

Talk Notes

Title: A Child is born to us

Meeting: Rebekah's dedication

Date: 03/12/2017

Introduction

This morning we have been celebrating the birth of Rebekah but in a few weeks time we will be celebrating the birth of another baby – Jesus.

I just want to give you a few things to ponder over the coming weeks.

To us a child is born

Now I am not sure how long before the birth you knew that Rebekah was on the way – I guess Luke and Heidy were the first to suspect – how long before the birth? Then the doctor, then family & friends and gradually the wider community.

I guess 7 to 8 months before the birth is probably around the maximum notice that any of us get for an impending birth – however around 730 years before Jesus was born, a man called Isaiah was telling anyone who would listen that this special baby would be born.

Here is what he said **(Isaiah 9:6) For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace'**

No pressure there then!

As we approach the Christmas season this year perhaps we might ponder a few things from this verse.

To us a child is born

Firstly I just want to highlight that Isaiah declared to 'us' a child is born and a son is given – now we might say that Luke and Heidy had a baby, close family and friends might consider that Rebekah has been given to us – but what Isaiah declared when speaking about the birth of Jesus is that He has been given to all of us as God's gift, that includes you and me.

The government upon His shoulders

The next thing we could think about is that the government will be upon His shoulders, this was saying that this child would become a ruler. Now while on earth Jesus shunned earthly power and authority – some tried to even force him to become king by force, but Jesus refused. So Jesus never came to be an earthly ruler, but instead He is the king of god's

Kingdom. A Kingdom that encompasses heaven and earth, this life and the next and a Kingdom we are all invited to be part of but never forced to be.

Wonderful Councillor

Isaiah goes on to give four names for Jesus – the first emphasised the wisdom of Jesus – wonderful counsellor – who of us can claim that we don't need more wisdom, not just knowledge which is so easy to acquire in our digital age – but the wisdom to properly apply that knowledge and the wisdom to make the right choices in life – Jesus is our Wonderful Councillor.

Mighty God

The second name Isaiah gives for this son given to us is mighty God. Jesus was not only man, He was and is also God. When we look at Rebekah, and remember that Jesus was once as small and as vulnerable as her, then we can be amazed that the fullness of God was there in that baby – God became man. Emmanuel, a title we often remember at Christmas means God with us – there's that 'us' again – when we remember Jesus we can remember that God didn't remain distant, but came to live with us and died for us.

Everlasting Father

The third title Isaiah used for Jesus was everlasting Father – this emphasises the care that Jesus has for us – as a loving Father for His children. Jesus told a story when He was teaching the people about a rebellious and ungrateful son who had taken his Father's money and wasted it on extravagant living and then penniless returned to beg his father's forgiveness. Seeing Him at a distance the Father leapt to his feet and ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him, forgave him and welcomed him back home with a party – that is the sort of Father we have.

Prince of Peace

The last title Isaiah gave to Jesus was 'Prince of Peace' – reminding us that Jesus came to bring peace. Now when we look at the World around us we recognise that there is much that is not yet at Peace. In this world, while the influence of Jesus can bring peace, He also warned us that there would continue to be wars and rumours of wars, however what Jesus offers to each of us is peace even in the midst of challenging circumstances – it is a peace which the bible calls 'beyond our understanding'. One day, when God's Kingdom is finally come in its fullness, there will be peace that encompasses all – but for now we have an invitation to enter a peace which we can begin to experience now, but will enjoy in its fullness in the life to come.

Conclusion

I am so pleased that you have all joined us here for Rebekah's dedication, I hope that as we approach the celebration of Jesus birth you will remember He is a gift to us all, the King of God's Kingdom, the source of all wisdom, God with us bringing us peace.