

THE SALVATION ARMY INTERNATIONAL
SPIRITUAL LIFE DEVELOPMENT



WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR
MIGHTY GOD
EVERLASTING FATHER
PRINCE OF PEACE



ADVENT

For to us a child is
born, To us a son is
given, And the
government will be on
his shoulders. And he
will be called

**Wonderful Counsellor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace**

Advent week 1 – **Wonderful Counsellor**

Major Anne Siundu
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Advent week 2 – **Mighty God**

Major Philip Wittenberg
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Advent week 3 – **Everlasting Father**

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Advent week 4 – **Prince of Peace**

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WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR

'Wonderful is described as something that is pretty, very good, beautiful, or magnificent. A Counsellor is a person that is trained to give guidance or advice.

Many years before the child was born and the son given unto us, Isaiah foretold that God was planning to send a counsellor for the broken-hearted. Isaiah declares and confirms that Christ will be a wonder to the world and heaven. He is a wonder in performance and his life depicts him who he is, he is a wonder working God, and a counsellor to us, he alone can give us guidance, help and deliverance through his wisdom and miracles.

Jesus is referred as a wonderful counsellor, none is like him, he is both human with divine nature. His uniqueness is seen in his incarnation as a miraculous act of God who came from heaven to earth and became like man.

The son who was promised to be a wonderful counsellor by prophet Isaiah "grew up healthy and strong, He was filled with wisdom and God's favour was on him"

- Luke 2:40

This was a promise of hope to Israel of the coming wonderful counsellor who was to deliver his people.

Jesus was a miraculous baby who was to be born and become an amazing adviser to save mankind by working for the kingdom of God. The wonderful counsellor amazes people with his wise counsel and unique knowledge and wisdom he possesses.

"In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" - Colossians 2:3

Christ's resurrection proves that he is a wonderful counsellor, and we can know God and have good relationship with him.

He is wonderful in counsel, excellent in wisdom and very qualified counsellor for our lives. We can trust the wonderful counsellor today.'

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Thank you to Major Anne Siundu, Secretary for Spiritual Life Development in the Rwanda and Burundi Command, for sharing this advent thought with us.



MIGHTY GOD

Any of us who have had the privilege of holding an infant may have asked, in those moments, either out loud or in the quietness of our spirit;

“I wonder what they will grow up to be”?

“What will they be known for”?

“What impact will he or she have on the world”?

In those moments, particularly if the infant is our own, while we are humbled by how unknowable the answers to those questions are; we are believing, praying, and hoping for something special. “May this child become something out of the ordinary” – “May they fulfil their God given destiny in ways that will raise eyebrows and cause those within their influence to take pause”.

If we are honest, we wish God would give us an Isaiah like prophecy - even a general outline of where this young, swaddled life will end up. With broad strokes we wish He would reveal what this child will become.....successful, handsome, beautiful, popular.....all the above!

Of course, for any of us that have had something more than just a taste of life, that is not generally how things work out. These things are revealed little by little; they unfold during the seasons of infancy, adolescence and into adulthood.

This causes us to bring to remembrance and offer up a prayer this Advent season

for all the infants we have ever held – that the Lord Himself would fulfil His good purposes in their lives and that they would know a greatness as God alone measures it!

Hundreds of years before the Advent of Christ, God was much more forthcoming in outlining what the future of His incarnate Son would hold. Isaiah 9:6 is the penultimate example of God being generous with His words of future casting through the prophet. Glorious line after glorious line of what He “will be”!

This Advent season, as we consider the stable, the shepherds, Joseph, and Mary. As we reflect on the temporary dependency of baby Jesus and the fact, that, in those moments, just beyond the womb, none of the traits found in Isaiah's prophecy are fully evident – we celebrate that over time, through Jesus' infancy, adolescence and into adulthood – through the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension He has fulfilled the entirety of Isaiah's prophecy.

He is the “Mighty God”!

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Thank you to Major Phil Wittenberg, Secretary for Spiritual Life Development in the USA Eastern Territory, for sharing this advent thought with us.



EVERLASTING FATHER

Even the best fathers in the world will inevitably mess up, make poor decisions or not be entirely kind or fair to their families. For some, their experience is tainted with far more disappointment, hurt and distrust.

Our earthly fathers are human. Imperfect and flawed. But this is not who our Everlasting Father is.

Isaiah's prophecy gave the people of God a hope they so desperately needed. A child would be born, and he would be called:

'Wonderful Counsellor,
Mighty God
Everlasting Father
Prince of Peace'.

These names tell us so much about who our God is. Protector and provider. Comfort and defender. Healer and guide.

Isaiah was writing hundreds of years before this child was born. But we know this child Isaiah speaks of is Jesus.

Jesus, the Everlasting Father. Born into a broken and sinful world to fill our hearts with Heaven's love and to show us how to love one another. To show us who God is. To make the Father known.

No matter your circumstances, no matter your feelings or unfulfilled longings for the kind of father you've never had, you can take comfort in this truth, child of God:

Your Everlasting Father still loves you. He still cares for you, still protects you and will always be there to comfort you.

For eternity.

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PRINCE OF PEACE

Approximately 700 years before the birth of Jesus, Isaiah foretold the coming of the Messiah.

He called him Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Let us consider Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Today's world perhaps more than ever needs peace.

In 2003, journalist Chris Hedges set out to determine whether there have been any sustained periods of peace in human record. He reviewed 3,400 years of history and discovered just 268 war-free years.*

Our world needs peace!

As a mum of two children, I remember when they were little and the sense of peace I felt when they finally, after a long day dropped off to sleep. If you're a parent, I am sure you know what I mean. I don't think that it was the absence of noise that brought me peace, rather it was the deep knowledge that my children were safe and secure, enjoying much needed rest.

You see, peace is much more than simply the absence of noise, war, or distress.

The word used in Scripture is shalom.

Shalom conveys wholeness, harmony, and health. It is where the conditions that create wars are transformed and everyone and everywhere flourishes.**

In John 14:27 Jesus says "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

So, this advent season, what situations or relationships do you need God's shalom with you?

Where do you recognise the Prince of Peace in your life?

And last of all, what might you do to bring the Prince of Peace to your community this Christmas time?

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Thank you to Major Liz Gainsford, Secretary for Spiritual Life Development in the New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa Territory for sharing this week's advent thought with us.

*The Promised One: Advent Readings from Christianity Today, 2022 page 24

** The Promised One: Advent Readings from Christianity Today, 2022 page 26

