

Mighty God

Read: Isaiah 9:6-7

Introduction:

As we continue in this Advent series, we explore the second of the four royal names prophesied about Jesus: Wonderful Counselor, **Mighty God**, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Where does your mind go when you contemplate this awesome title? Does it bring you comfort and hope in the midst of chaos and uncertainty? Does it bring out cynicism when you feel like your cries go unheard in times of need? Or does it leave you confused, not knowing how to balance the tension between waiting for God to intervene versus doing your part? Pastor Peter invites us to look into what the Bible says about the nature of power and strength, and how Jesus the Mighty God wields them.

Discuss:

What does Mighty God mean?

In this passage Isaiah is reassuring Judah, a small nation feeling powerless and fearful of its much bigger, stronger neighbors: Your King, the Warrior God, is coming! And you will no longer live in fear.

1. "Mighty God" is translated from the Hebrew word El Gibbor, which also means warrior, hero, and champion. As shown by the success of Marvel movies, our contemporary culture loves superheroes that solve problems by superpowers. How would you contrast that perspective with what the Bible teaches about God?

2. Quoting the Westminster Shorter Catechism, Pastor Peter explains that "Christ executes the office of a king in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies." What does this mean to you?

Why do we long for our own mightiness?

3. The Old Testament is full of stories of people turning to their own effort rather than waiting for God to act. Pastor Peter calls it the "false gospel of self-reliance." Can you find examples from your life where you made things happen on your own?

4. While it is not found in the Bible, do you think the saying, "God helps those who help themselves" is a good rule to live by? Is it possible to be led astray if we adhere to it uncritically?

How is Jesus our Mighty God?

Read: Isaiah 6:1-10 and John 12:36-43

5. Pastor Peter suggests that Isaiah's vision of God offers a glimpse of the pre-incarnate Christ, and is the very definition of power and strength. We typically associate power and strength with an active and energetic show of force. But here we are given an imagery of God *sitting* on a throne. What does this picture teach us about the nature of God's power and strength?

6. Pastor Peter shares the story of how finding "Meow", his little boy's toy dog, filled his heart with gratitude. What experiences can you recall when you felt seen and cared for by our Mighty God?

Apply:

The Christmas Story tells us that Jesus, the Mighty King, the Unrivaled Warrior, has chosen to come to us in the form of a humble, helpless baby. Let us take to heart how Jesus demonstrates the true meaning of power and strength, and let us imitate the gentle ways he displays them.