

Jesus is the Mighty God

Isaiah 9:6

11/12/2016

Introduction:

What did God really want us to know about the child He sent into the world?

Isaiah 9:6 tells us four things which we are using to prepare ourselves for Christmas this year:

*For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

We discussed the first of these at the end of October – that ***Jesus is the Wonderful Counsellor***. All through His public ministry Jesus was really clear about what His most urgent priority was – to teach people about the Kingdom of God.

In the same way we need to be clear about our urgent priority to learn from Him about how to live in His Kingdom. We rob ourselves and those around us every time we follow the pattern of the world or our own ideas and neglect to listen and obey His counsel. There is only one Wonderful Counsellor. It's not your favourite talk show host. It's not a psychologist, teacher or author. It's not an academic or a parent or a friend. It's not a pastor or human counsellor. It's Jesus.

Are you going to Him for counsel when you've got a decision to make? Are you following His advice when you respond to how someone has treated you? Do you believe what He says about what will bring you joy and peace?

One of the biggest problems Christians face is that we have too many sub-standard counsellors. What we need is more people who simply say “This is what Jesus said” and then help us to put His wonderful counsel into practice in our lives.

The second phrase is what we’re going to explore today: **Jesus is the Mighty God.**

So what does it mean and why does it matter to us today?

It’s made up of two Hebrew words, “El” and “Gibbor”. “El” simply means “God”, but “Gibbor” is a word used to denote a mighty warrior.

It’s used of King David’s Mighty Men in 2 Samuel 23. These were guys were powerful warriors who performed awesome deeds in battle. One of them killed 800 enemy soldiers in one encounter; another killed 300. One stood alone in a field against an invading army as the rest of the Israelites fled and single-handedly defeated them.

They were collectively called “the Gibborim”.

That’s the word used for the promised saviour here in Isaiah 9. El Gibbor, God the Mighty.

So that’s what was promised, did Jesus deliver on that promise. Did He live up to the prophecy?

Well, if you were to imagine what the arrival of a mighty God might look like, what would you picture in your mind?

Maybe something like...



The book of Hebrews begins a discussion about who Jesus is with these words:

Hebrews 1:1-3a

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,

(This is Jesus the Wonderful Counsellor!)

whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

Let's think a bit about the power that is being referred to when it comes to creating and sustaining the whole universe.

This is a picture of the most powerful thing ever created by a human. It was the detonation of the 50 Megaton "Tsar Bomba" in the USSR in 1961 during the cold war. It was over 1500 times more powerful than the two nuclear bombs dropped over Japan in WWII with a mushroom cloud that rose 7 times higher than Mt Everest and could be seen a thousand kilometres away. The heat generated from the explosion could produce 3rd degree burns over 100kms away from the blast site. It was a staggeringly powerful bomb.



Here's a picture of something that Jesus spoke into existence!



It's our sun, seen from Earth. It's roughly 1 million times the size of Earth; and every second it produces nearly 2 billion times the energy released by Tsar Bomba.

It's just one of the estimated 1 billion trillion stars in the observable universe. We're talking about power on a level that our minds can't comprehend; and it was all spoken into being and continues to exist by the powerful word of Jesus.

It makes Thor's hammer and Superman's laser vision seem pretty tame!

But when God the Son came to Earth and was given the name Jesus, did He come wielding this mighty power? Did He fulfil the prophecy to be "the Mighty God"?

In some ways He did. He spoke and a storm died down. He spoke and demons fled. He spoke and somehow 5 loaves and 2

fish fed over 5,000 people. He spoke and sick people were healed, no matter how far away they were. He spoke and water turned into wine. He spoke and a dead man came back to life.

The same powerful word that sustains the universe did some amazing things in Jesus' Earthly ministry. But there was also a sense of Him holding back.

After he fed the crowds they wanted to make Him king, but he took Himself away. And in His hometown of Nazareth where people refused to believe in Him, we read in Mark 6 that "He could no mighty works there".

What's that all about?

Is Jesus the Mighty God or not? Does He need people to believe in Him in order to have any power? Was He just a brilliant con artist but the people in Nazareth knew Him too well to be fooled?

It's not that Jesus couldn't do any miracles at Nazareth, but that He could not do more miracles there while staying true to His real mission.

You see the people of Nazareth for the most part did not believe what Jesus taught them about the Kingdom of Heaven. They just wanted Jesus to help them with the things they struggled with here on Earth. They had heard about what Jesus did in other places and felt that He should be focussing on His hometown first, healing their sick and solving their problems.

Jesus' mission was much bigger than that.

Jesus' mission was not to be the mighty God that looked after the people of Nazareth, or the people of Galilee, or the people of Judea.

He is much more than a superman-type figure who rescues Lois Lane whenever she gets in trouble!

Jesus was on His way to the ultimate showdown between good and evil; and nothing could distract Him from that mission.

He took on the powers of sin and death and defeated them on our behalf. He allowed Himself to be arrested, tortured and killed because He was the only person who could take on that battle and win. He was the only one who could bear the weight of the sins of the world. He was the only one who could rise again after paying the penalty for those sins.

Another Old Testament prophecy of “El Gibbor” the Mighty God is found in...

Zephaniah 3:14-17

¹⁴ *Sing, O Daughter of Zion;
shout aloud, O Israel!
Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,
O Daughter of Jerusalem!*

¹⁵ *The LORD has taken away your punishment,
he has turned back your enemy.
The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you;
never again will you fear any harm.*

¹⁶ *On that day they will say to Jerusalem,
“Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands hang limp.*

¹⁷ *The LORD your God is with you,
he is mighty to save.
He will take great delight in you,
he will quiet you with his love,
he will rejoice over you with singing.”*

In His humility and meekness Jesus was actually being mighty - mighty to save! We now know that our punishment is taken away and that our enemy – death – has been defeated. There is

nothing that can separate us from the love of God and the prospect of eternal joy with Him.

Revelation 19 to 22 describes what that will be like. It describes Jesus as a rider on a white horse, coming to judge the enemies of God. He has a huge army at His back but He doesn't need them. They are there to witness His power, not to add to it.

A sword comes out of His mouth and destroys His enemies. That might sound bizarre but a sword is actually a common metaphor for the Word of God. He doesn't need weapons or an army. He speaks and his enemies are destroyed.

There's some more events described as Jesus completes His judgement of the world and of the spiritual forces of evil. Then once that is completed we read the wonderful words in...

Revelation 21:1-5

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Conclusion:

Jesus is the Mighty God. He is Mighty to Save. He is Mighty to Judge.

He came to Earth to win the battle against sin and death on our behalf. He left to give His followers time to spread the news of His victory and invite every person to enter His Kingdom simply by trusting in Him as our conquering King. The we will experience His love for all eternity, no longer ruined by sin and fearful of death. He is mighty to save.

He will come back to claim His kingdom at a time no-one knows but God the Father. At that time anyone who has not accepted Christ as King will be judged as a rebel. They will remain in their sin and suffer its penalty – eternal death.

There will be no escape, because Jesus is Mighty to Judge.

Isaiah 9:6 tells us that Jesus is the Mighty God. Why does that matter to you today?

1. Because you must decide whether you want to experience Him as the mighty God who saves or the mighty God who judges. You can't avoid Him or defeat Him – you're no match for Him. Let Him love you the way He wants to. Let Him protect you and provide for you. Let Him rejoice over you and delight in you. Don't remain in the sins that He died to save you from. Don't force Him to judge you. Let Him forgive you and welcome you into His family.
2. Because like the people of Nazareth you might be tempted at times to demand Jesus be your personal super-hero. You might find yourself doubting His existence or His love for you when He doesn't use His power the way you want Him to.

This is normal. I spoke with some people early this week who prayed on Saturday for God to save a little boy's life but He didn't. Where was God's power then?

Wouldn't it be nice if a superman-type figure turned up in

Aleppo as hospitals were being bombed and civilians poisoned with chlorine gas? Or maybe on Friday in Nigeria to stop two schoolgirls from blowing themselves up and killing 56 other people.

You and I have both experienced what it's like to have our prayers answered with a "no" and for it to feel like God is absent. Sometimes we struggle with that.

How can God be all-powerful and good yet not use that power for good all the time?

Yet when we see the terrible consequences of sin and death in our world; doesn't it make Jesus' victory even more important to us? Don't we appreciate the fact that He has saved us so that we can enter into an eternal kingdom free from this stuff? Don't we applaud the fact that He will judge sin so that no-one who chooses to remain in it will be allowed to corrupt His kingdom?

It's no fluke that in places where Christians suffer most their focus on eternity is greatest. Because they focus more on eternity their fervour to spread the good news is also stronger. Because people see that they believe strongly enough to endure suffering their faith is shown to be more than just words. So suffering actually produces eternal life.

Does that mean Jesus won't step in and use His power to help us when we need it? Absolutely not! God is aware of every detail in your life and He loves you.

It does mean that He never loses sight of His real mission, which is to bring people into His eternal kingdom. Only He knows how that plays out through your life and mine. As Jesus Himself showed, sometimes that means walking a difficult road.

If you're a parent you know that giving your kids everything they want and protecting them from every difficulty they face is a sure recipe for disaster. It doesn't cause them to love you more, it causes them to love themselves more. Our king is a wise king. Whatever He does or doesn't do is for the sake of love.

Some people saw the suffering of Jesus and thought He mustn't be the prophesied King. By His suffering Jesus was being the perfect King. He was being the mighty God.