

December 17, 2017

## “A King Like David”

Isaiah 9:6-7

FCF: Need of a king - guidance and governance, provision and protection

**PROPOSITION:** (magnet) Christmas is about the coming of the King.

(anchor) We have great cause to celebrate.

### **SCRIPTURE INTRODUCTION:**

There were dark periods in ancient Israel’s history. One of the bleakest was the time of the Judges. Let me explain. This was after the exodus - God’s deliverance of His people from slavery in Egypt. Because of their hesitation to enter the Promised Land, Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years. Then came a time of conquest as Joshua led them into the land. But then came the time of the Judges and it was plain that all was not well (**READ Judges 21:25**).

Historical events laid bare their hearts. And made clear their great need for a great king. The same is true today. Historical events lay bare our hearts. And make clear our great need for a great king. Not just any king but the One whose birth we celebrate - Jesus, a King like David.

**SCRIPTURE READING:** **Isaiah 9:1-7**

### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

### **SERMON INTRODUCTION:**

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” captures the mood of the Old Testament well. It begins with a beautiful creation broken by humanity’s fall. God promises a Deliverer, a descendent of Eve. Later comes the promise to Abraham. He will be blessed to be a blessing and the line will go through him. We read of Isaac, Jacob, and the nation of Israel. Later comes governance by a king and a promise made to David (**READ 2 Samuel 7:16**). This set in motion a tension between great hope and expectation and great disappointment and disarray. For the nation meant to be a blessing and a light was sadly more often a curse and a part of the darkness. The light was flickering. The history was one of limited reach and rapid decline degenerating into years of division and finally exile. “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” captures the mood quite well.

But, though the people had failed, the Lord’s purposes and promises could not and would not. Which brings us to the prophets and these words of Isaiah. Verse 1 speaks with certainty to a time of change, a dramatic reversal on the horizon. Verses 2-3 capture the response to this, one of overflowing joy. Verses 4-7 explain how this could be. God will do a work, one defying the odds, much like the victory at Midian years before. The terror and tools of war, of conflict of any kind at all levels, will be swept away. How? Through what and whom? A King like David, great David’s greater Son, one in the line of David to whom David’s reign pointed and prepared.

Which brings us to Christmas. Christmas is about the coming of the King. So we have great cause to celebrate. Especially as we consider these two things - the kingdom and the King.

### **I. THE KINGDOM**

First, the kingdom. How can such joy be so certain? Because of what is coming - the kingdom of the King (**READ Isaiah 9:7**). This is cause for great joy and certain hope.

*A) Righteousness*

Let's look at the characteristics of the kingdom ushered in by King Jesus.

1. What has been

It will mean an end to the corruption, graft and greed, that so typifies what we are accustomed to.

2. What will be

This will be a kingdom of justice - each given what they are due. And righteousness - all done according to God's standards. If you have been cheated or trampled upon, this is good news.

*B) Peace*

This coming kingdom will be one of justice and righteousness. And peace.

1. What has been

No more wars between nations. No more bloodshed on the streets. No more quarrels in homes.

2. What will be

For this will be a kingdom of peace, of shalom - the way things are meant to and supposed to be.

*C) Eternity*

A kingdom of righteousness, justice, and peace. With a stability never known before.

1. What has been

An end to the turnstiles of rulers upon the throne, an end to military coups or just natural death.

2. What will be

How long will it last? This kingdom will be established, upheld, enduring and lasting forever.

*D) Universality*

There is an eternity to this kingdom. But how far will it spread? It will be universal.

1. What has been

At its peak, the nation of Israel ranged from Dan to Beersheba - north to south about 150 miles.

2. What will be

That was but a foretaste of the spread of the kingdom to come (**READ Zechariah 9:10**).

This is how our joy can be so certain - the reality of the kingdom of the King.

*Illustration:*

With such a glimpse into the future, how should that impact our present? Think with me. We know how things will end. Much as we do with movies we've seen time and again that pull us in, making us feel as though we're there with the characters. I think of the Jimmy Stewart classic of the season, "It's a Wonderful Life." George Bailey is in a dire situation. Mr. Potter finally has him right where he wants him. It seems financial ruin is all that awaits, the Building and Loan going down and taking him with it. Oh, it's going to take quite a rescue to pull this off.

The story pulls me in. So much so that I have to keep calling to mind what I know is coming at the end, when the people of Bedford Falls rally to George's aid. Which then helps me as the viewer say, "*This looks bad. But I know how it ends. So I can hang on a little longer.*"

*Application:*

With such a glimpse into the future, how should that impact our present? Think of our causes. Some of us are committed to preserving the environment, animal rights, fighting human trafficking. Each good causes. Traced to the roots, those concerns are sustained by the Christian worldview. For God shares those concerns. And it is the future breaking into the present that will sustain you with the sure frustrations as you press on, knowing no such labors can be futile.

So this impacts our causes. And our struggles as well - physical, relational, spiritual, even political. It all matters in this kingdom. And it will all be made new. So we can hold on.

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**II. THE KING**

So first, the kingdom. Which leads us then to the King. How can such joy be so certain? Not only because of what is coming but who - the King of the kingdom (**READ Isaiah 9:6**).

*A) Wonderful Counselor*

## 1. Counselor

He is the Counselor - not an advisor or a coach but one with deep insight, a plan and purpose.

## 2. Wonderful

And he is the Wonderful Counselor, meaning miraculous. He possesses a divine wisdom.

*B) Mighty God*

## 1. Mighty

And divine power as well. He is mighty, implying the strength of a warrior protector.

## 2. God

Mighty God is a title of the Lord Himself. And this title is clearly being given to this King.

*C) Everlasting Father*

## 1. Father

And He is described as Father, not as in the first person of the Trinity but as in the ways ancient kings would refer to themselves as the father of their subjects. So He is a benevolent protector.

## 2. Everlasting

But He is the Everlasting Father. He will have no need for a successor to follow in His steps.

*D) Prince of Peace*

## 1. Prince

Finally, He is the Prince. Meaning He is a ruler with a reign over nations and people.

## 2. Peace

The Prince of Peace. His decisions and pronouncements lead to a state of shalom. His renewal and His restoration will bring peace not just into the heart but upon this whole earth as well.

The kingdom of v.7 is ushered in by the king of v.6. And this is not meant as hyperbole. This is a prophecy of a reign far beyond any other ever seen. This is great David's greater Son.

*Illustration:*

Now these are strident claims, really strong doctrinal statements. Now “doctrine” has a bad rap. But think with me here. “Doctrine” is but what we base our lives on, the foundations for which we contend, the things we insist are true. Which means we all have doctrines.

Let me explain with a quote from Tim Keller ([READ “The Purpose of Christmas”](#)):

Mr. A is a Christian. His friend, Mr. B, is not. Mr. A one day sits down with Mr. B and says, "I wish you could believe Jesus is Savior and Lord. Let me try to convince you." Mr. B says, "Nobody can know anything definite about God. And secondly, you should not try to persuade other people to see things your way. That's not right."

When Mr. B says, you can't know anything definite about God, what is that? That is a faith position. That's not scientific. That's not empirical. It's a belief. And secondly, when he says you mustn't try to convince other people your take on spiritual reality is the right one, he at that moment is trying to say to Mr. A, "You ought to see it my way." In other words, he's saying, "I have a relativistic take on spiritual reality, and you ought to take it." He's doing the very thing he's forbidding as he's forbidding it.

Both Mr. A and Mr. B are being doctrinal. They have a non-empirical faith position. They've bet their lives on it. Mr. B has bet his eternal destiny on the idea that nobody can know anything definite about God. And they're both contending for it. Here's the difference. Mr. A is being openly doctrinal. He's being frank about his doctrine. Mr. B is not. Mr. B is in denial.

*Application:*

We all have our doctrine. We're all doctrinal. We shouldn't be doctrinaire - dismissive or intolerant of others. But we're all doctrinal. It's not a matter of if but what those doctrines are.

Which raises a question. What is your doctrine? And what impact does your doctrine have on your life? Would the people around you say that it has made you a person of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control? To embrace the message of the coming of this King and live under His reign will have that kind of effect on you. Not at all at once but slowly, surely. Your doctrine has an impact on your life. What's yours?

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**CONCLUSION:**

Some of you know that R. C. Sproul passed away last week. Dr. Sproul was the founder of Ligonier Ministries, a seminary professor, a pastor and theologian, a prolific author and speaker. He has been described as “the greatest and most influential proponent of the recovery of Reformed theology in the last century.” That's probably true and his ministry certainly had an impact on me and no few other pastors in our denomination. Along the lines of the celebration of Christmas, I want to read you this quote from [Tabletalk](#) some years ago ([READ quote](#)):

Every generation has its abundance of Scrooges. The church is full of them. We hear endless complaints of commercialism. We are constantly told to put Christ back into Christmas. We hear that the tradition of Santa Claus is a sacrilege. We listen to those acquainted with history murmur that Christmas isn't biblical. The church invented Christmas to compete with the ancient Roman festival honoring the bull-god Mithras, the nay-say-ers complain. Christmas? A mere capitulation to paganism.

And so we rain on Jesus' parade and assume an olympian detachment from the joyous holiday. All this carping is but a modern dose of Scroogeism, our own sanctimonious profanation of the holy...

...When God touches earth, the place is holy. When God appears in history, the time is holy. There was never a more holy place than the city of Bethlehem, where the Word became flesh. There was never a more holy time than Christmas morning when Emmanuel was born. Christmas is a holiday. It is the holiest of holy days. We must heed the warning of Jacob Marley: 'Don't be a Scrooge' at Christmas.

That was R. C. Sproul from a December 1993 article entitled, “Marley's Message to Scrooge”.

There's a reasonable question to raise at this point. How can this be? How can it be that

a man so steeped in the Bible, so serious in his stances, so strong in his convictions - a man who was such a stalwart defender of the faith be such a celebrant of Christmas? And the answer is simply this. It had everything to do with the faith he defended, the gospel he proclaimed, the Bible he studied, and the Savior he worshipped. Don't you see? To the degree those things are true of us, there will be no place for Scrooge and no room for his dismissive "Bah, humbug."

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