to take both word meaning and context into account in order to accurately translate the original text from one language into another. *The Amplified Bible* does this through the use of explanatory alternate readings and amplifications to assist the reader in understanding what Scripture really says. Multiple English word equivalents to each key Hebrew and Greek word clarify and amplify meanings that may otherwise have been concealed by the traditional translation method.

believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name 13 who owe their birth neither to bloods nor to the will of the flesh [that of physical impulse] nor to the will of man [that of a natural father], but to God. [They are born of God!]"

In this passage, the apostle John is saying that the people who “believe and receive” Jesus Christ have the privilege of being “born of God”, that is, being “children of God”. This is to say that in order to be a child of God, one has to believe and receive Christ as a Father. So, it is crucial that we understand what is meant by the concept of Christ as “Eternal Father”.

Let’s start with the idea of “Eternal”. The Hebrew word translated “eternal” is *ad*, and in other places is translated as *everlasting* or *forever and ever*. The Old Testament scriptures teach that the Messiah would live **forever**<sup>48</sup>, as do the New Testament scriptures<sup>49</sup>; and Jesus made this claim about Himself.<sup>50</sup>

But how are we to understand the concept of Jesus as “Father”? This, of necessity, brings us to the mystery of the Trinity – One God revealed to us through three Persons. Beginning in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis, the God of the Bible refers to Himself and reveals Himself in a plurality, through the words, “Let US....”<sup>51</sup> coupled with the Hebrew word translated “God”, which is *Elohim* – a plural word. Both Isaiah and John saw heavenly visions and heard the angels cry “Holy, holy, holy ...” – three exclamations – one for the Father, one for the Son and one for the

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<sup>48</sup> Psalm 110:4, Isaiah 9:7, Ezekiel 37:25

<sup>49</sup> John 12:34, Hebrews 7:24, 13:8

<sup>50</sup> Revelation 1:18

<sup>51</sup> Genesis 1:26, 11:7

Holy Spirit.<sup>52</sup> This was confirmed when the Godhead spoke: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for US?”<sup>53</sup> – One God, three Persons. Jesus also confirmed this when he spoke: “**Jesus replied, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.’**”<sup>54</sup> So we have great the mystery of the Trinity. But significant to our purpose here is that Jesus also said: “He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”<sup>55</sup> “I and My Father are one.”<sup>56</sup> The name “Eternal Father” is fitting for Jesus in that He and the Father are one.

But Jesus is also “Father” in other distinctive ways. The apostle John, the apostle Paul and the writer of Hebrews all concur that Jesus is the Father of Creation, in that “all things were made through Him”<sup>57</sup>, “by him all things were created”<sup>58</sup>, and “through (the Son) God (the Father) made the worlds”.<sup>59</sup>

Jesus is also the Father of the New Creation the Father of Eternal things. This is the Biblical theology: The apostle Paul wrote: “**So also it is written, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living soul’. The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.**”<sup>60</sup> Jesus became the Father of Eternal life – the Father of a new human race – those who have received His Eternal life. Jesus began

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<sup>52</sup> Isaiah 6:3, Revelation 4:8

<sup>53</sup> Isaiah 6:8

<sup>54</sup> John 14:23 NIV

<sup>55</sup> John 14:9

<sup>56</sup> John 10:30

<sup>57</sup> John 1:3

<sup>58</sup> Colossians 1:16

<sup>59</sup> Hebrews 1:2

<sup>60</sup> I Corinthians 15:45

to explain this miracle by saying: "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats (believes and receives) Me, he also will live because of Me."<sup>61</sup> He was speaking to people who were already living - biologically; He was referring to a different kind of life – spiritual life - His divine life – Eternal life – the life of the Eternal One. As the apostle John explained: "And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the (Eternal) life...."<sup>62</sup>

Even the more conventional interpretation<sup>63</sup> of Isaiah's "Eternal Father" name is also true and edifying; and that is this:

A "father" is obviously a "life-giver" – biologically or spiritually; but the Hebrew word, *ab*, is a word showing respect and honor, meaning the head of a household, family, tribe, clan, or group. I have particular memories of our years in South Africa: We helped a man named Cyril Ngulu in the planting and establishing of the church he pastors today. Every time he would have occasion to introduce me, he would say, "This is my (or our) 'father' ...." It took me some time to understand his use of the word. In the African culture, the title "father" was associated with the head of a tribe. Cyril was showing respect and honor towards me by introducing me as the one who, in his mind, was the one who helped to lead his church family. Associated with this title are the ideas of provision and protection – the way

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<sup>61</sup> John 6:57

<sup>62</sup> I John 5:11-12a

<sup>63</sup> Viz. That which is found in most commentaries.

a “chief” would provide both aspects of provision and protection for his tribe. In the Hebrew culture, a good and godly king would have these “fatherly” traits of provision and protection, and like with the African culture, this king would be regarded as a “father”. The Scriptures ascribe these fatherly traits to the Messiah. The apostle Paul wrote of Christ’s headship and preeminence:

**“He also is the Head of [His] body, the church; seeing He is the Beginning, the Firstborn from among the dead, so that He alone in everything and in every respect might occupy the chief place [stand first and be preeminent]”.<sup>64</sup>**

Isaiah spoke of the Messiah’s nurturing qualities:

**“He takes care of his people like a shepherd. He gathers them like lambs in his arms and carries them close to him. He gently leads the mothers of the lambs.”<sup>65</sup>**

There is another thought connected with Christ being our “Eternal Father”: It has to do with the idea of being “a chip off the old block”. It’s natural for the traits and qualities of fathers to be seen in their children. This is also God’s intention in Christ – “His Son”, but our “Eternal Father”. The apostle Paul explains:

**“God planned that those He had chosen would become like His Son. In that way, Christ will be the first and most honored among many brothers.”<sup>66</sup> “So**

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<sup>64</sup> Colossians 1:18 *Amplified Bible*

<sup>65</sup> Isaiah 40:11 *New Century Version*

<sup>66</sup> Romans 8:29 *New International Readers’ Version*

all of us ... can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like Him as we are changed into His glorious image.”<sup>67</sup> – the image of our “Eternal Father”.

As it was stated earlier: ONLY CHRIST’S CHILDREN CAN KNOW HIM AS “FATHER” – and to know Him as such, we must BELIEVE AND RECEIVE HIM as such:

“But to as many as did receive and welcome Him, He gave the authority (power, privilege, right) to become the children of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name who owe their birth neither to bloods nor to the will of the flesh [that of physical impulse] nor to the will of man [that of a natural father], but to God. [They are born of God!]”<sup>68</sup>

If we “believe and receive” Jesus Christ, we have the privilege of being “born of God”, that is, being “children of God”. In order to be a child of God, one has to believe and receive Christ as our “Eternal Father”.

## REVIEW:

We’ve seen that the first name given, “Wonderful Counselor”, can be understood in the context to mean “Miracle-working Strategist”. Jesus - the “Child born”, the “Son given” - is the “Miracle-working Strategist” Who can

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<sup>67</sup> II Corinthians 3:18 *New Living Translation*

<sup>68</sup> John 1:12-13 *The Amplified Bible*



create and carry out a supernatural plan to solve all the problems arising out of our desperate human condition.

The second name given is: “Mighty God”; and we’ve seen this “Most Valiant Warrior” appearing throughout the Scriptures: “... the Lord (Who) is a Warrior” in “The Song of Moses”<sup>69</sup>, “the King of Glory – the Lord of Armies” in David’s psalm<sup>70</sup>, receiving from Isaiah “the honors of a victorious soldier”<sup>71</sup>, called by the apostle John “the Faithful and True, King of Kings and Lord of Lords”, “Who is and Who was and Who is to come... the Ruler over the kings of the earth”<sup>72</sup>, “judging and making war” with “a sharp sword and iron scepter”, as He rides a white horse with “the armies of heaven following Him”<sup>73</sup>.

The third name given is: “Eternal Father” – a name fitting for Jesus firstly because He and the Father are one.<sup>74</sup> Secondly, Jesus is a Father in that He is a “life-giver” – the One Who gives Eternal life – the life of the Eternal One. In this way, He is the Father of the New Creation - the Father of a new human race – comprised of those who have received His Eternal life.<sup>75</sup> ONLY HIS CHILDREN CAN KNOW HIM AS “FATHER” – and to know Him as such, we must BELIEVE AND RECEIVE HIM as such.<sup>76</sup> When we do, we are born of Him – children of God; and partaking of His life

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<sup>69</sup> Exodus 15:1-3, 6-7, 11-13, 18

<sup>70</sup> Psalm 24:7-10 *God’s Word Translation*

<sup>71</sup> Isaiah 53:12

<sup>72</sup> Revelation 1:4-5, 4:8

<sup>73</sup> Revelation 19:11-16

<sup>74</sup> John 10:30, John 14:9

<sup>75</sup> I Corinthians 15:45, John 6:57, I John 5:11-12a

<sup>76</sup> John 1:12-13

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“... And His Name Will Be Called ....”

and divine nature we enter into a process of becoming conformed to His image.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Romans 8:29, II Corinthians 3:18



“ ... and His Name Will Be Called .... ”

PRINCE OF PEACE



Now we come to the fourth and final name which Isaiah has attributed to the Christ in this particular passage of messianic prophecy, and that is: “Prince of Peace”. We will be discussing the nature of this “Peace” in the context of human history and experience, but first we need to understand the nature of the word “Prince” and how this Prince administers His Peace.

I put quite a bit of thought into the fact that Isaiah used the word “Prince” rather than “King”. In other places in Scripture, Jesus is certainly identified as “King”.<sup>78</sup> But here, Isaiah refers to Him as “Prince”. The Hebrew word for “king” is *melek*, but Isaiah uses the word *rX (Sar)*.<sup>79</sup> While it seems that this Hebrew word *rX* may be the origin of the Latin word *rex*, which means “king”, the actual root of the Latin *rex* is the verb, *regere*, which means “to make a straight, to make right, to guide, to lead, to rule”.<sup>80</sup> This word has more to do with “making things right” than “reigning as king”. A prince is a male in the royal family who is to inherit the throne in the future. While the king is seated on the throne reigning in victory, the prince is active in the field gaining the victory. Peace is something for which the Prince has to fight to gain – or better, regain - for the kingdom. Jesus, God’s “Prince and Savior”<sup>81</sup>, the “Prince of Life”<sup>82</sup> came to earth to defeat the temporary “god of this world”<sup>83</sup> – Satan, “the prince of the kingdom over

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<sup>78</sup> Acts 17:7, I Timothy 6:15, Revelation 15:3, 17:14, 19:16

<sup>79</sup> Strong’s # 8269

<sup>80</sup> [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

<sup>81</sup> Acts 5:31

<sup>82</sup> Acts 3:15

<sup>83</sup> II Corinthians 4:4

the earth”.<sup>84</sup> This is an ongoing work of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace – it was announced when He first came to earth and will be completed when He comes again.

The evening of the birth of the Messiah, angels announced to shepherds: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those who have His good will!"<sup>85</sup> This anthem has two phrases – one God-ward and one man-ward. “Glory” – “to God (in the highest heavens)”. And “peace” - to people. But, this is added: “those who have His good will”. The Greek word is, *eudokia*, meaning “good will, kindly intent, or benevolence”. The word appears in the genitive case - that is - to people who are of, or to people who are the subjects of His goodwill, or kindly intent, or benevolence. Peace – not to all people, but to certain people. Who are these people? Those who believe on the Prince of Peace and receive the benefits of His work of peace-making.<sup>86</sup>

This subject of “peace” is profound. In fact, the Scripture says that it actually “surpasses all comprehension”.<sup>87</sup> But to understand this “peace” is to understand Jesus, because the Scripture says that “He Himself is our peace.”<sup>88</sup> But while this “Prince of Peace” is “the same yesterday and today

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<sup>84</sup> Ephesians 2:2 (Personal translation)

<sup>85</sup> Luke 2:14 *God’s Word Translation*. In accordance with *Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament*, this is actually a very accurate translation of this complex verse.

<sup>86</sup> Based on *Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament*.

<sup>87</sup> Philippians 4:7

<sup>88</sup> Ephesians 2:14

and forever”<sup>89</sup> – He “was and is and is to come”<sup>90</sup> - the experience of His peace throughout human history and experience varies.

One aspect of the Hebrew concept of “peace” is the idea of the wholeness that comes with completion. There was peace at the completion of the creation. Genesis 1:12 says, “And God saw that it was GOOD.” In contrast, after the fall of Man: “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. The LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them.”<sup>91</sup>

As Scripture progresses, Isaiah and others prophesy of the coming of the Prince of Peace to restore what was lost at the fall. But then it is most shocking to hear Jesus say after He arrived on the earth: “Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be the members of his household.”<sup>92</sup> It is also disconcerting to hear that when Christ’s followers preach His gospel, they

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<sup>89</sup> Hebrews 13:8

<sup>90</sup> Revelation 1:4, 8, 4:8

<sup>91</sup> Genesis 6:5-7

<sup>92</sup> Matthew 10:34-36, Luke 12:51-53

are described as men who “exceedingly trouble our city”.<sup>93</sup> How is this to be reconciled with the title “Prince of Peace”? As I said earlier, to understand “peace” is to understand Jesus, because the Scripture says that “He Himself is our peace.”<sup>94</sup> And this is the reality of things: PEOPLE DO NOT HAVE PEACE UNTIL THEY BELIEVE AND RECEIVE THE ONE WHO IS PEACE. If people refuse to believe and receive Him, the effect upon them is the opposite of peace, for they have rejected Peace. But those who believe on the Prince of Peace receive the benefits of His work of peace-making.<sup>95</sup> Peace has begun with those who are subjects of God’s good will, kindly intent and benevolence, but Isaiah said that **“Of the increase of His ... peace there will be no end.”** – so this is a cosmic, eternal work. Again, this is an ongoing work of peace-making which began when Jesus first came to the earth, and will be completed when Jesus returns to earth.

Let’s look at the Hebrew word translated “peace”. The word is ~wlX (shalom).<sup>96</sup> It means “completeness, well-being, harmony, peace”. It is a word that has to do with relationship – with God and with others. We usually apply the word to meaning merely an absence of conflict or some type of tranquility. But, the way Jesus used the word should give us some indication that there is much more to the idea than the way we usually apply the word. He said: “Peace I leave with you: My peace I give to you; not as

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<sup>93</sup> Acts 16:20, 17:8

<sup>94</sup> Ephesians 2:14

<sup>95</sup> Based on *Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament*.

<sup>96</sup> Strong’s # 7965

the world gives do I give to you.”<sup>97</sup> He said there was such a thing as “His peace”, and that it was different than “the world’s peace”. For starters, this tells us that THE ONLY SOURCE OF TRUE PEACE IS JESUS CHRIST, THE PRINCE OF PEACE, for as we have seen, peace comes to those who are the subjects of God’s good will, kindly interest and benevolence, which are all summed up in Christ.

The Scripture tells us that peace and harmony with God come through faith in Christ.<sup>98</sup> And that when we have received this “peace with God”, we can have peace within ourselves, because the peace that comes from God, even though it “surpasses our comprehension”, it never-the-less “watches over, guards and protects<sup>99</sup> our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”.<sup>100</sup>

The Scriptures also instruct us to extend that peace beyond ourselves into the world by being “peacemakers”.<sup>101</sup> We are told to “pursue peace”<sup>102</sup> and “the things which make for peace”,<sup>103</sup> and to “make every effort to live in peace with all men”<sup>104</sup> and “if it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”<sup>105</sup> But the Scriptures also tell

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<sup>97</sup> John 14:27

<sup>98</sup> Romans 5:1

<sup>99</sup> Greek, *phroureo*, Strong’s # 5432

<sup>100</sup> Philippians 4:7

<sup>101</sup> Matthew 5:9

<sup>102</sup> Psalm 34:14

<sup>103</sup> Romans 14:19

<sup>104</sup> Hebrews 12:14

<sup>105</sup> Romans 12:18



us that this may not be possible – it is all dependent upon one’s faith and relationship with Christ.

Christians are commanded to be “diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”<sup>106</sup> While it is often not our testimony, God has most certainly given the Christian community the resources to live in peace with one another, as a witness to the world.<sup>107</sup>

But we will not see peace on earth until Christ returns, when “at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are 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.”<sup>108</sup>

The Biblical concept of peace, in fact, goes beyond human beings to the whole of the created order. The creation groans for the peace – the wholeness and harmony – that was lost at the fall. The apostle Paul writes: “For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.”<sup>109</sup> When He returns, the Prince of Peace will come “to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him ... whether things on earth or

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<sup>106</sup> Ephesians 4:3 (also Colossians 3:14)

<sup>107</sup> John 13:35

<sup>108</sup> Philippians 2:10-11

<sup>109</sup> Romans 8:19-22

things in heaven.”<sup>110</sup> Isaiah prophesied this promise: “Then wolves will live in peace with lambs, and leopards will lie down to rest with goats. Calves, lions, and young bulls will eat together, and a little child will lead them. Cows and bears will eat together in peace. Their young will lie down to rest together. Lions will eat hay as oxen do. A baby will be able to play near a cobra's hole, and a child will be able to put his hand into the nest of a poisonous snake. They will not hurt or destroy each other on all my holy mountain, because the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the sea is full of water.”<sup>111</sup> Jesus Himself promised these things while He was still on the earth when He said: “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”<sup>112</sup>

As we have seen, the longing – even groaning – for peace is in the very fabric of creation. It is certainly the one of the deepest desires in every human heart. The promise of peace is available to whoever will believe and receive God’s good will, kindly intention and benevolence. Because Jesus Himself is our peace, it is as certain as He is. It’s coming in fullness is as certain as His coming again. Between now and then we have “the peace of God watching over, guarding and protecting our hearts and minds<sup>113</sup> - because that’s where the battle is – in our minds.

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<sup>110</sup> Colossians 1:20

<sup>111</sup> Isaiah 11:6-9

<sup>112</sup> John 16:33

<sup>113</sup> Philippians 4:7

The prophet Isaiah said this regarding peace of mind:

**“You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you.”<sup>114</sup>**

The apostle Paul gives us some helpful instruction about having a mind controlled by the Spirit:

- **The fruit of the Spirit is ... peace.<sup>115</sup>**
- **“... the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.”<sup>116</sup>**
- **“bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ”.<sup>117</sup>**
- **“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”<sup>118</sup>**

The key is to surrender every area of life, and every thought under the control of the word and Spirit of Christ.

The psalmist David gives us some encouraging thoughts about trusting in and keeping our “thoughts fixed on” the Lord Jesus:

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<sup>114</sup> Isaiah 26:3

<sup>115</sup> Galatians 5:22

<sup>116</sup> Romans 8:6b

<sup>117</sup> II Corinthians 10:5

<sup>118</sup> Philippians 4:6-7

- “In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, O LORD, will keep me safe.”<sup>119</sup>
- “The LORD gives his people strength. The LORD blesses them with peace.”<sup>120</sup>
- “I listen carefully to what God the LORD is saying, for he speaks peace to his faithful people.”<sup>121</sup>
- “Those who love your instructions have great peace and do not stumble.”<sup>122</sup>

And finally, the words of the Prince of Peace Himself:

“I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So, don’t be troubled or afraid.<sup>123</sup> “I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.”<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Psalm 4:8

<sup>120</sup> Psalm 29:11

<sup>121</sup> Psalm 85:8

<sup>122</sup> Psalm 119:165

<sup>123</sup> John 14:27

<sup>124</sup> John 16:33

Bill & Frances Furioso  
~ At Christ's Table ~



Just a little bit about ourselves ...

We have been married for 37 years, and have two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Being an avid student by nature, I have done formal study in various fields including Education, Music, Philosophy and Theology.

We served as missionaries in South Africa for thirteen years helping to establish churches and train church leaders. Our Bible teaching ministry has also taken us to other countries like Zimbabwe, Brazil, and England, as well as, throughout the United States.

We have pastored several churches, and as an itinerant Bible teacher, I have ministered in hundreds of churches on four continents. As a writer, I've authored many publications which are distributed to church leaders worldwide.

We have ministered together speaking in churches, leading spiritual formation seminars, personal mentoring, and administering an international partnership of church leaders.

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“... And His Name Will Be Called ....”

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“... And His Name Will Be Called ....”

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