A Prophetic Christmas: The Child with Four Names

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Preacher: Terry McCutcheon

[0:00] Welcome to our lunchtime Bible talk this Christmas time. Thank you so much for coming a wee bit early. We're starting a wee bit early today so that we can get a few more carols, a few more carols in.

Just talking with my pal the other day about how I'd never really noticed before how much great truth and how much great doctrine is in the Christmas carols. None more so than the first one that we're going to sing in your sheet there today.

To most people looking in, to the child in the manger, they've just seen a wee baby. But veiled in flesh the Godhead see. Hail the incarnate deity, pleased as man with man to dwell.

Jesus, our Emmanuel. We stand to sing, hark the herald angels sing. Lord, we stand to sing, hark the herald angels sing.

Glory to the new King. Peace, Lord, and the mercy of God.

[1:14] Love and see the dreadful soon. God, O Lord, and the mercy of God.

God, O Lord, and the mercy of God. We stand to sing, hark the herald angels sing. God, O Lord, and the mercy of God. God, O Lord, and the mercy of God. God, O Lord, and the mercy of God. I see the dreadful soon.

In Him, I hope we hold Him on. God, O Lord, and the mercy of God. Build in flesh and blood and seed Build in covenant with me and fear Jesus, I will be my new king Jesus, I will be my new world Long live on me to sin Glory to the new Lord Here I came, the thanks of peace There I saw a righteous place White and bright to holy peace

This will be in His feet While He makes His glory fire For that man in glory fire All the rest of His sons are good Long to live in the second world And the devil we shall see O come, O come, Emmanuel O come, O come, Emmanuel O come, thou day-spring Come and cheer Our spirits by thine advent hear Disperse the gloomy clouds of night And death start shadows put to flight We stand to sing O come, O come, Emmanuel

O come, Emmanuel O come, Emmanuel O come, Emmanuel O come, Emmanuel Peace bardzo The Lord We will bring to you immediately to the dead, the sea of rain upon the earth.

[4:50] We will keep you in the stakes. We shall Lemle, mantra, and we shall come to all ears perché.

Ommand I Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice In the love of the moon, the moon In the glory of each child In the glory of the Lord How the hell is to be My world more strength the hylie

Let Him that be Now there's ■ Query In DI■ recalled stock Now Dave and ■ Jose, ■■■ Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice when you have come to the First Way of Tahoe.

The Holy Spirit of Comanche The Spirit of God The Spirit of God

The Spirit of God The Spirit of God The Spirit of God

The Spirit of God The Spirit o

The Spirit of God And the Spirit of God Wonder man in your mannered or mannered air, the hope's how bedzie paid.

Oh, nice ceremony that I stand, I need the angels to know.

Don't let he lead the truth of the people milky, there will be the klift to go, limpat of all the thine and the gigg wantethcay some, Through the first World Leadership, The world's living on the lane, As we stand and lightly here, Than we walk for a new state.

Amen. Amen.

[12:31] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. The next hymn that we're going to sing reminds us that the Christmas story didn't just happen 2,000 years ago.

It was planned in the councils of God in eternity. And that plan was revealed to prophets. Prophets who prophesied the coming Messiah.

This is he who seers in old time, Chanted off with one accord, Whom the voices of the prophets promised in their faithful word.

Now he shines the long expected. Let creation praise its Lord evermore and evermore. We stand to sing of the Father's love begotten.

[13:32] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Whom the voices of the prophets promised in their faithful word.

[17:47] We turn now to one of those prophets, the prophet Isaiah, and to chapter 9, which you will find in page 573 of the Pew Bible. Isaiah chapter 9.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. We turn now to these famous words, which we see every year in Christmas cards.

In fact, I got a Christmas card just the other day with those famous verses of verse 6. But we begin our reading in chapter 8, verse 22. It's against this backdrop that the light of Isaiah chapter 9 dawns.

And they will look to the earth, but behold distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish. And they will be thrust into thick darkness.

But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time, he brought into contempt the land of Zebeon and the land of Naphtali. But in the future, in the latter time, he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations, or Galilee of the Gentiles.

[18:58] The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwell in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. You have multiplied the nation.

You have increased its joy. They rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, the staff for his shoulder, and the rod of his oppressor.

You have broken, as in the day of Midian. For every boot of the trampling warrior in battle tumult, and every garment rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for the fire.

For to us a child is born. To us a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder. And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and of peace. There will be no end on the throne of David and over his kingdom. To establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness.

[20:03] From this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. Amen. And may God add his blessing to this, the reading of his word.

Let us pray together. Father, how we indeed give you great thanks for your plan of salvation that was planned in eternity.

How we thank you, Father, that that plan was revealed to the prophets who prophesied your plan of salvation. We thank you, Father, that your plan of salvation is to bring light and life to men.

To those who walk in darkness just as in Isaiah's day. And, Father, we know that life in our days is no different.

Our world is full of darkness. Darkness inside our hearts. And darkness outside our hearts. Father, how we give you great thanks for this child who has been born.

[21:05] The Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Who brings the light of life and the light of your salvation to bear into our lives.

As we turn now to your word, Father, we pray indeed that your light would indeed shine upon the pages and into our hearts. That we may know and understand the truths in these pages herein.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. We sing the hymn on the screen just before we come to God's word. And this hymn picks up indeed these words from Isaiah chapter 9.

Good news, good news to you we bring. Let earth's dark shadows flee away. For in Christ has dawned an endless day. Let earth's dark shadows flee away.

itten names above. Thank you. We sing the hymn on the screen. Come to Jesus. And to us with strength Eternal Ski.

[22:33] Good news, good news, good news. All your glory on the screen. For us what seems like is premiersial. All your glory on the screen.

Ho our glory on the screen. Stallions where Snickers makeeres y tar footsteps. And Dios for Sh klimper, And Christ was from God and is there.

Hallelujah. And the blessing of Jesus For us know for us know Alleluia, alleluia.

Heaven's glory is there in the light. Alleluia. And the blessing of the Lord, of the Lord, alleluia.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Heaven's glory is there in the light. Alleluia. Alleluia.

[24:37] Alleluia. Alleluia. On Valentine's Day 2012, Glasgow Rangers Football Club were plunged into darkness and gloom.

The darkness and the gloom of administration. And this came due to the management, or as it turned out to be, the mismanagement of the club. And it seemed that almost nearly every day in that one 4th February, there were new revelations of how the men in charge of the club at the time were bleeding the club dry through their corruption, through their fraud, and through their self-interest.

The darkness that hanged over the club came from inside the club itself. The club huddled towards liquidation. And on the 12th of June that year, I am pleased to say, Rangers were officially liquidated.

Liquidation had claimed one of the world's best known and oldest football clubs. There was darkness and gloom everywhere. All caused by the corruption on the inside.

And if the darkness on the inside wasn't enough, they also had to contend with the darkness that overshadowed them on the outside. The darkness of Her Majesty's revenue and customs, bearing down on them, chasing them to the tune of 70 million pounds of tax that was dodged in players' wages.

[25:55] Different men came and took control of the club. But all they sought to do was to add to the darkness on the inside. But after a few false starts, there appeared on the horizon a king, Dave King, who has promised that he will deal with the darkness within the club.

He has promised that he has the power and the resources to do so. But it still remains to be seen if this king will deliver on his promises. Time indeed will tell.

Now, I share this story just to get at Rangers. No, but as a helpful way into a passage for today. Israel was in a state of darkness and gloom, as we have just read in chapter 8, verse 22.

And what we have in chapter 9 through the prophet Isaiah are the promises of God the king to come and to deal with the darkness. Well, what has caused the darkness?

What has caused this thick darkness? Well, the darkness on the outside was the invading army of Assyria, that great and ruthless empire. Now, chapter 9, verse 1, Galilee would fall in 734 BC and the rest of Israel, the northern kingdom in 722 BC.

[27:09] The ten northern tribes were about to be liquidated. They were about to disappear. And Jerusalem, the capital city, the city of David and Judah, was in the very real danger of going the same way.

But the darkness on the outside was more than matched with the darkness on the inside. Look with me to chapter 1 and to verse 12 and following.

They were a very religious people outwardly, obeying all the festivals, raising their hands in prayer. But their worship was in vain, because their hands were full of blood.

Chapter 1, verse 5 and 6. They were a people who were sick from head to toe. And this sickness had spread through the whole city. Chapter 1, verse 21.

How the faithful city has become a whore. She who was full of justice. Righteousness lodged in her, but now murderers. They do not bring justice to the fatherless. And the widow's cause does not come to them.

[28:19] They were a people who were caught up with materialism. Chapter 2, verse 7. And also full of idolatry. Chapter 2, verse 8.

Their land is filled with idols. They bow down to the work of their hands. To what their own fingers have made. And it would be no surprise that a people like this were an arrogant people.

Full of pride. Chapter 2, verse 12 to 17. So lofty. Full of grandeur. That God says he will come. And he will humble those.

Chapter 3, verse 6. They were a people who had crisis and leadership. For one man will take hold of his brother and house of his father saying, You have a cloak. You shall be your leader.

Basically what they are saying is, You have got a nice coat. You shall be your leader. It is absolutely laughable. And I can't help but think friends. My father is a darts player.

[29:16] He plays darts. And he never takes his suit jacket off. When he plays darts. Much to the humiliation of the people that he beats. And his nickname is, The Jacob.

The Jacket. They call him The Jacket. Now if my dad was around in Israel's time. They would have made him the leader. And I can tell you that would have been absolutely disastrous. My dad couldn't run him an odds.

And it will come as no surprise that with leadership with this. There was social collapse. Social disintegration. Chapter 3, verse 5.

And the people will oppress one another. Everyone his fellow and everyone his neighbour. The youth will be insolent to the elder. And the despised to the honourable. And the women of that day.

Well they were no better. Chapter 3, verse 16. Because the daughters of Zion are haughty. They are full of pride. And they walk with outstretched necks. Glancing wantonly with their eyes.

[30:12] Mincing along as they go. Tinkling with their feet. It's like a scene from Buchanan Galleries. Or Socky Hall Street. Israel was ravaged.

Judah was awash with alcoholism. Chapter 5, verse 11. Woe to those who rise early in the morning. That they may run after strong dink. Who tarry late into the evening.

As wine inflames them. And not only were they subject to booze. But their boozing was celebrated. Chapter 5, verse 20.

Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine. And valiant men in mixing strong drink. They were a people. Who have embarked on a complete departure from all that is good.

Chapter 5, verse 20. Woe to those who call evil good. And good evil. Who put darkness for light and light for darkness. Does this whole picture sound familiar, friends?

[31:15] It describes the world in which we live. And Isaiah is writing eight centuries BC. And here we are nearly 3,000 years later. That's why I always laugh at people who say that the Bible is no relevant.

Nearly 3,000 years later. And nothing has changed. And all of this eternal darkness has come about. And this will come as no surprise to you. Because of chapter 1, verse 2 to 4.

They have rebelled against their maker. They do not know their master. Even the ox and the donkey, dumb animals, know their master. But they do not know their master.

They are full of iniquity, a sinful nation. They have forsaken the Lord. They have despised the Holy One of Israel. And so they are utterly estranged. Yes, there is the outside darkness and the gloom of the invading Assyrian army.

But Isaiah wants the whole nation of Israel to see and to be in absolutely no doubt that the real darkness, the real gloom is on the inside. Due to their sin.

[32:17] Due to their rebellion. Forgetting and forsaking their maker. Their God. And when you turn from the Lord and the source of true light, you don't turn to nothing.

But you turn to everything and anything. And it's everything that is dark. Look at chapter 8, verse 19. And when they say to you, inquire of the mediums and the necromancers who chirp and mutter.

Friends, this is the people of God. The people of God turn into seances and necromancers and spiritism. And it's not as if there was a shortage of information or teaching.

Chapter 8, verse 20 says that there was an abundance of truth. But justice is the same with our generation. Abundance of truth. But they listen to the lies instead. And the consequence again.

Chapter 8, verse 20. Consult God's teaching and the testimony. If anyone does not speak according to this word, they will have no dawn. They will remain in darkness.

[33:23] Hearing the truth. But no dawning of light. Chapter 8 is a sorry picture. It's a very dark picture. Because God has been left out. And friends, God could leave it there.

He could say, right, this is what you've chosen. Go right ahead. You've made your bed. Now go and lie in it. I'm tired of you, Lord. But no, he doesn't. God comes into the darkness.

And the mess that we have made. Just as he did right at the start of the Bible with Adam and Eve. He comes into the darkness. And he speaks through the prophet Isaiah. And here is what it is promised.

There will be no more gloom. And especially for those in the land of Zebulun. In the land of Naphtali, verse 1. Yes, in former times, in the past. These lands were the first to be humbled by all invading armies.

These lands in the north were always the first to fall. But in the latter time, in the future, they will be honored. Isaiah speaks in verse 2 and following. In past tense.

[34:21] As if what he is saying has already happened. It has already taken place. So clear and so vivid are these things in the prophet's mind. Darkness will be replaced by light.

Distress will be replaced with joy. Gloom with gladness. And war will be replaced by peace. And even all the garments and the weapons of war will be burned up.

There will be no need for them anymore. Verse 4. All enemies have been destroyed. You can imagine the hope, the excitement, the joy that these promises would bring.

But when would these things take place? How would we know that these things are about to be realized? Well goes on Isaiah verse 6. For to us a child is born.

To us a son is given. Through the birth of a male child that would also be given. Surely you're joking Isaiah. Maybe you want to go back to God and seek some clarification on this prophecy.

[35:22] A child. This is God's answer. A child. We don't need a child. We need a bully. We need a bully. A great big bully who can come and bully the bullies. I mean, Isaiah, I mean, what you're saying here just sounds all a bit like a dream.

Like an illusion. Like the verse out of the Johnny Mathis song. It's all just a dream. It's all just an illusion. They're all across the world. We'll dawn a brand new morning. This will come to pass when a child is born.

A child? Come on. You don't send a child to do a man's work. Well, says Isaiah, I don't need clarification.

I've got this right. God's answer to the darkness, both in the inside and the outside, is this child. The child with the four names.

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie. Above thy deep and darkness sleep the silent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.

[36:27] The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight. And three∎■ my heart.

Of name, folk purple **III** lesbrede the same. Of name, folk, of prophetic living.

Let us pray.

Let us pray.

Let us pray.

[38:33] Let us pray.

Let us pray.

Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.

Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.

answer to the darkness, both inside and outside, not just in Isaiah's day. God's answer to the darkness in every generation before and every generation since is this child, the child with the four names. Note that this child firstly is a child who is born, denoting his humanness. He doesn't just magically appear from nowhere. He is born, but also he is a son, a son who is given, a son given in the line of David. And it is very clear that as we go on that this child will be a king, the ultimate king. Verse 6, the government shall be upon his shoulders. Verse 7, of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

[40:52] It is clear to see from these verses, isn't it, that this can't point to any mere human king. This is the promised Lord, the king of glory here on earth. This is God fulfilling in this child, the covenant he made with King David back in 2 Samuel chapter 7. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you who shall come from your body and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. And remember, it was the throne of David that was under very real threat.

The Syria and Ephraim, Israel were seeking to dispose of the Davidic king. Ahaz, back in chapter 7, verse 6, they were seeking to take down Judah and set up the son of Tabeel as king. But God's answer to show that his plan of salvation could not be stopped, that nothing would stop his plan of salvation was the sign that was given. In chapter 7, verse 14, behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us. The coming Lord comes as a king in David's line to provide salvation, to establish his kingdom and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness forevermore. It won't be politicians who will accomplish this or bring it about, nor any other human force.

It will be the zeal, the commitment, the coming of the Lord of hosts that will do this. And as we turn to the pages of the New Testament and to Matthew's gospel, Matthew is very clear that Isaiah chapter 9, verse 2 is fulfilled in Jesus, that the people walking in darkness have seen a great light. They're in the coming of Jesus, the child with the four names is born. Names don't really mean much in our culture. I've actually got six names, Terence, Andrew, Patrick, Murphy, McCaffrey, McCutcheon. And I suppose all you could really tell from that is that I'm a Celtic supporter and maybe I have an Irish Catholic background. But in Jewish culture, names sought to convey identity and character. I suppose a wee bit like nicknames in our culture.

If you told me your name was Christopher, it doesn't tell me much about you. But if you said to me my nickname is Napoleon, well, it tells me something about your character and your identity. And just as we look at these names, friends, we can't get away from the fact that what Isaiah is seeking to convey to us about the character and the identity of this child is that this child is divine. That this child is none other than God himself in the flesh. No matter how much we think that this is absolutely impossible, we have to concede that this is exactly what Isaiah is seeking to convey.

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The child with the four names. Well, let's get to the names. Firstly, he is the wonderful counselor. He is the wonderful counselor. He brings the wisdom that we need. People are walking in darkness. They have no light. They have no guidance. Jesus came to be the guide, to the guide out of the darkness for those who walk in darkness. If only they will come to him. Most of us pretend, don't we, that we have it all worked out, that we don't need any wisdom. We don't need anybody to guide us, that there is no darkness in our lives. We have devised a whole load of coping mechanisms to help keep us in our pretense that we don't need wisdom, that there is no darkness in our lives. But friends, Jesus Christ has penetrated the darkness. And he says, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. He is the wisdom that I need. The wisdom that I need to lead me out of the darkness. Secondly, he is the mighty God. He provides the power that I need. The power to liberate me.

Some folks have tried to translate mighty God as a God-like hero, because they cannot stomach where is plain here in the scriptures. That this child will be both divine and by human. So they try to get away by saying, ah, it means God-like hero, but that's absolute nonsense. Just turn the page to chapter 10, verse 21. Isaiah writes, a remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God.

The word used for God in both places here is the same. It's the word L-E-L, which means the mighty God. He is the warrior God. The Lord is a warrior. The Lord is his name. He provides the power that is needed to liberate me, to liberate me from sin and its darkness. He will break the yoke of our buttons, verse 4, the rod of our oppressor, for he himself will shoulder it. To my mind, the only thing that Jesus shouldered in the gospels was the cross, as he made his way to Calvary and to the death and the darkness that awaited him there. Was it the nails of Saviour that bound you to the tree? No, it was your everlasting love, your love for me, for me. Help me understand it. Help me to take it in, what it meant for you, the holy one, to bear, to shoulder my sin. If the Son sets you free, then you are free indeed.

He is the mighty God with the power to liberate me. But thirdly, he is the everlasting Father. Yes, he is a child and a son, but he is also the Father. Not that he is the Father, the first person of the Trinity, but that he will show fatherly care for all his people. He will bring and show paternal love to his people. He will make known the love of God. Jesus makes this known, the love of the Father.

Not all of us have been brought up in homes where we have known the love of a Father. In fact, the opposite may be true for some of us, but Jesus brings the love of the everlasting Father, the love to protect, the love to provide, and to love his children. I have loved you with an everlasting love. He gives the love of the Father, but he also, as any human Father, he gives life to his children. Everlasting life. I have come, he says in John 10, verse 10, that you may have life, and life in all its fullness.

He is the everlasting Father. I will not leave you as orphans. He is the wonderful counselor. He is the mighty God. He is the everlasting Father. But fourthly, he shall be called the Prince of Peace.

[47:46] If we had to take a microphone and stop people passing by in Bath Street today, and ask them this question, what's your one wish for Christmas? I'm sure that most folks would say, an end of war. I would like there to be world peace. Now friends, even if we could make that wish come true on Christmas Day, we know, don't we, that all wars would resume again on Boxing Day.

I mean, some of our family gatherings can't even get through Christmas Day in peace. But why is that? Well, the reason, friends, that that is so, is because it's not peace out there we need.

It's peace in here. Why do we pretend? Why do we pretend that we have peace when we don't? Why do we kid on we have peace, peace, when there is no peace?

Why do we kid on when we can have peace, when peace can be realized? In Jesus, we can have peace. We can know peace. Peace with God. Real peace. Lasting peace.

Peace that the judgment of God has been dealt with fully and finally in the person of Jesus Christ. peace. And this word peace, shalom, does not mean absence of war. It means wholeness and harmony.

Yes, harmony with God firstly, but dwelling in harmony with others. It's the perfect life as it was intended to be. Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, brings lasting peace to the human heart.

And this peace can be mine if only I will trust him. My peace I give to you, nor as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. He is the wonderful counselor, bringing the wisdom that I need to lead me out of the darkness. He is the mighty God, bringing the power that I need to be liberated from my sin. He is the everlasting Father, bringing the life and the love of the Father that I need, bringing me into the Father's home, the Father's house for all eternity. And he is the Prince of Peace, bringing the peace with God that I need, bringing me forgiveness and dealing with my guilt. Friends, Jesus Christ is all of these things, all of the time, to all of his people. I wonder how many Christmases you have lived for.

This will be my wee boy's first Christmas. And do you know what I know for sure will happen on Christmas Day? The gifts that people have kindly given me for my son, when we unwrap the gifts, my wee boy will be more interested in the shiny wrapping paper than he will be the gifts that folks have given him.

Regardless of the cost, regardless of the trouble that people have taken to get him those gifts, my wee boy will be more interested in the shiny wrapping paper. But friends, some of you have lived through countless Christmases.

And you're like that. You're like my wee boy when it comes to Christmas. You're more interested in the shiny wrapping paper than the real gift that's offered and given in Jesus Christ.

[51:11] To us, a child is born. To us, a son is given. Just for a moment, friend, replace that word, us, with me.

To me, a child is born. To me, a son is given. Why don't you this Christmas time take the gift, accept it, and open it, that he may be yours?

That would be the best Christmas present ever. Don't you agree? Let us pray together. Father, all we can do is to thank you for your indescribable gift of your son, who was born to lead us and liberate us from the darkness of our sin.

We thank you for the wonderful counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. And we do indeed pray, Father, that his peace would remain and presence itself with us this Christmas time.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, to close today, we sing the hymn on the screen. The promised time arrives.

[52:36] The time of God's appointing. A time when one is born whom bears the Lord's anointing. What prophets long to see is finally made clear.

For Jesus comes to earth and brings the kingdom near. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[53:55] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. In all things offenses, God, Heaven, R Oar, C ■■■ Home, ■■oi Quite foi Quote I come just in Apostle And He called me Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen.