

“WONDERFUL”

Rev. Donald L. Rose

Lesson: Isaiah 9:6

“And His name shall be called Wonderful” (Isaiah 9:6).

Think about the baby lying in a manger; and while the picture of the baby is in your mind, think of His name. Before He was born, the angel said His name would be Jesus. At that name, Jesus, every knee “should be bowed in heaven and on earth.... There are many names of God...such as Jehovah...Jesus and Christ...” (*True Christian Religion* 297).

Of the many names, let us think especially of the name, “Wonderful.” Hundreds of years before the Lord was born, it was written in the book of Isaiah that certain names would tell us about Him. One of them is “Prince of Peace.” Doesn’t that name by itself tell you a lot about what the Lord would do for people, and what He would give to people? He would one day say, “My peace I give unto you.” And so when He was born, the angels sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace....”

In Isaiah, also, it is said that His name would be called “Immanuel”, which is really a way of saying “God with us” (Matthew 1:23). This name of Immanuel or *God with us* leads up beautifully to the name “Wonderful” (in Isaiah 9). For there is something *wonderful* about what we mean when we say, “God with us.” If God is *with* a person, is that person safe? Yes, because if God is *with* them, God is *taking care* of them. You know the saying, “I will fear no evil, for Thou art *with me*” (Psalm 23).

If your wish for someone were that God would be with them, it would be a wish that they would be safe and that all things would be well with them. Did you know that the word *goodbye* comes from saying quickly, “God be with you” or “Good with ye”? To say goodbye then, is wishing the Lord’s care to be with someone until you meet again.

We call the Lord’s care “Providence.” And you can be sure that the name *Wonderful* belongs to the Lord’s Providence. (Note: *Apocalypse Explained* 927 on how the word “wonderful” especially points to the Lord’s Providence). Think of the *wonderful* blessings in the phrase, “God be with you” or “God shall be with you.” “This signifies the Divine Providence of the Lord; for when the Lord is *with* anyone, He leads him, and provides that all things which happen, whether sad or joyful, befall him for good: this is the Divine Providence” (*Arcana Coelestia* 6303).

So as you picture the Lord as a baby and say the word “wonderful,” think first of His Providence. He would have the lives of us all in His hands. He would have the government upon His shoulder, and He would say of His people, “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of My hand” (John 10:28). He would say, “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.” If He is in the midst of them, they shall be led to what is happy. To be gathered in His name is to be gathered into something wonderful. Do you know what makes heaven? Or do you know Who makes heaven? It is the Lord. Every single thing of heaven comes from Him.

If all those wonders come from the Lord, we can see why it would be said that He is to have the name “Wonderful.” The main thing of heaven is happiness, and all that happiness comes from the strong wish of the Lord for the happiness of all (*Heaven and Hell* 397). He was born into the world for a wonderful purpose. He said, “I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). He says that He wants His joy to be in us and that our joy should be full.

Let us pick just two of the many wonders of heavenly life. One of them is this. When we come into heaven and meet others like ourselves, we feel that we have known them all our life, although we just met them. “*What is wonderful* when a person meets them and sees them it is as if that person had been acquainted with them from infancy” (*Divine Providence* 338:4). This has been provided by the One whose name is “Wonderful.”

To understand another wonder, imagine yourself feeling happy and wishing that somehow your happiness could go out to make others happy. In this world this is not possible in the same way. You can’t just transfer your happiness to another. But in heaven it can be done “in a wonderful way,” for the joy of one is shared with another “by a real transmission that is wonderful” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1392,1393). Again, this is arranged by the Lord, whose name is “Wonderful.”

But let us not think that the Lord does not also bring about wonders on earth. Every time a tree or plant grows, we are seeing a wonder. Every time we see the marvels of living things in nature, we see wonders. And the truth is that “all these wonderful things are from God” (*Divine Love & Wisdom* 60).

When the shepherds saw a baby in a manger, they went and told others how angels had spoken of this baby’s birth. “And all they that heard it *wondered* at those things which were told them by the shepherds” (Luke 2:18).

It is something to wonder at, for it is such a wonderful thing expressed in the words of the prophet: "Unto us a child is born. Unto us a son is given. And the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." *Amen.*