Unto Us He Came

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[0:00] Isaiah chapter 9, since the fall of humanity, there's always been an anticipation of Savior.! It's always been a desperate need, but also an anticipation.

! The covering of the naked and ashamed in the garden of Eden was the first hint at salvation.
The bow that God hung in the clouds, literally a warrior's bow, as the text reads, God had hung up his bow of judgment after the devastating worldwide flood showed that judgment would not have the final word.
The promise to Abraham followed that. The ram in the thicket would later save Abraham's son, Isaac's life, and show that a substitute would be provided by the Lord.
You see it again in Egypt. The slaves were in bondage, and they were set free by the blood of the Passover lamb being posted on the doorpost.
[1:13] After that, an elaborate sacrificial system that was originally established in the desert was taken down and carried and reestablished across the desert.

All of that points to God's desire to dwell among his people, as well as our need for someone to mediate for us. The lifting up of the bronze serpent that brought relief pointed to the lifting up of another.
Christ even references it to himself in John. Follow that by the prophets. Follow that by the promises. Follow that by the kings and their foreshadowings.
It was all clues that are scattered across the pages of scripture that this is not all there is. There's more to come. Like breadcrumbs in the forest or signposts on the highway, they were always pointing to something else coming.
Some of those signs were small, and some of them were bold and unable to be missed. However, none were greater, I don't believe, or more clear than that of the prophet Isaiah.
[2:36] He is a prophet that gives eternal hope and speaks not just to the people who first heard it when he spoke it, not just to the larger nation that they represented, but to all.

He speaks to all. He speaks to all who would confess and believe on the coming Savior. The reality is he came for us. And with that promise in mind, I want us to hear the word of the Lord from the prophet.
Isaiah chapter 9, beginning in verse 6, says this. 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 uphold it with justice and with righteousness.
From this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. These words were written by Isaiah and they were held close by the people of Israel.
[4:07] I want us to spend these Sundays leading up to Christmas exploring the depth of what this passage means.

It meant something to the Israelites. It sure should mean something to us as well. As a matter of fact, they prayed over these scriptures. They often recited these scriptures.
They passed down these scriptures. They built their hope on this scripture. Parents taught their children this scripture. Priests rehearsed it in the temple courts.
Scribes copied this scripture again and again. Exiles found hope for another day in knowing a savior was coming.
What Isaiah gave was not just a hint. What was not just a shadow as had often been seen before. But what he brought was a promise.
[5:05] A clear promise of a child, of a son, of a savior coming. But not just coming.

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I want you to understand the people who first heard this from Isaiah understood that he was coming for them. But not just for them, thank God.
But he also came for us. He came as a child. Scripture says that to us a child is born. Jesus Christ came as a child.
He was 100% human. He cried like a baby. He learned to walk as a child does. He learned to speak as children do.
We see him in scripture in the manger. And then several months of age, when he was several months of age, we see the wise men come to his home.
[6:03] That's right. They came months later into his home. Now that may tear up your manger scene this year. I'm sorry. But you need to put the wise men somewhere else. We see him again at 12 years old.

In the temple. And then when we see him again at 30 years of age, he's coming out of the desert ready for ministry. I want you to understand, though, there's human life between these times.
He was a boy who grew. He apparently learned his father's trade and submitted himself to his parents. Scripture tells us he grew in wisdom and in stature, or his body grew.
And he lived among us. And we're not told every detail of those early years. It's not necessary for us to know that, apparently. Those details are not what God wanted us to know.
But let's not hop, skip so quickly over the childhood of Christ. Because if we do, we'll miss the wonder of his humanity. Before he ever taught a soul, he learned to walk.
[7:13] Before he ever healed the hurting, he possibly played with the tools of his father. Before he ever led others, he learned to follow.

Now, this child born to us is truly and gloriously human. However, it also says that he came as a son.
To us, a son is given. This child that's come is also the only begotten son of God. So get this. He was 100% human.
But he was also 100% God. Now, that's hard for us to wrap our minds around that. And that's good. Because God's beyond us. He's bigger than us.
Understand it at least as best we can. He came into this world, God. And he did not lose any of his deity. But he added humanity to himself.
[8:18] He remained what he was and became what he was not. He didn't lay aside his divine infinity.

But he did accept its human limitations. It's interesting how it all works out. Because only God could bear the punishment of sin.
But only a man could stand as a substitute for humankind. Jesus is the one man with two completely different natures.
Fully God and fully man. And in that mystery, he fully reveals God and fully redeems us.
He is the God-man. He became like us to make us like him. I love the way the commentator, Mark, excuse me, James Edwards, describes it.
[9:23] This paradox. He says this, and I quote, He who commands the winds became weary. He who feeds 5,000 grew hungry.

The Holy One enters a world of sin without ever becoming sinful. End of quote. He was not born to us.
He already lived. He was given to us. Truly divine. So he can save. And truly human.
So he can sympathize. With us. And be our willing substitute. Who bore our sins. To redeem us. A son.
Is given. He came as a son. But he also came as a savior. When it says, And the government shall be upon his shoulders. It literally draws the picture of a royal robe being placed upon the shoulders of a king upon his coronation.
[10:31] He would go through the investiture where he would receive the robe. He would receive the ring. He would receive the crown. He would receive the scepter.

Those things would be invested to him in all of his grandeur. And we don't really have anything like that in America. The closest thing that we would have is if you watched King Charles be enthroned after his mother's death.
But his celebration had Lionel Richie and Katy Perry singing. So it's a little different. Because that makes it quite different from the typical celebration of an Israeli king.

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When the royal robe is placed, the government is upon his shoulders. And when there's a royal birth, it's a very public event.
The royal child was celebrated. The royal child was guarded. The royal child was adorned.
[11:42] Excuse me. That child was placed in a silk blanket in the warmth of a palace. Surrounded by attendants.

Surrounded by processions. All kinds of official announcements. But not this king. Not King Jesus. He didn't come like that. When the government is placed upon King Jesus, it's quite different. There is no celebration. At least not at his birth. Instead of privilege, he takes on the yoke of hardship like an ox.
It's fitted to pull the weight of a cart. Christ would come to bear the full burden of ruling and redeeming. A fallen world. He was not born in a palace.
He was born in a cave that housed pack animals for travelers. The rags that he was wrapped in was far from a silk blanket.
[12:50] The rags that he was wrapped in were those fit for a barn to help with the animals. The announcement of his birth came to the lowest of the low.

Nomadic shepherds. Who were out in the field because nobody really wanted them around them. Who moved from place to place because people didn't really want them to stay around very long. Entrusted to animals. Christ was a child king. Now let me be honest.
A child king is something people often dreaded. Government suffered when young kings were enshrined. Before they were ever old enough to bear the responsibility.
As a matter of fact, earlier in the book of Isaiah, Isaiah speaks of this. He knew too well what would happen if a child became king.
[13:53] And he thundered against children rulers. He speaks of how that kind of enthronement as a sign of God's judgment upon a wayward people. Why? Why?

Because they were childish. Why? Because they were unstable. Why? Because they were unsteady in leadership. And it was never beneficial to a country for that to happen. However, now, just a few chapters later, Isaiah lifts his eyes and proclaims victoriously another kind of young leader.
He speaks of one whose shoulders the government can truly rest on. In the majesty and the wisdom and the strength of the only begotten son of an everlasting God.
This would be different. Before a robe would ever be draped upon his shoulders, a cross would be. Before he ever sat on a throne, he would heal the sick. He would raise the dead. He would proclaim everlasting truth. He would wash the dirty feet of his followers.
[15:00] He would drink down the dread of the wrath of God against the sins of the world. And then bear the cross to redeem those very sinners. Oh, this king that came as a child among us is a son of God given to us.

And a savior that came for us. Now understand Isaiah the prophet speaks 700 years before the birth of such king.
And the hope of salvation that he foretold is just as real today as the first day that he proclaimed it. Because this child king is not only the hope of Christmas, this child king is the hope of eternal life. He's the child that carried the cross before he ever wore a crown. He's the son who bears the government upon his shoulders. Because he first bore the cross of our salvation.
He's the savior who carried the way to the world to redeem us. He's the savior that can surely be trusted to carry the burdens that we face in our lives today.
[16:18] And I have no idea what those burdens are for you. I don't know what your struggle is this morning.

But I can tell you this, I know one common struggle that we all have. We're all born in the same state. And I don't mean South Carolina. I mean in the state of our sin.
We're born into sin. And not only were we born into a sinful nature. But we've all of our own fruition committed sin. We're all sinners.
sinners. We all need a savior. We all need one to forgive us for what we've done wrong. We all need to be redeemed.
To bought back because of the debt that we've caused. The sin debt. And I'm thankful that this child king that came did not stay a child. But rose to become a perfect savior.

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[17:22] Died on an old rugged cross. And then rose again. To give us eternal life. Prepare a place for us. And provide for us for all of eternity. Let me tell you something this Christmas.

If you've never acknowledged the sin in your life. And asked God to forgive you of that sin. If you've never surrendered your life to the Lord Jesus Christ. I want you to know the greatest Christmas gift you could ever get this year.
Would be giving your heart and life to Christ. Asking him to forgive you. Asking him to cleanse you. And committing your life to follow him.
And if that's never happened in your life. I want you to know today's the day of salvation. You can surrender to him today. And he'll meet you where you are. And he'll change you for all of eternity.
Maybe you're hearing that's happened in your life. And it's been a private matter in your life. It's never been anything public. But Jesus by his commission. And by his example. Tells us to follow that up with a public confession.
[18:24] Through baptism. If you've never been baptized as a believer. I encourage you to come. We won't do it this morning. But encourage you to come. And say I want to take a step of obedience.

To follow Christ. As he spoke to my heart and life about it. Maybe God's drawing you to Pickens First Baptist Church. Doing a wonderful work in our church. And what a wonderful Christmas gift it'd be to you.
As well as to this church. If God leads you to be a part of this church. I'd love to talk to you about that. I have no idea. What God's leading you about.
But I do know this. I do know that across this room. There are burdens. I know of some of them. I don't know of most of them.
And the good news is. I don't have to know. What they are. You've got. A child king that's come. And the government shall be upon his shoulders.
[19:22] You know what that means? That means he'll bear the burden of leadership. Not only over his people. But he'll bear the burden of leadership upon your life. I love the way it's put in the New Testament.

It says. Cast your cares upon the Lord. That word cast there. Is like casting a line when you fish. A real fisherman will tell you.
They don't cast a line like this. If you're going to cast a line. You cast it. You throw it out. You get rid of it. Hear me.
Whatever burden you have today. Christ has become. The one who can lift that burden. He's the one who will listen to you.
He's the one that will relieve you. He's the one that will change you. Will you give him that burden today? You can do that. When we stand in just a moment and sing.
[20:23] You can do that where you stand. You can do it at this altar. Leaving it here. Bring your burden. And leave it here. With the Lord. If you want me to pray with you.

I'd love to pray with you. I don't have a clue. What God's working your life about. But I'll tell you one thing. He's come to bear our burden. He's come for us to lay it on his shoulders.
So whatever it is this Christmas season. I got news for you. I got a wonderful Christmas gift for you. Jesus Christ. Is available and ready. To relieve you.
Of the burdens in your life. Heavenly Father I love you. I thank you for the truth of Christmas. I thank you Lord for the message of Christ.
And I ask this morning dear God. That you will work and move in our lives. Help us to lay our burdens before you dear God. To cast them upon you. To have you work and move in us.
[21:23] As only you can. Help us to simply be obedient. To follow your will. In your way. And all that we do. In Jesus precious name. Amen.

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