

Wonderful Counselor
Isaiah 9:6
December 5th, 2021

1. The context of the promise: _____ and _____ (9:1-5)
2. Jesus is our _____. (9:6a)
 - a. He gives miraculously good _____.
 - b. His future _____ will be marked by wisdom and justice.
 - c. He is wise in _____.
3. Because He is our Wonderful Counselor...
 - a. He knows how to _____ us.
 - b. He understands the _____.

Questions for Discussion/Reflection on Isaiah 9:6

These questions can help you take the message and bring it to your life. Consider working through them on your own or with others this week.

1. How would you describe the month leading up to Christmas for you? Is it usually hectic? Stressful? Restful? Joyful? Mixed?
2. Is there anything you have done in the past that has helped you focus on Jesus in December?
3. How might Thanksgiving and Christmas be difficult for people who are suffering? What are some ways we can care well for people at Christmas who are discouraged, suffering, or have experienced loss?
4. How are counselors described in the following verses from Isaiah? How does this clarify the significance of the “wonderful counselor” phrase in Isaiah 9:6?

Isaiah 1:26; 3:1-5; 5:21; 19:11-15; 31:1-3; 47:10-13

5. How is Jesus a “counselor” to us? In what ways does Jesus give good advice about life? What feels insufficient about describing His teaching that way? What are some ways that the “advice” of Jesus runs counter to the other advice people may hear?
6. How is God’s counsel described in the following verses from Proverbs?

Proverbs 1:30ff; 19:21; 21:30

7. How does the righteous, wise, and just rule of Jesus help us endure wicked, foolish, and unjust leadership at home, at work, or in government? (see Jer. 23:5)
8. What is Paul’s response to the wisdom of God that needs no counsel in Romans 11:33-36?

Rabbit room – Thomas McKenzie – harpooner analogy

Moby Dick – chapter LXII (62) - According to the invariable usage of the fishery, the whale-boat pushes off from the ship, with the headsman or whale-killer as temporary steersman, and the harpooneer or whale-fastener pulling the foremost oar, the one known as the harpooneer-oar. Now it needs a strong, nervous arm to strike the first iron into the fish; for often, in what is called a long dart, the heavy implement has to be flung to the distance of twenty or thirty feet. But however prolonged and exhausting the chase, the harpooneer is expected to pull his oar meanwhile to the uttermost; indeed, he is expected to set an example of superhuman activity to the rest, not only by incredible rowing, but by repeated loud and intrepid exclamations; and what it is to keep shouting at the top of one's compass, while all the other muscles are strained and half started—what that is none know but those who have tried it. For one, I cannot bawl very heartily and work very recklessly at one and the same time. In this straining, bawling state, then, with his back to the fish, all at once the exhausted harpooneer hears the exciting cry—'Stand up, and give it to him!' He now has to drop and secure his oar, turn round on his centre half-way, seize his harpoon from the crotch, and with what little strength may remain, he essays to pitch it somehow into the whale. No wonder, taking the whole fleet of whalers in a body, that out of fifty fair chances for a dart, not five are successful; no wonder that so many hapless harpooneers are madly cursed and disgraced; no wonder that some of them actually burst their blood-vessels in the boat; no wonder that some sperm whalers are absent four years with four barrels; no wonder that to many shipowners whaling is but a losing concern; for it is the harpooneer that makes the voyage, and if you take the breath out of his body how can you expect to find it there when most wanted!

Again, if the dart be successful, then at the second critical instant, that is, when the whale starts to run, the boat-header and harpooneer likewise start to running fore and aft, to the imminent jeopardy of themselves and everyone else. It is then they change places; and the headsman, the chief officer of the little craft, takes his proper station in the bows of the boat. ³

Now, I care not who maintains the contrary, but all this is both foolish and unnecessary. The headsman should stay in the bows from first to last; he should both dart the harpoon and the lance, and no rowing whatever should be expected of him, except under circumstances obvious to any fisherman. I know that this would sometimes involve a slight loss of speed in the chase; but long experience in various whalers of more than one nation has convinced me that in the vast majority of failures in the fishery, it has not by any means been so much the speed of the whale as the before described exhaustion of the harpooneer that has caused them. ⁴

To ensure the greatest efficiency in the dart, the harpooneers of this world must start to their feet from out of idleness, and not from out of toil.

My note: How many of us approach Christmas like the harpooner – expected to pull and strain in chaotic busyness and then drop it and pause in wondrous reflection on the birth of Jesus?

Thomas MacKenzie - We are called to live a life of waiting. Of course, there will be moments of strife, and we should be ready for them. But we must resist the voices that say we must be

always fighting, always struggling. These voices tempt us to use all our strength in some righteous cause, throwing ourselves against the merciless storm of evil in the world. They lead us to believe that we will conquer our enemies, but the truth is that we will only destroy ourselves. Instead, we must learn the truth that God is the mighty warrior, he is the Victorious One. He is strong enough to conquer the darkness, I am not.

1 Pet. 1:10-12 ¹⁰ As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful searches and inquiries,

¹¹ seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.

¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things into which angels long to look.

What does advent mean?

Coming – 3 comings in mind

Isa. 9:1-7

But there will be no *more* gloom for her who was in anguish;
in earlier times He treated

the land of Zebulun
and the land of Naphtali
with contempt,
but later on He shall
make *it* glorious,
by the way of the sea,
on the other side of Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles.

² The people who walk in darkness
Will see a great light;
Those who live in a dark land,
The light will shine on them.

³ You shall multiply the nation,
You shall increase their gladness;
They will be glad in Your presence
As with the gladness of harvest,
As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

⁴ For You shall break the yoke of their burden
and the staff on their shoulders,
The rod of their oppressor,
as at the battle of Midian.

⁵ For every boot of the booted warrior in the *battle* tumult,
And cloak rolled in blood,
will be for burning,
fuel for the fire.

⁶ For a child
will be born to us,
a son

Isa. 9:1-7

O come all ye faithless, joyless and defeated. O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem. Christmas is for the weary, for the messed-up, and for the broken. If your life isn't Instagrammable, Christmas is for you.

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light."

Sam Allberry

Mac –

Pathetic scene

Going back to ch 8, gives the context for the prophecy of ch 9. Such darkness and sin that it demanded the announcement of Messiah for the sake of the godly who were there. Everything looked so black and hopeless.

My note – every Christmas movie has the low point – Charlie Brown is mocked for the tree and feels like he can't do anything right, Buddy the Elf can't help the sleigh fly in central park because there isn't any Christmas spirit, George Bailey wanders through his hometown in wreckage

Isaiah was speaking to a people that were not in 15 minute low point in the narrative arc of a Christmas movie. The word Isaiah uses to describe their situation is gloom.

Isa. 8:19-22 ¹⁹ When they say to you, "Consult the mediums and the spiritists who whisper and mutter," should not a people consult their God? *Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living?*

²⁰ To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn.

²¹ They will pass through the land hard-pressed and famished, and it will turn out that when they are hungry, they will be enraged and curse their king and their God as they face upward.

EBC – the asyring invasion would bring an acute food shortage. Hunger would foster anger, which the Israelites would blame, in part correctly, on their apostate king and, quite wrongly, on their God.

ESV - Prov. 19:3 ³ When a man's folly brings his way to ruin, his heart rages against the LORD.

²² Then they will look to the earth, and behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and *they will be* driven away into darkness.

Mac – 2 kings 16, ahaz was the king and he was wicked

2 Ki. 16:2-3 ² Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do what was right in the sight of the LORD his God, as his father David *had done*.

³ But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and even made his son pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had driven out from before the sons of Israel.

Promised salvation

Perfect savior

Peaceful sovereign

Isaiah ministered in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, a period extending from 739-686 BC. The book was written sometime after 701 BC, the date of the Assyrian invasion under king Sennacherib. The first half is set against an Assyrian background and is principally concerned with rebuking and condemning the people and leader of Judah and predicting the overthrow of the kingdom. The second half is written from the viewpoint of the Babylonian exile of 586 BC. In these chapters Isaiah

addresses prophetically the Jews of the captivity. Spiritually, Isaiah ministered during a period of degeneracy and apostasy, especially during the reigns of Ahaz and Manasseh.

ESV Study Bible

Isaiah prophesied “in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah” (1:1). His call to ministry came “in the year that King Uzziah died” (6:1), around 740 b.c., and he lived long enough to record the death of Sennacherib (37:38), datable to 681. A few of the oracles can be dated, as the notes will show: e.g., chapter 7 comes from about 735 b.c.; chapters 36–38 come from the time of the Assyrian invasion, 701. Most of the material, however, can be dated only in very general terms because the book offers no such information.

Isaiah announces God’s surprising plan of grace and glory for his rebellious people and, indeed, for the world. God had promised Abraham that through his descendants the world would be blessed (Gen. 12:1–3). God had promised David that his throne would lead the world into salvation (2 Sam. 7:12–16; Ps. 89:19–37). But by Isaiah’s time, the descendants of Abraham and many members of the dynasty of David no longer trusted the promises of God, aligning themselves instead with the promises—and the fears—of this false world. Judah’s unbelief in God during the pivotal events of Isaiah’s lifetime redirected their future away from blessing and toward judgment. At this historic turning point, Judah moved from independence under God’s power to subservience under pagan powers.

Isaiah’s book envisions three historical settings (see chart): (1) chapters 1–39 are set against the background of Isaiah’s own times in the late eighth century b.c.; (2) chapters 40–55 assume the Jewish exiles in Babylon in the sixth century as their audience; and (3) chapters 56–66 take the returned exiles and subsequent generations of God’s people as their backdrop.

But there will be no *more* gloom for her who was in anguish;

But ... (EBC) despite the fact that Israel had rejected God’s word through Isaiah, God has planned to give his people light again, though the timing of this is not specified. The humbling of the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali refers of course to the invasion and annexation of the northern parts of Israel by Tiglath-pileser III in 733-732 BC. This is made very clear when we consider the other geographic references here, for ‘the way of the sea’ almost certainly refers to Sharon or Philistia, while “galilee of the gentile” is probably Gilead and southeast Syria . . . These lands, the first to feel the ominous tread of the warrior’s boot (v 5) would be the first to see the new and great light God would focus on Israel. Matthew rightly saw the fulfillment of this in the ministry of Jesus in Galilee.

Antecedent of “her”?

Why was she in anguish?

Isa. 8:22 ²² Then they will look to the earth, and behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and *they will be* driven away into darkness.

BKC – in 732 bc this northern portion of Israel became an Assyrian province under Tiglath-Pileser iii, thus humbling the people there and putting them in gloom.

Term - gloom

in earlier times He treated

antecedent of “he”?

translators take as God

earlier times – Isaiah’s vision projects his thought out of the tragic present as if it were already past.

the land of Zebulun

Where is Zebulun?

*Use room as reference point for map – pulpit
(sea of galilee), center aisle (Jordan river), door*

to HS room (Nazareth), stage (Galilee), locate Capernaum on stage, section of chairs in middle left (right?) from standing up front (Zebulun and Naphtali), section of chairs in middle right near back (Decapolis)

Zebulun suffered severely in the Assyrian invasion under Tiglath Pileser (2 Kings 15:29), many of its inhabitants were deported and its territory was assimilated into the Assyrian empire. ... Nazareth was within its traditional borders.



2 Ki. 15:29 ²⁹ In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria came and captured Ijon and Abel-beth-maacah and Janoah and Kedesh and Hazer and Gilead and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria. and the land of Naphtali

Where are these regions?

Two of the 12 tribes of Israel, settled in this region west of the sea of Galilee

where is Naphtali?

What is each area like?

with contempt,

In what way did God treat them with contempt?

but later on He shall

make *it* glorious,

by the way of the sea,

BKC – major international highway running through this region, Invading Assyrian soldiers took that route when they invaded the northern kingdom. From that area the messiah will arise and will wipe away the gloom and darkness brought on by the Gentile domination.

on the other side of Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles.

² The people who walk in darkness

Zack Eswine – naïve Christmas preaching has in mind our motivation to keep the foot tapping and the mouth smiling. Rather than weeping with those who weep, a naïve talker, tries to rejoice with those who cry. We are like those who cheerily and cluelessly “sing songs to a heavy heart” (Prov 25:20). ... Our problem is that we forget that it was for those in gloom that Jesus was born. “Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, *on them* has light shown.” God has told us his story of good news and great joy by reminding us plainly of why this news and its joy are so desperately needed. God’s way of telling us the story includes, rather than removes, painful details.

Those who refused the appeal in 2:5

Isa. 2:5 ⁵ Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

^{8:22} Then they will look to the earth, and behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and *they will be* driven away into darkness.

In what way were they in darkness? What was that darkness like?

Who is still in darkness today?

Will see a great light;

The people were in darkness because of their distance from the temple and mixed spiritual background after centuries of conquest and relocation of exiles.

All of us are in spiritual darkness until God brings spiritual light in Christ

Colossians 1:13-14 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

“Upon them a light dawned”

Like when the sun finally rises on a hard night, something glorious about the light

Jesus describes Himself as the light of the world

If you find yourself in spiritual darkness, weighed down by hard and confusing things in life, know that Jesus came for people like you.

Those who live in a dark land,

The light will shine on them.

³ You shall multiply the nation,

In what way will God multiply them?

Nation is singular, implying that population within a nation will multiply rather than multiplying nations by making more nations

You shall increase their gladness;

Gladness is going or was going to be increased!

Their gladness will be in God’s presence and is compared to the gladness that comes at the time of harvest or when receiving a bounty of provisions (not unlike Christmas morning).

Their gladness is associated with the yoke of burden being broken and the rod of their oppressors being removed.

They will be glad in Your presence

As with the gladness of harvest,

Peaceful abundance and spoils of war

As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

In what cases will people divide the spoil? Is this only during time of war?

⁴ For You shall break the yoke of their burden
Explains the gladness of v 3 with a threefold “for”
and the staff on their shoulders,
The rod of their oppressor,

Who was their oppressor at the time Isaiah was written?
Is this referring to their oppressor at isaiah’s time or Messiah’s time?

as at the battle of Midian.

Where was midian? What happened at the battle of midian?

Judges 6-7, Gideon defeated the Midianites who had been oppressing them in a cycle of sin, servitude, supplication, deliverance, peace.

Bkc - This will be a supernatural work of God much like the nation’s deliverance when Gideon defeated Midian. It will be like taking a burden off one’s back.

EBC – vast multitude of the enemy swarming all over the land, the giving of a sign, the emphasis on faith in God and not dependence on man, and perhaps the defeat of great forces through apparently insignificant means (300 men in the case of Gideon, and the child of promise here). Most of all, of course, the passage promises total redemption by the Lord.

⁵ For every boot of the booted warrior in the *battle* tumult,
What is this imagery describing literally? Figuratively?

Bkc - At that time, after the child-messiah will come, the implements of warfare will be destroyed (v. 5) because His reign of universal peace implements of war will not be needed.

And cloak rolled in blood,
will be for burning,

Ps. 46:9 ⁹ He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariots with fire.

No further need for the boots of war

Using vivid pictures – boot of war, cloak stained from battle will be obsolete because of the peace God would provide.

fuel for the fire.

⁶ For a child

For – connects the birth of the child to previous statements

EBC – all of these wonderful events must have an adequate cause. The word “child” is in a position of emphasis.

Ortlund - God's answer to everything that has ever terrorized us is a child. The power of God is so far superior to the Assyrians and all the big shots of this world that he can defeat them by coming as a mere child. His answer to the bullies swaggering through history is not to become an even bigger bully. His answer is Jesus.

Look at Jesus. As the Wonderful Counselor, he has the best ideas and strategies. Let's follow him. As the Mighty God, he defeats his enemies easily. Let's hide behind him. As the Everlasting Father, he loves us endlessly. Let's enjoy him. As the Prince of Peace, he reconciles us while we are still his enemies. Let's welcome his dominion.

Oswalt – what is the meaning of the emphasis upon this person as a child? Surely, it is for two reasons. First, it emphasized that the divine ruler will not merely be God, but although partaking of the divine attributes, will have the most human of all arrivals upon the earth, namely, birth. The expected perfect king will be human and divine. But the language also makes another point. The point underlines the central paradox in Isaiah's conception of Yahweh's deliverance of his people. How will God deliver from arrogance, war, oppression, and coercion? Surely the book of Isaiah indicates frequently that God was powerful enough to destroy his enemies in an instant, yet again and again, when the prophet comes to the heart of the means of deliverance, a childlike face peers out at us. God is strong enough to overcome his enemies by becoming vulnerable, transparent, and humble – the only hope, in fact, for turning enmity into friendship.

All of this points to a remarkable congruence with the Immanuel prophecy. Somehow a virgin-born child would demonstrate that God is with us (7:14). Now he says "to us a child is born" (Isaiah including himself with his people in their deliverance as he did in their sin [6:1]) and this child has those traits which manifest the presence of God in our midst. Surely this child (also described in 11:1-5) is presented to us as the ultimate fulfillment of the Immanuel sign.

Is this developing why they will be glad or the manner in which they will be freed from their oppressor?

will be born to us,

plural, community language for the birth

a husband and wife might say that a child will be born to them, but they would seem to mean their immediate family. This is describing a child that will be born for to the nation/people.

ESV – to us sinners

a son

will be given to us;

in what way will this son be given to them?

And the government will rest on His shoulders;

Already but not yet?

Picture of Isaiah looking at a series of mountain peaks seeing his own time, the time of captivity and restoration, the time of Christ, and the millennial kingdom, new heaven and earth.

Bkc – figuratively refers to the kingly robe to be worn by the messiah. As king, he will be responsible to govern the nation. In Isaiah's day Judah's leaders were incompetent in governing the people. But the Messiah will govern properly.

And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor,

Exod. 15:11 ¹¹ "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?

Term: wonderful

Holladay, *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT (HOL)*

Hol6792

אֲלֹף: sf. אֲלֹף, אֲלֹף; pl. אֲלָפִים & תִּלְאָפִים: — 1. **s.thg extraordinary, marvel** Ex 15¹¹; pele° yô±çf a marvel of a counsellor Is 9⁵; — 2. pl. p[®]l[®]im adv. in an astonishing manner La 1⁹; p[®]l[®]ôt marvels Ps 119¹²⁹. (pg 291)

Oswalt - Lit. wonder of a counselor

Throughout the first part of the book especially, the folly of human wisdom is derided, for usually such counsel lacked any spiritual wisdom. (see verses below)

By contrast the coming one would give wondrous counsel, unfailing in the depth of its wisdom. For it is true wisdom which knows that in weakness is strength, in surrender is victory, and in death is life. So this counselor is a wonder because his counsel goes beyond the merely human.

Isa. 1:26 ²⁶ "Then I will restore your judges as at the first, And your counselors as at the beginning; After that you will be called the city of righteousness, A faithful city."

Isa. 3:1-5 For behold, the Lord GOD of hosts is going to remove from Jerusalem and Judah Both supply and support, the whole supply of bread And the whole supply of water;

² The mighty man and the warrior, The judge and the prophet, The diviner and the elder,

³ The captain of fifty and the honorable man, The counselor and the expert artisan, And the skillful enchanter.

⁴ And I will make mere lads their princes, And capricious children will rule over them,

⁵ And the people will be oppressed, Each one by another, and each one by his neighbor; The youth will storm against the elder And the inferior against the honorable.

Isa. 5:21 ²¹ Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes And clever in their own sight!

Isa. 19:11-15 ¹¹ The princes of Zoan are mere fools; The advice of Pharaoh's wisest advisers has become stupid. How can you *men* say to Pharaoh, "I am a son of the wise, a son of ancient kings"?

¹² Well then, where are your wise men? Please let them tell you, And let them understand what the LORD of hosts Has purposed against Egypt.

¹³ The princes of Zoan have acted foolishly, The princes of Memphis are deluded; *Those who are* the cornerstone of her tribes Have led Egypt astray.

¹⁴ The LORD has mixed within her a spirit of distortion; They have led Egypt astray in all that it does, As a drunken man staggers in his vomit.

¹⁵ There will be no work for Egypt Which *its* head or tail, *its* palm branch or bulrush, may do.

Isa. 29:10-14 ¹⁰ For the LORD has poured over you a spirit of deep sleep, He has shut your eyes, the prophets; And He has covered your heads, the seers.

¹¹ The entire vision will be to you like the words of a sealed book, which when they give it to the one who is literate, saying, "Please read this," he will say, "I cannot, for it is sealed."

¹² Then the book will be given to the one who is illiterate, saying, "Please read this." And he will say, "I cannot read."

¹³ Then the Lord said, "Because this people draw near with their words And honor Me with their lip service, But they remove their hearts far from Me, And their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned *by rote*,

¹⁴ Therefore behold, I will once again deal marvelously with this people, wondrously marvelous; And the wisdom of their wise men will perish, And the discernment of their discerning men will be concealed."

Isa. 31:1-3 Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help *And* rely on horses, And trust in chariots because they are many And in horsemen because they are very strong, But they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the LORD!

² Yet He also is wise and will bring disaster And does not retract His words, But will arise against the house of evildoers And against the help of the workers of iniquity.

³ Now the Egyptians are men and not God, And their horses are flesh and not spirit; So the LORD will stretch out His hand, And he who helps will stumble And he who is helped will fall, And all of them will come to an end together.

Isa. 47:10-13 ⁰ "You felt secure in your wickedness and said, 'No one sees me,' Your wisdom and your knowledge, they have deluded you; For you have said in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me.'

¹¹ "But evil will come on you Which you will not know how to charm away; And disaster will fall on you For which you cannot atone; And destruction about which you do not know Will come on you suddenly.

¹² "Stand *fast* now in your spells And in your many sorceries With which you have labored from your youth; Perhaps you will be able to profit, Perhaps you may cause trembling.

¹³ "You are wearied with your many counsels; Let now the astrologers, Those who prophesy by the stars, Those who predict by the new moons, Stand up and save you from what will come upon you.

Term: counselor

צֹדֵק noun common masculine singular absolute

Holladay, *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT (HOL)*

Hol3258

צֹדֵק & f. *צֹדֵק, sf. צֹדֵק: pt. צֹדֵק: **counselor** 2S 15¹²; f. 2C 22³. (pg 132)

Motyer – the book of Isaiah is noted for significant names (7:3; 8:1) both foreshadowing the coming events and also “embodying” the word of the Lord.

Fourfold name – the first two elements match his earlier name of Immanuel and the second two note the conditions he will bring about.

Wonderful counselor – lit – wonder-counselor and wonder means something like supernatural.

Supernatural counsellor

One giving supernatural counsel

Isa. 1:26 ²⁶ "Then I will restore your judges as at the first, And your counselors as at the beginning; After that you will be called the city of righteousness, A faithful city."

2 Sam. 16:23 ²³ The advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, *was* as if one inquired of the word of God; so was all the advice of Ahithophel *regarded* by both David and Absalom.

1 Ki. 3:28 ²⁸ When all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had handed down, they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

In particularizing this gift of the coming King, Isaiah was understandably reacting from Ahaz, the king who was able and clever but not wise. Much more, however, he was going to the heart of things – as did the young Solomon.

1 Ki. 3:9 ⁹ "So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

The decisions of a king make or break a kingdom and a kingdom designed to be everlasting demands a wisdom like that of the everlasting God. In this case, like God because he is God, the mighty God, the title given to the Lord himself in 10:21. Plainly, Isaiah means us to take seriously the *el* component of Immanuel. Mighty caps the military references in 3-5.

Isa. 28:29 ²⁹ This also comes from the LORD of hosts, *Who* has made *His* counsel wonderful and *His* wisdom great.

Isa. 40:13-14 ³ Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him?

¹⁴ With whom did He consult and *who* gave Him understanding? And *who* taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge And informed Him of the way of understanding?

God's understanding is intrinsic to Himself, not provided by something or someone greater – because there is none.

Romans 11:34-36 ³⁴ For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR?

³⁵ Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN?

³⁶ For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen.

1 Cor. 2:16 ¹⁶ For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.

Esv – counselor – one who is able to make wise plans, he is a ruler whose wisdom is beyond merely human capabilities, unlike intelligent but foolish Ahaz.

All double names

Ligon Duncan - And so He is called a "Wonderful Counselor." And He's called a "Wonderful Counselor" because of the wonder of His work as well. He is seen as a divine, wise, ruler of the people of God. The government is on His shoulders and the wonder of His counsel is apparent to all. Remember Ahaz was a very energetic and, frankly, clever man. But he was not a wise man by biblical standards. And in contrast, Isaiah looks forward to the day when God will give His people a wise ruler, a ruler who has wisdom which is from above. ... And think of how the New Testament and how

Isaiah and how other parts of Scripture ascribe this kind of divine wondrous heavenly wisdom to Jesus Christ. God made His counsel wonderful and His wisdom great. He is called “the Wisdom from God,” in 1 Corinthians 1:30; “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” Colossians 2:3. “And by His knowledge He will justify many,” Isaiah says in Isaiah 53:11, because He knows exactly what is needed to save sinners. ...

Jer. 23:5 ⁵ "Behold, *the* days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land.

My note - Don't we want that in leadership? You want a wise, just boss. You want a wise, just governor. You want a wise, just President. Everyone around the world wants that and suffers when they don't have it.

Lig - And so here's the first attribute of the King: He is a Wonderful Counselor in contrast to the un-wisdom of earthly kings who have led God's people into peril and into destruction. He will lead them in wisdom and His wisdom is wondrous.

Deity and royalty in the names

Deity	royalty
Wonderful	counselor
God	mighty
Eternal	father
Peace	prince

1 Cor. 1:24 ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Mighty God,

Isa. 10:20-21 ²⁰ Now in that day the remnant of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped, will never again rely on the one who struck them, but will truly rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. ²¹ A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God.

Eternal Father,

ESV – father is of a benevolent protector, which is the task of the ideal king and is also the way God himself cares for his people, not using the Trinitarian language for “father” for the Messiah; rather, it is portraying him as a king

Bkc – everlasting father is referring to his his relationship to time, not within the trinity

Ps. 103:13-14 ¹³ Just as a father has compassion on *his* children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him. ¹⁴ For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are *but* dust.

Isa. 22:20-21 ²⁰ "Then it will come about in that day, That I will summon My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, ²¹ And I will clothe him with your tunic And tie your sash securely about him. I will entrust him with

your authority, And he will become a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.

Prince of Peace.

Isa. 54:10 ¹⁰ "For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, But My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, And My covenant of peace will not be shaken," Says the LORD who has compassion on you. Esv - He is the ruler who will bring about peace because the nations will rely on his just decisions in their disputes.

⁷ There will be no end to the increase

In what way will his government and peace continue to increase? Is this during the millennial kingdom or new earth?

His empire of grace will forever expand, and every moment will be better than the last.

Bkc – following the kingdom on earth, he will rule for eternity.

of *His* government
or of peace,

On the throne of David
and over his kingdom,
To establish it
and to uphold it

with justice
and righteousness
From then on
and forevermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

Bkc – this will all be accomplished by the zeal of the Lord- the coming of the millennial kingdom depends on God, not Israel. The messiah will rule because God promised it and will zealously see that the kingdom comes.

They were unaware that this would be divided between the two advents of Christ 1 Pet. 1:10-12 ¹⁰ As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful searches and inquiries, ¹¹ seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven- - things into which angels long to look.

Laney –

Immanuel as the great light (1-2)

Immanuel as the great liberator (3-5)

Immanuel as the great Lord (6-7)

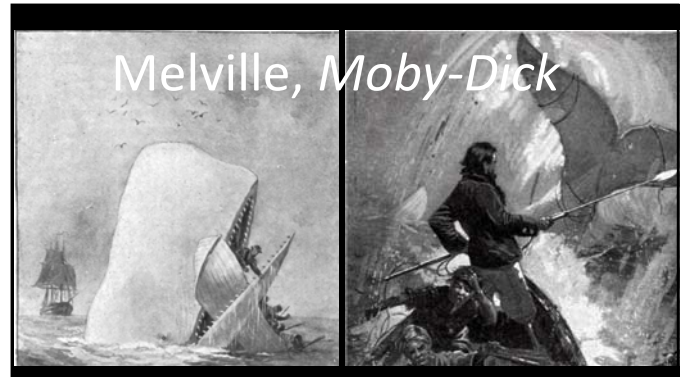
Hard to rest as the harpooner during Christmas. Presents to buy. Concerts to attend. It's got to be hallmark movie perfect. Pull aside to rest and focus on Sunday mornings. If somethings got to give, don't let it be worship of Jesus – whether it is individual study of the Word or corporate gatherings.

Imagine telling a loved one, I'm so sorry I couldn't attend your birthday party, I was so busy celebrating your birthday without you all month long.

- i. ~~Paired with Isaiah earlier prophecy we know this will not only be a child but a child born of a virgin.~~
- ii. ~~**Isaiah 7:14** Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.~~
- iii. ~~Skeptics say, "that's not possible! Virgins don't have babies!" Exactly!~~
- iv. ~~CS Lewis shared the story of an atheistic colleague who came by to visit C.S. Lewis at Christmas. Lewis' window was slightly cracked open and there were carolers singing down below and they happened to be singing about the virgin birth, and at that point his colleague said to him, "Isn't it good that we know that virgins don't have children." And C.S. Lewis responded by saying, "Don't you think that they knew that virgins didn't have children?"~~
- v. ~~In another place Lewis interacts with the same idea. He imagines a dialogue with a skeptic who says science has disproved miracles.~~
 - 1. ~~Miracles,' said my friend. 'Oh come. Science has knocked the bottom out of all that. We know that Nature is governed by fixed laws.' 'Didn't people always know that?' said I. '[Oh, no],' said he. 'For instance, take a story like the Virgin Birth. We know now that such a thing couldn't happen. We know there *must* be a male spermatozoon.'~~
 - 2. ~~Lewis goes on to explain to his friend that people at the time knew that as well. They might not have know the details of how genetics worked, but Joseph planned to divorce Mary when he learned she was pregnant. Why? Because he knew that meant she had been with a man. He knew nature worked in fixed, regular ways but he also knew there was something outside of nature.~~
 - 3. ~~'But modern science has shown there's no such thing.'~~
 - ~~'Really,' said I. 'Which of the sciences?'~~
 - ~~'Oh, well, that's a matter of detail,' said my friend. 'I can't give you chapter and verse from memory.'~~
 - ~~'But, don't you see', said I, 'that science never could show anything of the sort?'~~
 - ~~'Why on earth not?'~~
 - ~~'Because science studies Nature. And the question is whether anything *besides* Nature exists—anything "outside". How could you find that out by studying simply Nature?'~~
- vi. ~~He is wonderful, supernatural from the beginning of His earthly life.~~



1



2

1. The context of the promise: darkness and oppression (9:1-5)

3

2. Jesus is our Wonderful Counselor (9:6a)

4

a. He gives miraculously good advice.

5

Isaiah 3:1-5 For behold, the Lord GOD of hosts is going to remove from Jerusalem and Judah Both supply and support, the whole supply of bread And the whole supply of water; ² The mighty man and the warrior, The judge and the prophet, The diviner and the elder, ³ The captain of fifty and the honorable man,

6

Isaiah 3:1-5 The counselor and the expert artisan, And the skillful enchanter. ⁴ And I will make mere lads their princes, And capricious children will rule over them, ⁵ And the people will be oppressed, Each one by another, and each one by his neighbor; The youth will storm against the elder And the inferior against the honorable.

7

Isaiah 19:11 The princes of Zoan are mere fools; The advice of Pharaoh's wisest advisers has become stupid. How can you *men* say to Pharaoh, "I am a son of the wise, a son of ancient kings "?

8

b. His future rule
will be marked
by wisdom and
justice.

9

Jeremiah 23:5 "Behold, *the* days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land.

10

c. He is wise in
Himself.

11

Isaiah 40:13-14 Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him? ¹⁴ With whom did He consult and *who* gave Him understanding? And *who* taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge And informed Him of the way of understanding?

12

3. Because He is our Wonderful Counselor...

13

a. He knows how to save us.

14

Ephesians 1:7-8a In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He lavished on us.

15

Ephesians 1:8b-10 In all wisdom and insight ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.

16

b. He understands
the *world*.