

Christmas Special 04-12-19b

Let's resume our study this morning, our special for the Christmas season. Let's return, having looked at some of the names of the Lord Jesus given in the New Testament, revealed in the time of His birth, and go back to Isaiah chapter 9, which was our scripture reading this morning, and take a look at the names that were prophesied in this particular passage. Time would fail us to cover all of the names that are ascribed to the Lord Jesus, both in prospect and in retrospect, but these are of particular interest because they are prophetic in nature, and they're not always well understood.

I did not really know too much about these names, and I thought, well, we'll just go in and find out together. A little bit of background for the statements made in chapter 9 is found back in chapter 7. Probably one of the most famous prophecies in the entire Bible is found in Isaiah chapter 7, verse 14. If you look at the context here, there is doubt in the mind of the king as to whether what God says will happen.

This is in the days of Ahaz, the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, the son of Ramaliah. This is chapter 7, verse 1. The king of Syria and the king of Israel went up to Jerusalem to make war against it, but could not prevail. It was told the house of David, saying, Syria's forces are deployed in Ephraim.

His heart and the heart of his people were moved, as the trees of the woods are moved with the wind. It's a pretty graphic demonstration of the fear that swept through the land. Then the Lord said to Isaiah, Go out now to meet Ahaz, you and Shir Yeshuv, your son.

Now, Shir Yeshuv has already been introduced earlier. He is the son of Isaiah, and God told him to name him Shir Yeshuv, which means the remnant shall return. So, take your son at the end of the aqueduct from the upper pool on the highway to the fuller's field, and say to him, take heed and be quiet.

Do not fear or be fainthearted for these two stubs of smoking firebrands. Now, here, these are the two biggest threats on the landscape, and God calls them stubs of smoking firebrands. Do not be afraid or fainthearted, the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria and the son of Amaliah, because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Amaliah have plotted evil against you, saying, Let us go up against Judah and trouble it.

Let us make a gap in its wall for ourselves and set a king over them, the son of Tabel. Thus says the Lord God, It shall not stand, nor shall it come to pass. The head of Syria is Damascus, the head of Damascus is Rezin.

Within 65 years, Ephraim will be broken, so it will not be a people. The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Amaliah's son. If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established.

Moreover, the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God. Ask it either in the depth or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord.

Then he said, Hear now, O house of... By the way, that is a false application, isn't it? The Israelites know that they're not supposed to put God to the test. And so when God says, Ask a sign, He says, Oh no, I don't want to put God to the test. Well, this is where you have to look at different pieces of the word of God and decide which one takes priority.

The word of God that existed in that day said, Do not put the Lord your God to the test. This is a test of your own devising. We've talked about this in our study in Hebrews, where the people in the wilderness, in the day of testing, we talked about the two words for testing, dokimadzo, to test for the purpose of approval.

And it's not porou, am I? I can't think of it. Anyway, the two words, one that means to test to find out what something is made of, and the other is to examine for the purpose of approval. And they committed both of those against God.

They devised the test. They set the standard. They set themselves up as judge and jury over God.

That's not what's happening here. And it's a bad application to say, Oh, no, I would never put God to the test. So in verse 14, Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel. Goes on to talk about, Before he knows how to refuse evil and choose good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings. Well, this has an immediate fulfillment, a near-term fulfillment, and a far-reaching resonance.

The word translated virgin here is batula, which means young maiden. And basically this is not the prediction of a miraculous birth or a virgin birth in this context. The young woman is going to conceive and bear a son.

That takes nine months. Before he is old enough to refuse evil and choose good, i.e., before he reaches accountability, before he reaches the age of, say, three or four or five, somewhere in those early years. How young is a child when they learn that when somebody says, No, don't do that, they shouldn't do it? Pretty young.

Refuse evil and choose the good. You're tempted to put your hand on a piece of fragile pottery. Your parents say no, and you learn to obey.

That's refusing the evil of your nature and choosing the good, which is the standard set by your parents. It's a pretty young age. So this is somewhat indefinite.

He doesn't give it in terms of days or years. But he says someone is going to conceive and bear

a child. That's going to take nine months.

And then that child is going to eat curds and honey so that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land you dread will be forsaken. The Lord will bring the King of Assyria upon you and your people and your father's house, days that have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah.

And then it talks about all the whistling for enemies that's going to come down. And in verse 22, it says that the Lord will shave with a hired razor. In verse 20, with those from beyond the river, the King of Assyria, the head and hair, the legs, and will remove the beard.

It shall be in that day a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep. So it shall be from the abundance of milk they give that he will eat curds. For curds and honey everyone will eat who is left in the land.

It shall happen in that day, wherever there could be a thousand vines worth a thousand shekels of silver, it will be briars and thorns. With arrows and bows men will come. All the land will become briars and thorns.

What's it saying here? Curds and honey is what you feed a small child. It's pabulum, it's baby food. And everyone in Israel is going to be reduced to eating baby food to stay alive.

That's what the young child that's predicted is going to eat, so that he can live long enough to learn to refuse the evil and choose the good. And God says, I'm going to bring down this razor and I'm going to shave your land. I'm going to shave off your beard, humiliate you.

Crops will not grow. Where there ought to be vines, there's going to be thorns. You're not going to be able to butcher your livestock, because you'll have no starts.

You'll have one cow and two goats, or two sheep, and you're going to have to live off their milk. You can't kill them or you'll be totally wiped out. And so you're going to live on milk and milk products and honey that you find wild in the desert.

They didn't have beekeepers in those days, so they had to go find it wild. And you're going to live on curds and honey, because the land is going to be devastated. All you can do with your land is let your oxen and sheep graze on it.

You'll be able to grow no crops. So this is a prediction of this child. Now, two chapters later in chapter 9, actually just a little over a chapter later really, we have once again, unto us a child is born.

And there's a suggestion that there is a relationship or a link between these two passages. And the joy and the raising of the gloom that's brought about by this prediction of destruction is it's not going to last too long. And before this child, everybody is sort of going to join the child,

Emanuel, in eating curds and honey, because God's going to discipline the nation.

He's going to wipe out their agriculture with this invasion. And everybody is going to sort of track with Emanuel. Emanuel, this symbolic child, is eating these curds and honey.

And everybody else is going to be eating curds and honey, God says. And by the time he is weaned off of that and gets old enough to know good from evil, know his right hand from his left, graduate to more solid food, hopefully everybody else is going to be ready also. And this threat is going to be gone.

So this is a prediction measured in terms of single-digit years at most. Would you agree? Certainly by the age of 10, a child is responsible for knowing good and evil. I would say less than half that age.

We're not talking about accountability for salvation, understanding the sin, righteousness, and judgment. We're talking about the difference between good and evil, the difference between right and wrong, the difference between obedience and disobedience, is learned very early. And children can be held accountable very early.

And that's the time that God says is allotted before this prophecy will come to pass. So there is a link between these. And look again at the preceding verses in chapter 9. The gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, as when at first he lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali.

If you look on a map of Israel during the distribution to the 12 tribes, you will find that the land designated here by Zebulun and Naphtali is up in the area of Galilee. This is up around the Sea of Galilee. And the invasion and annexation of the northern parts of Israel took place in 733 B.C., 732 B.C. Tiglath-Pileser III came in and invaded.

And that was the beginning of the southern thrust of foreign powers, the Assyrians, the way of the sea and beyond the Jordan. This refers to Philistia or Sharon, that area in central Israel close to the Jordan. And there were three provinces that were created in the Assyrian invasion up in this area.

And that's what's referred to here by the land of Zebulun and Naphtali, the way of the sea and beyond Jordan. These were three Assyrian provinces that were established based on this invasion. And they felt the tread of the warrior's sandal in verse 5. Every warrior's sandal from the noisy battle and garments that had been rolled in blood was the loss in battle, the defeat that allowed this to take place.

But the gloom is not going to last forever. Verse 3, You have multiplied the nation and increased its joy. They rejoice before you according to the joy of harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

For you have broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his

oppressor, as in the days of Midian. Now, this is not when Midian was oppressing Israel and got defeated. This is when Midian itself was defeated.

And we don't have time to go into great detail on that. But it was another occasion where it looked like there was a power that could not be broken. And it was broken, somewhat surprisingly.

People expected a long, drawn-out affair and they were suddenly removed. That's what Midian represents here. The staff of the shoulder and the rod.

Breaking a yoke doesn't wear away the yoke. It doesn't saw away the yoke in a long period of time. And when you break it, it snaps suddenly.

People in Israel had these yokes that were made of wood that they would put over an ox and plow. And as you're plowing along, you've got these leather straps and things attached to your stone plow or your bronze-tipped plow. Later on, early iron, you have iron-tipped plows.

And you hit a stone or something and the ox is powerful as he's moving forward. Something has to give. Either a strap is going to break, the plow is going to break, or the yoke itself could break.

And when it breaks, it snaps of a sudden. And of those implements, the last thing you expect to break is the yoke. You would expect the straps first, possibly the plow to break.

But when the yoke breaks, it's sudden and it's unexpected. And so when it says here, you have broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, it's a snap. It happens suddenly and somewhat violently.

As in the day of Midian. And so these artifacts from the defeat, the warrior's sandal and the garments of blood, are going to end up being used for fuel. It's not exactly swords into plowshares, but the aftermath of the battle is going to wind up being a benefit.

These warrior's sandals that are trotting down the land are instead going to be fuel for the fire. The garments rolled in blood that are taken from the slain are going to be put to a use. So it's aftermath.

Useful for burning and fuel of fire. Why is there going to be joy, multiplying of the nation and the joy of harvest, dividing of the spoil? Because, verse 6, unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulder. His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace, there will be no end. Upon the throne of David and over his kingdom to order it and establish it with judgment and justice. From that time forward, even forever, the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Well, we are not so interested in the immediate fulfillment as the rising of hope, as this young

woman does conceive according to the word of the prophet and bear a son. And those who believe the word of God know that the time of oppression will be short. The time of curds and honey is going to be short.

That's great for them, but we look at this prophecy just as we do Isaiah 7.14 in its longer range prospects because there is a son who is going to do in the spiritual realm and in the ultimate sense what this symbolic child is going to do in the immediate context. Give hope, be a light to those who are in darkness. The promise is the object of faith.

Those who believe God and trust God are going to be blessed as they look at this child. You can see a miniature, a model if you will, of the work of Christ when he comes in Emmanuel because he is a symbol of the work of God amongst his people. There is going to be a period of darkness.

There is going to be a period of deprivation, but it is followed by rescue, deliverance, and prosperity and blessing. So verse 6, unto us a child is born. This is more interesting in Hebrew, at least to me, than it is in English because when you say a child is born in English, it doesn't have the alliteration that we have in Hebrew.

In Hebrew it says that there is a Yeled that is going to be Yalad. Yeled, Yalad. And of course you can see the relationship between that noun and that verb.

Unto us a born one is born, if you will. Yeled looks at a child from the standpoint of one who has been born into a family. Yalad means to give birth or to beget.

So unto us a begotten one is begotten, if you can catch it that way. And unto us a son, a Ben, is given. So Ki Yeled Yulad Lanu.

Yeled, Yulad. Unto us a son is born. That's the Yulad part there.

The Yu tells us that it's a passive rather than the active. It actually comes across as a Pu'al for those of you that are Hebrew scholars. Then it says Ben Netan Lanu.

Lanu is to us. La is to and Anu is us. So Yeled Yulad Lanu.

Born, a born one to us. Or actually a born one is born to us. Ben Netan Lanu.

Ben means son, is given. Netan, Nathan. And it says the Misrah, M-I-S-R-A-H, will be upon his shoulder.

His Shikmo. Actually, Shikmo, the O on the end means his. Shikem has the idea of shoulder.

So what is Misrah? Ha-Misrah? Well, the root of this, a lot of times you can take a word that starts out as a verb or has a verbal connotation and put a maim in front of it, put an M in front, you can turn a verb into a noun. So the maim in front of this tells us this comes from a different word. Masar, from Sar.

And Sar or Sarah here, this is not Sarah although it's related. But Sar is where the Russians get their word for their leader, Tsar. It's where the Romans get their word for Caesar.

Caesar, Tsar, traces all the way back to the ancient Near Eastern languages as Sar, S-A-R. This has the idea of a prince. But it has a maim in front of it, so it's something associated with a prince or related to a prince.

And then it's got the A-H ending, the feminine ending, which tells you that it's an abstract. So it's an abstract thing related to a prince. What is it? It's his principedom.

We put D-O-M on the end of something to kind of make it into an abstract noun. Kingdom. Christendom.

Well, this is Sarah. So this is not rulership in the sense of Mashal to rule, or the kingdom in the sense that we think of it. This is translated as government, but the idea is authority.

A prince is an authority. And there's going to be authority on his shoulder. And this has the definite article in front of it, Ha-Misra, so the authority.

What does Jesus tell his disciples just before he leaves? All authority has been given to me in heaven and in earth. That's a fulfillment and a manifestation of this prophetic utterance. The authority will be upon his shoulder.

The shoulder was the place, just as it is today, in some military uniform items where you displayed your badge of rank. Today sometimes they have forgotten what they're called. The cords that go, the army guys, I can't remember the name of those things, but they have these loops, cords that hang down.

We have shoulder boards in some uniforms in the Navy. We have badges of rank in most of the military services that go up on the shoulder. Why the shoulder? Well, to be seen, especially in a crowd, it needs to be up high on your body.

It's not like the heavyweight wrestling championship belt that you're going to wear down low. If you're in a crowd or surrounded by people, nobody can tell that you're the great pseudo-wrestler of the world. You've got your big belt down there.

You need something up high where it can be seen. This is why the concept of crowns is used. But this is not the highest crown that the king wears.

This is a badge of authority that goes on the shoulder. And it's related to the prince, not the king. So, it's telling us that this is a very high authority, but it's not the highest authority.

Otherwise, it would just say the crown will be on his head. This says the authority will be on his shoulder. He's going to be very high, but he's not the highest, at least not yet.

So, the authority will be on his shoulder. He is going to have ruling authority, princely authority,

and it's going to be indicated by this badge of rank. If you look in the tomb paintings and inscriptions in Egypt, you see the pharaoh, or you see the princes, and they have the scepter, the ruling stick, with a little crook in the end, or sometimes it has a little symbol of a bird or some other god of Egypt.

And how do you find it? How do you find the coffin lids where the arms cross and you've got something in each hand? And where do those symbols rest? Right on the shoulders, because the shoulders is where the badge of rank goes. The scepter is held and carried on the shoulder. You see officers with swords when they march, and their sword at the carry is on the shoulder, and that's not an accident.

We could carry it at port arms, but the carry is up on the shoulder. You can see the point of the sword and you say, ah, that's not a snuffy with a rifle, that must be an officer or an NCO. His name will be called.

Now, there's been great dead seas of ink spilled over whether there are four names or five here. And opinion is divided. I think most of the opinion is where my opinion is.

For once, I'm actually in a majority. I think there are four names here. I think the comma does not belong between Wonderful and Counselor, and I'll tell you why.

These four names are all compounds. Even in English, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. And it makes sense that they are symmetrical and that there are four names.

His name will be called. So the first name here is Wonderful Counselor. The called is kara, to call or to cry out, sometimes translated shout.

His name will be shouted. His name will be cried out. His name will be announced.

People aren't just going to say his name, they're going to call out his name. Yikra Shemo. Shem is the name.

Shemo, his name. Yikra Shemo. Then the first name here is Pele Yoetz.

P-E-L-E is the first word. Y-O-E-T-S is the second word. Pele Yoetz.

Pele is translated here in the English as wonderful. But Pele basically means a divine miracle. For example, in Psalm 77,15, you are the God who does wonders.

You have declared your strength among the people. You are the God who does miracles. This is wonders.

And wonderful probably made sense in the King James Day because something, we use wonderful when we find a nice soft piece of bread. We say, oh, wonderful, that's just wonderful. Well, wonderful basically means miraculous, full of wonder.

And wonder doesn't mean I wonder because I don't know. Wonder means I am in wonderment because I have been awed into insensibility by the greatness of something. I just can't think.

I am astonished, as it used to say in the old King James. Astonished. I am overawed.

But that's how wonderful came to be in the text. But really, miracle or miraculous would better fit the meaning in our modern parlance. Over and over in the Bible, Pele is used in this sense.

Psalms 78,12, marvelous things He did in the sight of their fathers in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan. Marvelous things is the translation of Pele. Miracles He did in the sight of their fathers.

Psalms 88,12, will you work wonders for the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise you? Selah. Psalm 88,11. Fascinating psalm, by the way.

Will you work miracles for the dead? Divine acts of fiat. Supernatural power in evidence. You find this in the text here, accompanied by the second word, yoetz.

Now, if you've been tracking some of my elementary Hebrew revelations during the course of our studies, if you listen to yoetz, what kind of an infix, what kind of vowel sound does that have? It's O-E. Yoetz. And the O-E infix, the O-E vowel sound in the middle of a word in Hebrew, makes it an I-N-G word, a participle.

So yoetz, whatever it is, is an ongoing action. And this is somebody who does it. The participle is a verbal noun.

So this is going to be a name that basically is an action that characterizes someone. So yoetz, as you might expect, comes from ya'atz. And ya'atz in Hebrew means to plan, to decide, to provide consultation.

So we would say the one planning or the planner. The planner of miracles is what this literally means. Wonderful counselor just doesn't grab it by the guts here.

This is the planner of miracles, the one who decides when and where divine power is going to be implemented in a supernatural way. That is wonderful counselor. He is the planner.

Ya'atz also has the idea of advising someone. In the passive, it means to receive advice, to receive a plan from someone else. Somebody says, you don't know what to do? Well, here's a plan for you.

Here's a course of action. Why don't you do this? It has the idea of providing counsel. And that's how you get the word counselor here.

But the relationship of these two words, when you take out the comma, is that this is the one who is planning miracles, supernatural works of God, the power of God implemented in human life, who decides when and where that's going to happen. This individual does. Is he advising

the Father as to when and where? Is he interceding to the Father and saying, Father, intervene with your power on behalf of this person? That might be in view.

The idea of planning, advising, formulating the concept of how something is going to be implemented is what is in view. So that's our first name for Christ. Miracle planner.

The second one is El Gibor. El, short for Elohim, God, the old Canaanite traditions. Also, just as today, we have the word God that's used in a wide variety of ways.

When I was at Fort Sill, we were possessed of all knowledge related to gunnery that was worth having, and so they called us gunnery gods or gods of gunnery. They talk about the God of this and the God of that in the Roman pantheon. Well, El was that utility type of word in the ancient Near East.

And El was worshipped by the pagans as they understood Him, just as the Israelites worshipped Yahweh. But Yahweh, Elohim, distinguishes God from any other God that might be available for worship. So El.

And then Gibor. Gibor is the word for strong. The Giborim are the mighty ones.

So this is just fine as it stands. Mighty God. El Gibor.

Gibor has in view might in the sense of strength for battle, ability to prevail. It has the idea of one who is looked up to for their conquests, for their durability, for their might in the sense of accomplishing things. When you're a mighty warrior, you accomplish something in battle.

When you're a mighty man of valor. Remember the angel greets Gideon when he's threshing undercover to hide from the Philistines. And he says, Hail thou mighty man of valor.

He calls him a Gibor. And Gideon with all the chaff stuck in his hair and sneezing and itching down his neck says, I'm the mighty man. What do you call me that for? Gibor El.

That's his second name. Mighty God. The third one is Aviad.

It's one word, but it's a compound. If you try to look up Aviad in the lexicon, a lot of lexicons don't even have it. They're going to have it under Av, which is father, A-V.

Aviad. So you have to break it apart into its component parts. Avi has the idea of father.

And Ad has the idea of an age or an era. It doesn't mean eternity or it doesn't necessarily imply the everlasting. Ad as a preposition in Hebrew means until.

It talks about a duration of time. Even in Latin, you say ad infinitum, until you can reach infinity. Ad nauseum, until you're nauseated.

And Ad has a similar idea in Hebrew. So the translation here, everlasting father, is backwards because it's not how long the father is going to last. He's going to everlastingly be the father.

He is the father of an age. Father of the age. This is what he's going to be called.

Well, we know that this is a reference to the Lord Jesus. What age is he going to be the father of? It's the millennial kingdom, right? People are not going to see God the father in heaven. Who are they going to look to and say, He is the one who rules, the mighty one who rules with a rod of iron.

He is the father of the age. Jesus says, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age. There's a lot said in the Bible about the ages.

And the Lord Jesus is described in Hebrews. It says Moses was faithful in his house. The Lord Jesus is faithful in his house.

His age, his economy, oikonomia. His oikos is how it puts it in Hebrew. That's his house.

That's his domain. He's going to be the one who oversees it as a father oversees his household. It again implies authority.

And then we have sar shalom, S-A-R. The very same word that is at the heart of government, M-S-A-R-A-H-M-I-S-R-A. The government will be on his shoulder.

Sar, prince, is in the middle of that. This is that word. He is the sar shalom, the prince of peace.

We know that the millennial kingdom is a thousand years long. It is the seventh day in the week of human history. What is the seventh day? It is the day of rest.

What does the author of Hebrews argue? Today, if you will hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion. Your fathers tested and tried me for four years, saw my works. Then I swore in my wrath, they shall not enter my rest.

There is a rest that remains for the people of God. There is a spiritual rest that we can enjoy in our soul. There is a physical rest when the curse is lifted from creation.

In Romans chapter 8, the whole creation groans waiting for the redemption of the people of God. That curse is going to be lifted in the millennial kingdom. It is a time of rest.

It is a time of restoration. It is a time of peace because the Lord Jesus is going to rule with a rod of iron. He is going to shatter in pieces like a potter's vessel anyone who rises up in rebellion all the way until the end.

When Satan is released, then you have the Gog Magog rebellion and the ultimate denouement of human history. So we have these four names. Two of them, the planner of miracles and the mighty God, are references to the divine nature of Christ, aren't they? This is his role as the second person of the Trinity.

The other two, father of an age and prince of peace, speak of his humanity, his role as the son

of David. First two, son of God. Second two, son of man, son of David, the earthly king.

First two, heavenly kingship, divine authority, divine right of rule. The second two, earthly authority, earthly kingdom, earthly right of rule. Two names for his divine appointment, his divine offices.

Two names for his human authority, his human offices, his human appointments. Of the increase of his government and peace, no end. What does this mean? Once again, we have the word hamisra, of the increase.

This is mrav-a, mrav-e, m-from, rav, multiplication, a-h, feminine, makes it abstract. Of the multiplication, the fruitfulness, the blossoming, budding, burgeoning, cornucopia, whatever you think of in terms of multiplication and abundance, the abundance, multiplication, of his authority And, Le Shalom Ein Ketz. Ein Ketz, no end.

Upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to order it and establish it. This is the focus. This is the area where this prophecy applies.

When you look at the planner of miracles, the mighty God, the father of the age and the prince of peace, it is upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, ordering it, establishing it, judgment, justice, from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform it. This is Ad Olam.

Remember the word Ad? Avi Ad, father until, father of an age. Ad Olam is unto the ages. And the zeal of the Lord of hosts, Yahweh Sabaoth, will Asa, will make this happen.

So, what do we learn from these Old Testament names of the Lord Jesus Christ? As we look at His birth, as we look at the prophecies of His birth, prophecies of what He will be called, it all looks forward to the accomplishment of His mission. It looks even beyond the cross, here, to the fulfillment and the blessing that comes after His work on the cross is finished. When He is the king in the millennial age, when He is both God and man with ruling authority, that's the Lord that we serve, that's the Lord that we celebrate at this Christmas season.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank You for the opportunity to spend time in fellowship in the study of Your Word. Bless us, be with our thoughts during this Christmas time.

Bless our fellowship. May we remember the reason that we celebrate each and every day. And we look forward to a new year and learning and growing in grace and knowledge of our Savior.

We pray these things in His name. Amen.