



TOPIC Everlasting Father

SPEAKER Rev Daniel Wee

THEME Jesus – Our Saviour King

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

Our Everlasting Father

This month's theme delves into the fourfold roles and attributes of God as named in Isaiah 9:6. The sermon this week focused on His role as our Everlasting Father, with the speaker expounding on the original Hebrew text to guide our understanding of the verse and its references.

God Is Our Father Always

There are important differences among various translations of Isaiah 9:6. In the first line of the verse, NKJB and ESV state, "a child is born", but NASB says, "a child will be born", while NET and NSRV tell us, "a child has been born". These grammatical differences would indeed change the identity of the child in the verse, begetting the question: which is the accurate translation?

The original Hebrew text contains the word *yullad*, meaning "born", which in this form is a third person, masculine verb in perfect tense (i.e. the word/action has been completed). Thus the first line reads, "(he) **has been** born". So then, who is the child in this verse?

The answer can be found within the biblical context of Isaiah's ministry, served under four kings. First, King Uzziah, referenced in Isaiah 6, who ruled for 52 years and was considered a good king. Next, his son Jotham, who continued his father's legacy, in Isaiah 7. He was followed by Ahaz, who was a bad king and did evil in the eyes of the Lord, in Isaiah 8. During that time, the northern kingdom of Israel was about to fall, and its people endured troubles. Ahaz's son was Hezekiah, who became the next king at the age of 25, and did better than his father, in Isaiah 36.

It was during the reign of Ahaz that Isaiah 9:6 was placed, prophesying that a child has been born, who is of royal lineage ("Prince of Peace") and will one day become king ("the government will be on his shoulders"). Hence, it was probably understood then that this child was referring to Hezekiah, who had already been born by then, but not yet ascended to the throne. However, as we know it now, this passage has a greater eternal fulfilment in Jesus Christ, our coming King.

In the second line of Isaiah 9:6, the NKJV version states, "And his name will be called..." The Hebrew text uses the word *va'yiqra*, meaning "call", this time a verb in imperfect tense i.e. "and (he) will call" (active, not yet completed). Who could be the one calling the child these names? The phrasing of the Hebrew text is as such: Wonderful Counsellor, Everlasting Father, and Mighty God call the child Prince of Peace. It is in fact our Lord who gives these names to the child. To which,

this child has only one name, Prince of Peace, not four.

The speaker explained that “Everlasting Father” was translated from the Hebrew word *aviad*, meaning “until forever, my father”. These words take on a deeper meaning when considered in light of the situation at that time. It was a period of darkness and uncertainty: the northern kingdom was in a dire state, with Isaiah foretelling its destruction. People in the south wondered if the same fate would befall upon them, and whether God would abandon them.

A prophecy of hope was given: our God is our Father always. In dark periods, God is still present. He will not abandon us, whether in times of good or bad “kings” (such as political leaders), who do not last forever, unlike Him. Although we may feel abandoned or are unable to sense His presence when things go wrong, we must know that our Heavenly Father is always thinking about us, and has a plan for us (Job 23:8-10). As with the case of the prodigal son, even when we are far from the Lord, God is there for us. When we encounter storms in life, He will be our anchor, holding us secure and keeping us from being swept adrift.

Conclusion

God is our Everlasting Father, OUR Father throughout the ages. With this promise, we can assuredly put our faith and trust in Him, knowing that He will always be there for us.

QUESTIONS

Share an experience which helped you to understand God's role as our Everlasting Father. How did you gain this understanding?

How did your experience with your earthly father (or parent) influence your understanding/relationship with God as our Everlasting Father, or vice versa?

What is one practical thing you can do to respond and relate to God as your Everlasting Father?