

Sermon Outlines

His Name is Wonderful Counsellor

Readings

Isaiah 9:6

Introduction

In previous “Sermons” there has been consideration of the names “Wonderful” and “Counsellor”. In this sermon they are being combined. Christ is the “Wonderful Counsellor”.

To my knowledge there are only four verses in the scriptures which have within them the concepts of “counsel” and “wonderful”, three of which are in Isaiah.

- a) “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and . . . his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor” (Isa. 9:6).
- b) “O LORD, thou art my God; I will exalt thee; I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth” (Isa. 25:1).
- c) “This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working” (Isa. 28:29).
- d) Job had lived through very dark experiences, the loss of his family and virtually all his possessions. His friends could not supply the reason and eventually Job took upon himself to speak to God. After the Lord had presented manifestations of His power and wisdom, Job answering said: “Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” (Job 42:1-6)

The first used of the word translated “Wonderful”

The word “pele”, which is translated “wonderful” (Isa. 9:6), is first used after the Lord had redeemed His people from Egypt (Ex. 15:13) and delivered them by power (Ex. 14:15-30).

- a) When the Israelites saw the Egyptians dead on the shores it was a great relief, but this was eclipsed when the full impact of the completeness of their deliverance thrilled their souls.
- b) With unspeakable delight they began to sing the first song in the scriptures, and praising God for the greatness of His victory. Joyfully they sang: “Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders” (Ex. 15:11).
- c) They were aware the God who redeemed and delivered them was great in His foresight (Gen. 15:13-17); fully capable to fulfill His purposes (Ex. 3:8); superior to all the gods of Egypt (Ex. 12:12); and in this awareness they sing of Him doing “wonders” (Ex. 15:11).

Yet, as they began the journey to the promised land, they must have wondered what God was doing, for the Wonderful Counsellor had, according to human rationale, ignored the straight route. Instead, they were led to bypass the land of the Philistines (Ex. 13:17) which would have been a direct route to the promised land! Then He led them through the wilderness (Ex. 13:18) and then told them to turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth (Ex. 14:2). It must have seemed all wrong but the Wonderful Counsellor knew exactly what He was doing and the lessons He was going to teach them.

- a) There are times in our lives when we are puzzled by the directions our Wonderful Counsellor gives us. It may be a business collapse, an instruction to go somewhere and then tragedy falls. At the time it seems all wrong but we do learn that His directions were best.

Christ the Wonderful Counsellor

- 1) When the Lord is called “Wonderful Counsellor” in Isaiah, the emphasis is not on what the Lord can do but describes what He is, the “Wonderful Counsellor”. We must never forget that God’s descriptive names and titles are manifestations of His character and abilities. For instance:

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- a) His Name is “Holy” because that is His character (Isa. 57:15; Psa. 99:9).
 - b) His Name is “Almighty” because that is His unbounded power (Ex. 6:3; Job 37:23).
 - c) His name is “Wonderful Counsellor”, that is His all sufficient ability for guidance in life for:
 - i) He is all knowing in that He knows my situation, what brought me to this present situation, and what lies ahead (Psa. 139:1-6; Isa. 46:10).
 - ii) His integrity will feed them and guide them (Psa. 78:72).
 - iii) He is abundant in generosity, consequently He will never give advise begrudgingly but will withhold it when the individual has no intention of receiving it (Psa. 84:11).
- 2) When our lives are lived receiving and living by Him as our “Wonderful Counsellor”, we then enter the realm of peace for His promises and counsel is interlinked.
- a) When He counseled Gideon saying: “I will be with thee” (Josh. 1:5), it was a promise for Gideon to move forward (Jud. 6:16).
 - b) When the nobleman was told his son would live, the man went back home believing (Jn. 4:50), the Wonderful Counsellor had given a promise.
 - c) He gave Israel the benefit of His knowledge as the Wonderful Counsellor by setting before them the “way of life and the way of death” (Jer. 21:6-10). They were to decide whether to take His counsel or reject it.
 - d) The same was true for the King of Judah (Jer. 22:1-5).
- 3) The counsel of God is unfrustratable for he promised: “Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” (Isa. 46:10).
- 4) David asked counsel of the Lord (Psa. 16:7), how wise he was in doing such. Sadly there were always tragic consequences when the children of Israel acted according to their own knowledge and asked not counsel of the Lord (Josh. 9:14). Saul made a fatal decision when instead of asking counsel of the Lord he went to the witch at En-dor (1 Sam. 28:7-19), or the children of Israel (Isa. 30:1). The same was true of Israel (Jer. 25:7-9). In every case judgment fell.
- 5) His counsel is wonderful for it displays:
- a) His compassion. He made the people sit down and then provided them with something to eat knowing they would faint on the way home due to hunger (Mk. 8:3).
 - b) His understanding of events to come and instructing people both regarding the events of A D 70 and in the future what to do (Matt. 24:4-27; Lk. 21:20).
 - c) How wonderful was His counsel when He gave an understanding of man’s true spiritual relationship and what true freedom is (Jn. 8:33-36). Who could tell the blessing of a Counsellor who differentiates between false and true righteousness (Lk. 18:10-14). This Counsellor is wonderful because He always speaks the truth, even if it is against the religious leaders (Matt. 9:11). Being the source and circumference of all wisdom He will expose evil motivations (Matt. 21:12-13) and makes it clear God would put no labels of righteousness on those who honored Him with their lips (Matt. 15:7-9) but who disobeyed Him with their hands, hearts, and lives (Lk. 18:9-14).

Conclusion

When do we need a counselor?

When the children of Israel came to the Jordan they were venturing on a new journey. The Lord had led them through the wilderness (Ex. 13:20; 23:20) but they had not “passed this way heretofore” (Josh. 3:4) and so the Lord very clearly takes the lead in how they were to go across the Jordan. They needed Him as their Wonderful Counsellor.

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There are times in all our lives when there is the need for a counsellor. A situation arises in which an individual needs someone with more experience than they have to assist in making a decision. When Solomon came to the throne and the people came to him he was not sure what to do and sought counsel from the old and young men (2 Chron. 10:8-14). Sadly he took the counsel of inexperience and it resulted in a split in Israel, a split which has never been dealt with to this day.

- a) In the early days of the church a matter of concern regarding the Gentiles came to the fore. Should the Gentiles be made to submit to the Mosaic law? There was called a counsel of the spiritual leaders (Acts 15:1, 6, 12) to give their understanding of the mind of God on the matter. Since in Him, that is Christ, are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, therefore He needs consultation with no one, and knowing all things the question is asked: "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Rom. 11:34)
- b) Thank God we have a Wonderful Counsellor who, with delight, will lead us and give us the benefit of His understanding, wisdom, and foreknowledge and cause us to know the blessing of His promise: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Psa. 32:8).

What a blessing to sing the words of William Williams.

Our Wonderful Counsellor and Guide

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but Thou art mighty; hold me with Thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more; feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain, where the living waters flow;
Let the river of salvation, follow all the desert through.
Strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,
Be Thou still my Strength and Shield; be Thou still my Strength and Shield.

Lord, I trust Thy mighty power, wondrous are Thy works of old;
Thou deliver'st Thine from thralldom, who for nought themselves had sold:
Thou didst conquer, Thou didst conquer,
Sin, and Satan and the grave, sin, and Satan and the grave.

When I tread the verge of Jordan, bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death and hell's destruction, land me safe on Canaan's side.
Songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to Thee; I will ever give to Thee.

Musing on my habitation, musing on my heav'nly home,
Fills my soul with holy longings: come, my Jesus, quickly come;
Vanity is all I see;
Lord, I long to be with Thee! Lord, I long to be with Thee!

William Williams

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

Rowan Jennings, Abbotsford, British Columbia