

CHRISTMAS INTERLUDE

Resting In Christ's Christmas Messianic Titles

III. Resting In The Everlasting Father

(Isaiah 9:6; 8:5-10)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

This Christmas Season, many people sense a great need for protection and provisions:

(1) Regarding protection, (a) a letter by William R. Bellotti of Middlebury in the Republican-American, December 11, 2020, p. 8A expressed what I've heard others affirm when he wrote, "My take-away from the last four years is social media and mainstream news outlets cannot be trusted, and are as dangerous as government itself."

(b) To show *why* many people have come fearfully to distrust even their government, consider "the Hunter Biden laptop" issue: "Five former directors or acting directors of the CIA signed a letter asserting the laptop . . . 'has all the hallmarks of Russian information operation.' More than 50 former senior intelligence officers . . . endorsed the letter, which was used by the Joe Biden campaign and the news media to discredit the damning emails about Hunter Biden's business dealings . . . [Yet,] (a)nyone believing the officials, who used their past titles and long experience to lend credibility to their letter, would have been shocked to learn last week that Hunter Biden is under federal investigation for tax crimes . . ." (Rich Lowry, "Red-faced over Russian canard," Ibid., December 16, 2020, p. 10A)

(c) Many people have similar distrust and resulting fear of the pharmaceutical industry: Megan McArdle's column, "Regulators disdain 'warp speed'" (Ibid., December 12, 2020, p. 10A) claimed, "American faith in experts and institutions . . . is particularly dire when it comes to the pharmaceutical industry . . . thanks to allegedly impartial experts who condemned public gatherings, then made exceptions for mass protests . . . [and] to public-health authorities who first said masks didn't work, and then said everyone should wear them . . ."

(2) Regarding provisions, (a) Mike Patrick's story, "Fewer food boxes on hand" (Ibid., December 14, 2020, p. 3A) claimed Waterbury "will receive at least 1,000 fewer food boxes from the federal Farmers to Families program because demand has been so great that a truckload has been diverted from Waterbury to fill a need elsewhere."

(b) Jacqueline Rabe Thomas' story, "Despite moratorium, thousands facing eviction" (Ibid., December 17, 2020, p. 1A) reported that "2.4 million to 5 million American households are at risk of being turned out of their homes when the CDC's ban on evictions . . . expires in January . . . With a deluge of low wage workers unemployed as the economic impact of the public health emergency drags into a tenth month, evictions are expected to surge if the moratorium continues to be scaled back or thrown out."

(b) Tom Purcell's column, "Thankful even though feast canceled" (Ibid., November 25, 2020, p. 11A), added that the need for livelihood provisions affects far more than just low wage earners: his own family is "as apprehensive about the coming months as anyone. We have experienced lost work and wage cuts as millions of Americans have."

Need: *So we ask, "What would God have us do about the great need many sense for protection and provisions?!"*

I. Messiah's Isaiah 9:6 KJV title, "The Everlasting Father" in Isaiah's day signified the fatherly protection and provision that Ancient Near Eastern kings would claim that they provided for their subjects:

- A. The Hebrew noun '*ad*' rendered "everlasting" (KJV) means "perpetuity, duration," expressing the "quality of fatherhood of Messiah" (E. J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, 1974, v. I, p. 338-339). Messiah "eternally is a Father to His people. Now and forever He guards His people and supplies their needs," Ibid., p. 339.
- B. Dr. Young supported this claim by citing the ancient Babylonian king Hammurabi who likened "himself as a natural father for his people" since he had allegedly "established perpetual safety for his people," Ibid.

II. Accordingly, the Isaiah 9:6 name for the Messiah as "The Everlasting Father" addresses the failure of Judah to trust God's protection and provision as He had clarified back in Isaiah 8:5-10 (as follows):

- A. When Judah's king Ahaz hired Assyria to attack the Israel-Aramea coalition that threatened Judah (2 Kings 16:5-9), God claimed that Judah "refused the waters of Shiloah that flow gently, and rejoice over [Aramea's king] Resin and [Israel's king Pekah] the son of Remaliah," Isaiah 8:5-6 ESV.
- B. To explain, the "waters of Shiloah that flow gently" in Ahaz's era referred to a surface conduit of water that ran down a gradual slope from the Spring Gihon outside Jerusalem's northeastern wall south along the city hill to a pool at the southern tip of Jerusalem that was used for irrigating the king's garden, Z. P. E. B., v. 5, p. 437.
- C. Thus, Judah had exchanged God, Who likened Himself to the gently flowing waters of Shiloah, for Assyria!
- D. Consequently, God would let Assyria invade Judah like the flooding Euphrates River and overflow the land of Judah, threatening great devastation, its figurative "water" reaching up to the people's necks, Isa. 8:7-8 ESV!

- III. However, Judah was "Immanuel's" land, the land of the God Who was with Judah, the "Everlasting Father" Messiah Himself (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6 and Matthew 1:21-23), so He would defend Judah, causing the Assyrians to fail, for "Immanuel," or "God is with us," was with Judah to deliver her, Isaiah 8:9-10!
- IV. This promise was fulfilled when the "Angel of the Lord," the Preincarnate Lord Jesus Christ Himself, slew 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night outside the city of Jerusalem as recorded in Isaiah 37:33-38.

Lesson: *When Judah refused God's gentle, faithful, fatherly protection and livelihood provisions for Assyria's aid in defeating the Aramea-Israel coalition, she would suffer a great threat from Assyria itself. However, Messiah, "The Everlasting Father" Who eternally protects and provides for His own, would then graciously deliver Judah.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we rely on Christ, our "Everlasting Father" Who gently, graciously protects and provides for us, to meet each protection and provision need we have this Christmas.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

God referred to Himself as "the waters of Shiloah that flow gently" (Isaiah 8:6 ESV), so we study **some** of the ways God used those waters to provide protection and provision for Judah for our edifying application (as follows):

(1) Ancient Near Eastern cities were built on hills with walls for protection, but a water source was necessary for a city to withstand a prolonged siege. The Spring Gihon just outside the northeastern wall of Jerusalem thus caused the Canaanites who predated the Hebrews there to select that location for the city. (Ibid., Zon. Pic. Ency. Bib.)

(2) The Spring Gihon was a perpetual water source, picturing God's faithfulness in providing for His people.

(3) The waters of Shiloah flowed to a pool used to irrigate the king's garden, illustrating God's supply of food.

(4) Were the spring located on top of the hill, its flow would have made the erection of a city there impossible due to flooding, but were it too far from the hill, the city would not have been established since water would not have been readily available during a siege. God's locating the spring outside the wall but close enough to the city to make it the city's water source under siege revealed God's precision in meeting His people's protection and provision needs.

(5) The Jebusites who dwelt in the city before the Hebrews dug a tunnel from inside the city wall down to the Spring Gihon to get to its water supply without having to go outside the wall during a siege. (2 Samuel 5:7-9 ESV) Thus, God guarded His people through His supply of the perfect location for Spring Gihon for the waters of Shiloah.

(6) The gentle flow of the waters of Shiloah as they coursed along the open conduit of the western ridge of the hill of Jerusalem signals God's grace in meeting the provisional needs of His people without it threatening them.

(7) The fact that there was a ridge that ran south from Spring Gihon along which a conduit could be formed to transport the water from the spring to the reservoir at the southern tip of the city indicates God's foresight in designing the western hill of Jerusalem to run that way with its gentle degree of slope to make the transport of water feasible.

(8) God's faithfulness to meet His people's provision and protection needs through the ages is seen in events involving the Spring Gihon itself: (a) Godly priest Melchizedek to whom Abraham paid tithes in Genesis 14:18-20 was king of "Salem," a shortened form of "Jerusalem" (cf. Psalm 76:2; H. C. Leupold, Expos. of Genesis, 1974, vol. I, p. 463). By Melchizedek's reference to Abraham's God as being "El Elyon," the Most High God, a monotheistic term, indicates Melchizedek was a surviving godly priest from the Noahic era who had not succumbed to the worldwide paganism of his day (Ibid., p. 465), so God used Spring Gihon to meet the livelihood needs of godly Melchizedek around 2100 B. C. (Ryrie St. Bible, KJV, 1978, Bible Timeline chart, page 2021). (b) Gihon then existed when father Abraham was led of God around 2,040 B. C. to offer up his son Isaac further up that same ridge where the temple of Solomon would be built 1,000 years after Abraham's time (Genesis 22:1-2, 14; 2 Chronicles 3:1; Ibid., Ryrie, p. 2021-2025). (c) Finally, when David's wicked son Adonijah tried to seize the throne, he held a feast at En-Rogel, a well that was located south of the southern tip of Jerusalem, but he did not invite Solomon, for he likely planned to kill him because David had said Solomon would rule after David, 1 Kings 1:9; Ibid., Z. P. E. B., v. 2, p. 721. Since the Spring Gihon was located just outside Jerusalem's northeast wall and close to David's palace there, it was much closer to the throne than En-Rogel where Adonijah held his feast and thus a safe yet public location to anoint Solomon as king. Thus, David had Solomon anointed king at Spring Gihon, then immediately brought back into the city and seated on the throne in David's nearby palace before Adonijah knew of the event. This move saved Solomon's and David's lives from execution by Adonijah and possibly avoided a civil war in Israel! (1 Kings 1:32-53) God's provision of the location of Spring Gihon for the waters of Shiloah thus repeatedly showed His foresight and protection of His people!

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we rely on "The Everlasting Father," our Messiah and God, for protection and provision.