



AS WE GATHER

During the season of Advent, we prepare to celebrate the birth of God's Son, who was given the name *Jesus*—a Hebrew name that means “God saves.” However, in addition to His earthly name, Holy Scripture calls Jesus by various titles that describe something about His person or work. We will examine the four titles given to Jesus in Isaiah 9:6—Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace—and will study how each of these titles describes something about *who* Jesus is and *what* He did for our salvation.

Today we consider how God rescues us from the cunning counsel of the devil and blesses us with the wonderful counsel of His Son, whose Word of truth sets us free from sin and its damning deception. Jesus is given the title Wonderful Counselor because His Word rescues us from the lies of the devil and our own self-deception and leads us into God's wisdom, which results in our salvation.

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

HYMN “Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love”
 LSB 900 Sts 1–3

1 Jesus! Name of wondrous love,
 Name all other names above,
 Unto which must ev'ry knee
 Bow in deep humility.

2 Jesus! Name decreed of old,
 To the maiden mother told,
 Kneeling in her lowly cell,
 By the angel Gabriel.

2
3 Jesus! Name of priceless worth
To the fallen of the earth
For the promise that it gave,
“Jesus shall His people save.”

Text: William W. How, 1823–97, alt.
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FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:1–2, 6–7

P A reading from Isaiah, the ninth chapter.

¹But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time He brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time He has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shined.

C ⁶**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.**

P ⁷Of 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 to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

P When Isaiah looked forward to our Lord's coming, he said it would be as if “the people who walked in darkness [had] seen a great light” (Isaiah 9:2). We give thanks that the Holy Spirit has shown the light of the Gospel into our hearts.

HYMN

“Arise and Shine in Splendor”

LSB 396, Sts 1–2

1 Arise and shine in splendor;
Let night to day surrender.
Your light is drawing near.
Above, the day is beaming,
In matchless beauty gleaming;
The glory of the Lord is here.

- 2 See earth in darkness lying,
The heathen nations dying
In hopeless gloom and night.
To you the Lord of heaven—
Your life, your hope—has given
Great glory, honor, and delight.

Text: Martin Opitz, 1597–1639; tr. Gerhard Gieschen, 1899–1987, alt.

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CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

- P** We do not always bring our sins to God, confident that our Wonderful Counselor has forgiven them all. Let us therefore confess our sins to our heavenly Father.
- C** **I confess that I have sinned against You this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You. In the name of Jesus Christ, I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me that I may rest in peace.**
- P** By the mercy of God we are redeemed by Jesus Christ, and in Him we are forgiven. We rest now in His peace and rise in the morning to serve Him.
- C** **Amen.**

PSALM *Psalm 119:129–136; antiphon: v. 129*

- P** Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them.
- C** **The unfolding of Your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.**
- P** I open my mouth and pant, because I long for Your commandments.
- C** **Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is Your way with those who love Your name.**
- P** Keep steady my steps according to Your promise, and let no iniquity get dominion over me.
- C** **Redeem me from man's oppression, that I may keep Your precepts.**
- P** Make Your face shine upon Your servant, and teach me Your statutes.
- C** **My eyes shed streams of tears, because people do not keep Your law.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them.

SECOND READING*Romans 11:32–36*

P A reading from Romans, the eleventh chapter.

³²For God has consigned all to disobedience, that He may have mercy on all.

³³Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways!

³⁴“For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor?”

³⁵“Or who has given a gift to Him that he might be repaid?”

³⁶For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THIRD READING*Matthew 7:24–29*

P A reading from Matthew, the seventh chapter.

²⁴“Everyone then who hears these words of Mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

²⁸And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at His teaching, ²⁹for He was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSORY FOR ADVENT*Jeremiah 23:5a, 6*

P Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch.

C **This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.**

P In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely.

C **This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.**

P Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

C This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

CONFESSION OF FAITH *The Explanation of the Second Article of the Apostle's Creed*

P What does it mean that we believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord?

C I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

HYMN OF OUR ADVENT SERIES

"The People That in Darkness Sat"

LSB 412

- 1 The people that in darkness sat
A glorious light have seen;
The light has shined on them who long
In shades of death have been,
In shades of death have been.
- 2 To hail Thee, Sun of Righteousness,
The gath'ring nations come;
They joy as when the reapers bear
Their harvest treasures home,
Their harvest treasures home.
- 3 To us a Child of hope is born,
To us a Son is giv'n,
And on His shoulder ever rests
All pow'r in earth and heav'n,
All pow'r in earth and heav'n.
- 4 His name shall be the Prince of Peace,
The Everlasting Lord,
The Wonderful, the Counselor,
The God by all adored,
The God by all adored.
- 5 His righteous government and pow'r
Shall over all extend;
On judgment and on justice based,
His reign shall have no end,
His reign shall have no end.

6
△ 6 Lord Jesus, reign in us, we pray,
And make us Thine alone,
Who with the Father ever art
And Holy Spirit, one,
And Holy Spirit, one.

Text: John Morison, 1749–98, alt.
Text: Public domain

SERMON “Christ... the WONDERFUL Counselor”
Isaiah 9:6-7

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye
Mighty Gates” *LSB 341, Sts 5*

5 Redeemer, come and open wide
My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide!
O enter with Thy grace divine;
Thy face of mercy on me shine.
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on
Until our glorious goal is won.
Eternal praise and fame
We offer to Thy name.

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590–1635; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.
Text: Public domain

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Wonderful Counselor, we come to You, Lord Jesus, thankful that You have enlightened us with the counsel of Your wonderful gracious word of forgiveness for all our sins. Help us, we pray, as we interact with people who may be entrapped by their sin, not knowing Your full forgiveness, and unable to rejoice at the anniversary of Your birth. Wonderful Counselor, use us and all we have, to bring others to hear and believe the Good News. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Mighty God, we come to You in faith, gracious Lord, trusting that You were and are God in the flesh, our Immanuel. Strengthen all who are in distress from the worldly forces that surround them. Assure them of Your presence, strengthen their faith, and lead them to Your home above, where we may all rejoice together in Your love and grace. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Everlasting Father, we come to You, O Lord, who conquered sin and death as ruler of creation while also serving Your people as a caring Father. Grant us to know always Your eternal presence among us and help us to amend our lives and pass on the joy of Your eternal forgiveness to our

neighbors, friends, and family. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Prince of Peace, we give thanks that You came to earth and paid the penalty that our sins deserved. Grant us steadfastness of faith to be at peace with one another, knowing that because of Your grace and love for us, we will be with You in eternity. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P These things we pray to You, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

PRAYER FROM THE PREVIOUS SUNDAY

P Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come,

C that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance;

P for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

PRAYER FOR TODAY

P Shine into our hearts, O Lord, and illumine every part of our lives,

C so that we will be ready to rejoice at Your birth and be guiding lights for those who do not yet know Your saving grace and forgiveness;

P for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER

C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

C Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
 give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive
 those who trespass against us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the
 glory forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠
 Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you.

G Amen.

HYMN “O Lord, How Shall I Meet You”

LSB 334:1, 5–6

1 O Lord, how shall I meet You,
 How welcome You aright?
 Your people long to greet You,
 My hope, my heart's delight!
 O kindle, Lord most holy,
 Your lamp within my breast
 To do in spirit lowly
 All that may please You best.

5 Sin's debt, that fearful burden,
 Cannot His love erase;
 Your guilt the Lord will pardon
 And cover by His grace.
 He comes, for you procuring
 The peace of sin forgiv'n,
 His children thus securing
 Eternal life in heav'n.

6 He comes to judge the nations,
 A terror to His foes,
 A light of consolations
 And blessèd hope to those
 Who love the Lord's appearing.
 O glorious Sun, now come,
 Send forth Your beams so cheering,
 And guide us safely home.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–76; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.

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DISMISSAL

P Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.