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Mighty God

Isaiah 9.6-7

Series: The Child-King

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The Village Church

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I. **The Child-King**

A. Advent Text

1. **Isaiah 9:6-7** (ESV) —

- a. 6 For to us a child is born,
- b. to us a son is given;
- c. and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
- d. and his name shall be called
- e. Wonderful Counselor,
- f. Mighty God,
- g. Everlasting Father,
- h. Prince of Peace.
- i. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end,
- j. on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
- k. to establish it and to uphold it
- l. with justice and with righteousness
- m. from this time forth and forevermore.
- n. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

B. This is the kind of text that can give you whiplash

1. About the time you think it's heading in one direction, the text seems to take a detour
 - a. Sending you where you never expected to go

C. As you recall from last week, the Chapter 9 of Isaiah opens with great optimism for an oppressed people

1. The northern kingdom of Israel had collapsed
 - a. Beset by moral and spiritual deterioration, God had inflicted them with great pressure from Assyria – which overran Israel, exiled many, and imported Assyrians to dominate the chaotic culture
2. The southern kingdom of Judah was under pressure as well – for pretty much the same reasons
 - a. They were following the same idolatrous path as their northern neighbors
3. And much of Isaiah's message was a warning to Judah to change course, or they too would fall to the northern hordes

D. But Chapter 9 bears a message of hope

1. **Isaiah 9:1** (ESV) —
 - a. 1 But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. ...
 2. Really? That's different!
 3. **Isaiah 9:1** (ESV) — 1 ... In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.
 - a. Zebulun and Naphtali – the former tribal territories of Israel in what we know as Galilee
 - b. Galilee of the nations – for when the conquering nations poured in from the north, these were the first territories to experience oppression and displacement
 4. And yet Isaiah says, “No more!”
 - a. “No gloom for her who was in anguish”
 - b. And then he says this:
 5. **Isaiah 9:2** (ESV) —
 - a. 2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.
 6. A remarkable vision of hope
 - a. From darkness to a great light!
 7. He goes on:
- E. **Isaiah 9:3** (ESV) —
1. 3 You have multiplied the nation...
 - a. Instead of a nation dispersed and destroyed – multiplied!
 2. **Isaiah 9:3** (ESV) — 3 ... you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
 - a. In an agricultural nation, harvest is one of the times of great joy
 - b. When all the efforts to plow and plant and cultivate bear fruit
 - c. Celebration when the sheaves come in!
 3. And when they divide the spoil
 - a. The image here is the other side of the ancient societies – those who are often at war
 - b. And the image is victory over the enemies
 - c. Gladness when they conquering armies come home and divide the spoil
- F. **Isaiah 9:4–5** (ESV) —
1. 4 For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
 2. 5 For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.
 - a. The metaphor of conquering warriors continues
 - b. And the result will be so thorough, so overwhelming, that the very weapons of war will become a thing of the past
 - c. The ultimate disarmament action
 3. So who is it who would orchestrate such a decisive victory?

- a. Who would lead the charge?
 - b. Who would carry the people of God to glory?
 - 4. Here's the whiplash
- G. **Isaiah 9:6** (ESV) — 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given...
 - 1. A child?
 - a. Are you serious?
 - 2. We were expecting – well – a warrior
 - a. A Gideon-like leader
 - b. A Joshua leading troops into battle, conquering territory after territory
 - c. A David slaying a nation of Goliaths
 - 3. But a child?
 - 4. But then again, that speaks to God's ways and means as compared to our ways and means
 - a. And it speaks to the immensity of God's power
 - b. As God can do through a child what even the most powerful militaries cannot even begin to accomplish
- H. **Isaiah 9:6** (ESV) —
 - 1. 6 For to us a child is born,
 - 2. to us a son is given;
 - 3. and the government shall be upon his shoulder...
- I. This child born, this son given
 - 1. Has a government!
 - a. He carries it on his shoulder
 - b. I don't know if you seen the shoulder of an infant lately
 - c. There's not much to it!
 - d. And yet, this child, his shoulder, is no ordinary child, and no ordinary shoulder
- J. As a basketball fan, we had season tickets for years at WVU
 - 1. And we saw some great college basketball, especially during the years when they were in the Big East with some great programs like Syracuse, Connecticut, and Pitt
 - 2. And we saw some great players
 - 3. And occasionally, one of those players would take over the game
 - a. He would get the ball and was unstoppable
 - b. And in the end we would all say, "He put the team on his back!" or "He carried the team."
- K. Well, here's this child, this baby!
 - 1. And he's carrying, not a bunch of basketball players
 - 2. He's carrying the government!
 - a. Not "a" government; "the" government!
 - b. The government of everything and everyone
 - 3. We sing, "He's got the whole world in His hands"
 - a. We should sing, "He's got the whole government on His shoulder"
- L. He is the **Child-King**

1. The most incongruous images imaginable
 - a. The Child who is the Sovereign
 - b. And not like has sometimes happened – the child as the king-in-waiting, and will assume the throne when the father passes
 - c. No! He’s King now! He’s the Sovereign now!

II. **The Godness of God**

- A. We’ve been focusing on the names of this Child as we began our Advent series last week
- B. **Isaiah 9:6** (ESV) —
 1. 6 ... and his name shall be called
 2. Wonderful Counselor,
 3. Mighty God,
 4. Everlasting Father,
 5. Prince of Peace.
- C. You’ll recall from last week that first name – Wonderful Counselor – is actually not a very accurate English translation from the original Hebrew
 1. That Isaiah (actually, God through Isaiah, His prophet) didn’t use the adjective “wonderful” so that it modifies the noun “Counselor”
 2. He actually used the noun form – “Wonder”
 3. So this Child shall be called “Wonder Counselor”
 4. He’s not just wonderful – He is Wonder
- D. And we observed, then, that this first name takes us to His deity
 1. This Child, this Wonder, must be God
 - a. For the way “wonder” is used in scripture – it applies to only things God can do
 2. So we have this hint – actually, it’s more than a hint, isn’t it – of the God-man
 - a. Of the incarnation of the Son of God
 - b. Of God come in the flesh
- E. And in a sense, all of these names reflect those dimensions of God-incarnate
 1. Even the introduction – **“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given...”**
 2. The “child” speaks of His humanity
 - a. And the “son” – well, whose son would that be?
 - b. The Son of God
 - c. The son speaks of his deity
 3. The God-man
- F. And so with each name there is the statement of deity
 1. And also with the impact of deity on the created world
- G. **Wonderful Counselor** (or Wonder Counselor)
 1. Wonder – God
 2. Counselor – God’s wisdom applied to humanity
- H. **Mighty God**
 1. God refers to, well, God!
 2. Mighty – speaks of God’s power of His creation

- I. **Everlasting Father**
 - 1. Everlasting – the eternal character of God
 - 2. Father – the way this God cares for His earthly family
- J. **Prince of Peace**
 - 1. Peace – a quality that can only come from the deity (peace is, after all, a fruit of the Spirit)
 - 2. Prince – the earthly means of establishing this quality as God reigns and rules in and through His people
- K. The God of Christianity – indeed, the God of the Bible – is not some far removed, inaccessible Other
 - 1. He is God, to be sure
 - a. With all of the attributes that Bible assigns to God
 - 2. But He is an engaged God
 - a. A God who loves His creation
 - b. A God who loves His people
 - c. A God who moves in and through His creation to accomplish His purposes
 - 3. He is not the God of the deists
 - a. A God who made the clock, gets it ticking, and lets it run
 - b. Only to sit apart from it as a distant observer
 - 4. No! This God, this Child-King, He came
 - a. Came to this planet
 - b. Came as God-incarnate
 - c. Came to meet us where we are
 - d. Came to find us when we were lost
 - e. Came to save us from our sin
- L. I called this section the **Godness of God**
 - 1. But many of you are looking at your outline and saying, “No, this is a misprint – he really means the “goodness of God”
 - 2. No – I actually do mean the Godness of God
 - a. It’s important from time to time to speak about the Godness of God
 - b. And by the way, I didn’t up that term; I stole it from someone – don’t even remember who I stole it from!
 - 3. But the reason why we speak about the Godness of God is that many in our day speak about God, but in a way that demeans His nature
 - a. And look at God as if He were but a bigger version of the best version of ourselves
- M. The reason I raise this issue is because the history of scholarly commentary on this name – Mighty God – seeks to undermine His Godness
 - 1. They say, the term is just metaphorical
 - a. That this Child merely does “God-like” things
 - b. That He really isn’t God
 - c. After all, they say, the scripture sometimes calls human beings “gods”
 - d. Jesus, quoting Psalm 82:

- e. **John 10:34–35** (ESV) — 34 Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? 35 If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—
- 2. So there, they say – the scripture calls human beings gods sometimes
 - a. So this Child may not be God, really, at all
- N. But they err who say such things
 - 1. For whenever terms like that are applied to humans, it is the Hebrew “elohim”
 - a. Which is sometimes used of God
 - b. Sometimes of angels
 - c. And, like Psalm 82, sometimes of humans
 - 2. But that’s not the word here in Isaiah 9
 - a. Here it is simply “El”
 - b. And El is always used of the Deity
 - 3. **Isaiah 31:3** (ESV) — 3 The Egyptians are man, and not God... (El)
 - 4. **Isaiah 10:21** (ESV) — 21 A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. (El gibbor – the same phrase as in Chapter 9
 - 5. So Mighty God, El gibbor, can be none other than the deity Himself
 - 6. And this Child, this son given – He shall be called Mighty God
 - a. Why?
 - b. Because He is Mighty God!
- O. And even more – the root of the Hebrew word El itself means “strong”
 - 1. And so the confluence of the two words raises the intensity of its meaning
 - 2. This Child is “Mighty Strong”
 - a. He is strong on steroids!
 - 3. So we don’t just have the impression of the power of God
 - a. We have the mighty power of God
 - b. We have the omnipotence of God
 - 4. All invested in this Child who is born, this Son who is given

III. **The Power of the Child**

- A. And that is indeed the case when we examine the earthly life of this Child-King
 - 1. And how He exhibited such power
 - 2. How He is Mighty God incarnate
- B. **Over Truth**
 - 1. Jesus demonstrated in His words that He knew the end from the beginning
 - a. And He had complete command of the truth of every matter before Him
 - 2. And He constantly, it seems, confounded those who fashioned themselves as the arbiters of truth – the Pharisees and teachers of the Law
 - 3. **Mark 1:22** (ESV) —
 - a. 22 And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.
 - 4. Remember when the Sadducees, who do not believe in the resurrection, tried to trick Jesus by posing the possibility that a woman may have

survived seven husbands, and asked whose wife she would be in the resurrection?

a. **Matthew 22:29–33** (ESV) — 29 But Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. 31 And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: 32 ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not God of the dead, but of the living.” 33 And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching.

5. Jesus had power over the truth

a. In fact, He would say **John 14:6** (ESV) — 6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

b. He had power over the truth, because He is the truth!

C. **Over the Creation**

1. Jesus had power over the natural world, the creation it self

2. **Mark 4:35–41** (ESV) —

a. 35 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.”

b. 36 And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him.

c. 37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling.

d. 38 But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”

e. 39 And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

f. 40 He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?”

g. 41 And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

3. How could He have done that?

a. Well, because He’s God incarnate!

b. **John 1:3** (ESV) — 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

c. **Colossians 1:16** (ESV) — 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

4. He is the Creator of all things

a. So this Child had power over the Creation

D. **Over Physical Bodies**

1. Of course, one part of the creation is us humans

- a. And we humans are embodied creatures
- b. Having a spirit, soul – all united in our bodies
- 2. And so much of Jesus' ministry had to do with healing
 - a. Too many to list them all!
- 3. **Matthew 9:35** (ESV) —
 - a. 35 And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.
- 4. Jesus healed every kind of malady known at the time
 - a. Physically handicapped – the lame
 - b. Blind
 - c. Deaf
 - d. Mute
 - e. Internal diseases – hemorrhage
- 5. He even raised the dead!
 - a. Lazarus – after he was in the grave four days!
- 6. **Mark 5:21–24** (ESV) —
 - a. 21 And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea.
 - b. 22 Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet
 - c. 23 and implored him earnestly, saying, “My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live.”
 - d. 24 And he went with him. And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him.
- 7. **Mark 5:35–42** (ESV) —
 - a. 35 While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?”
 - b. 36 But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, “Do not fear, only believe.”
 - c. 37 And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James.
 - d. 38 They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly.
 - e. 39 And when he had entered, he said to them, “Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping.”
 - f. 40 And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was.
 - g. 41 Taking her by the hand he said to her, “Talitha cumi,” which means, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.”

- h. 42 And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement.
 - 8. This Child has power over our physical bodies
 - a. Even the power of life and death
 - b. Why?
 - 9. **John 1:3–4** (ESV) —
 - a. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.
 - b. 4 In him was life...
 - 10. That's because this Child is God
 - a. **John 5:26** (ESV) — 26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.
- E. **Over the Spiritual Realm**
 - 1. Not only over the physical realm did this Child have power, but also over the spiritual realm
 - a. The realm of Satan and demons
 - 2. **Mark 1:34** (ESV) — 34 And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.
 - a. Sometimes casting out demons was associated with healing
 - b. Demons had to ask Jesus permission even to speak!
 - 3. **Mark 1:39** (ESV) — 39 And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.
 - a. And sometimes casting out demons was associated with preaching!
 - 4. **Matthew 8:28–32** (ESV) —
 - a. 28 And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way.
 - b. 29 And behold, they cried out, “What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?”
 - c. 30 Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them.
 - d. 31 And the demons begged him, saying, “If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs.”
 - e. 32 And he said to them, “Go.” So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters.
 - 5. That's an amazing story of how, not only could Jesus cast out demons – but how the demons knew that they had to obey Him
 - a. Why?
 - b. Because this Child had power over the spiritual realm
- F. **Over Sin**
 - 1. There was the time when the crowds thronged around Jesus
 - a. He was in a house in Galilee – the place was packed

- b. And a couple of guys were bringing a paralyzed man on a stretcher
 - c. And they couldn't get into the house
 - d. So they took him up on the roof, created a hole in the tiles, and dropped the man down in front of Jesus
 - 2. **Luke 5:20–25** (ESV) —
 - a. 20 And when he saw their faith, he said, “Man, your sins are forgiven you.”
 - b. 21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”
 - c. 22 When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, “Why do you question in your hearts?”
 - d. 23 Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’?
 - e. 24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the man who was paralyzed—“I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home.”
 - f. 25 And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God.
 - 3. And that's probably the one power we all need Jesus to display for us!
 - a. The forgiveness of sins
 - b. And only God can forgive sins
 - c. This Child born, this Son given – He can forgive sins
 - d. He has that power – He has that authority
 - 4. He still does!
 - a. Are your sins forgiven?
 - b. Have you cast yourself on Jesus for the forgiveness of sins?
 - c. Because you can't do it yourself – only God can provide the propitiation for you!
 - d. Propitiation – the wrath-removing sacrifice
 - e. Jesus, the Child-King, the God-man – paid it all
 - 5. He alone has the power to forgive sins
- G. **Over the Future**
 - 1. We find the drama of the future unfolding in the book of Revelation
 - a. A particularly poignant scene
 - 2. **Revelation 5:1–5** (ESV) —
 - a. 1 Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. [scroll containing the plan of redemption as it would unfold through history]
 - b. 2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?”
 - c. 3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it,

- d. 4 and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.
- e. 5 And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”
- 3. Only this Child-King, only this Lion-Lamb, has the power to break the seals and open the scroll
 - a. And bring history to its appointed conclusion
- 4. What kind of power is this?
 - a. **Hebrews 7:16** (ESV) — 16 who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by **the power of an indestructible life.**

IV. Conclusion

- A. This Mighty God – this Child-King
 - 1. By the power of His indestructible life
 - 2. Has power over
 - a. The truth
 - b. The creation
 - c. The physical body
 - d. The spiritual realm
 - e. Forgiveness of sins
 - f. The future
- B. This Mighty God is worthy of our worship
 - 1. He is worthy of our trust
 - 2. He alone can give us hope