

## The Birth Announcement

Isaiah 9:6-7

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12/23/12

Note: The text below was prepared for oral delivery rather than for publication in print. As such, be aware that sentence fragments are intentionally used and that this document has not been edited to correct the errors in grammar, sentence structure, etc.

### I. Introduction:

- A. It's great to see you folks out on this holiday weekend. It's a special season of good cheer and joy as families gather together. Now I suspect all of you are familiar with the catchy reminder that "Jesus is the reason for the season" – that being a reminder to those who profess to be of the Christian faith to be mindful of the one who was born and placed in a manger some 2000 years ago. Despite growing secular opposition, nativity scenes with a baby all wrapped up in a manger still dot our landscape during this time of year in recognition of that birth.
- B. And yet while many know of Christ's historical birth and even a lot more about Him, sincerely believing the Bible's historical accounts of the life of Jesus, from His virgin birth to His death on the cross and subsequent resurrection from the dead; the Bible (and particularly the New Testament Epistles) indicate that the vast majority of those who profess to be of the "Christian" faith, in reality don't know the true Christ – not as He is revealed and set forth in God's Gospel – the Gospel believed upon by all who are saved. Did you realize that the numerous warnings in the Epistles to beware of the false teachers and preachers that had infiltrated the ranks of the early church were actually directed to those who profess to believe on Christ? So knowing this, it should cause us all to ask ourselves, whose birth do we celebrate?
- C. Well, as you can see, I've titled today's message "The Birth Announcement" and have listed as our primary text Isaiah 9:6-7 (if you'd like to be turning there). Some of you know that Susan and I have been blessed with 7 delightful grandchildren from our 3 wonderful daughters and son-in-laws. And more often than not, upon the birth of each grandchild, our girls would mail out a small number of birth announcements to family and close friends. These announcements typically include a cute picture of the newborn along with the baby's full name. Thereby the baby's arrival is announced, the name is given, sometimes other information such as birth weight and height might be included, but that pretty much comprises all the information one could gain from the typical birth announcement.
- D. But this morning we are going to take a look into God's word at 3 birth announcements of the most important Person to ever walk on this earth. Of course I'm speaking of the miraculous and wondrous birth of the Savior – the Lord Jesus Christ. And unlike the typical birth announcement of our day, the announcements from God's Word of the Savior's birth are loaded with information – with the very essence of who He is and what He would accomplish. In these announcements we're given His name. And more often than not when the Bible speaks of the "name" of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is referring to far more than a mere moniker or title by which He is to be addressed, for to know His name is to truly know Him as He is – as He is uniquely revealed to all those He saves.

E. Someone might point toward me and ask, “Who is that fellow?” You might answer, “Why, that’s Randy Wages.” But while that may give them an idea of how to address me, it doesn’t mean they really know me does it? Not yet anyway. But when the Bible speaks of the name of Christ, it’s referring to something much deeper. We know there is significance to His name for as Paul wrote in Romans 10:13, “***For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.***” So we know that refers to more than just knowing the title by which He is to be addressed. We call on His name when, by the hearing of God’s preached Gospel, we see aright, with the God-given eyes of faith, (1) who He is and (2) what He actually accomplished to save us. His Person and work. That’s His name.

II. Announcement # 1 - Isaiah 9:6-7: Well, the first announcement we will consider is found in our text for today, Isaiah 9:6-7. This is a prophecy of God through the Prophet Isaiah of the birth of the promised Messiah – a prophecy made some 700 to 800 years before His actual arrival. It reads, “***For 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, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.***”

A. In the verses immediately preceding these, Isaiah had spoken about the sure blessings for God’s people, (called in the Bible the elect, here speaking directly to the eternally chosen remnant from among this idolatrous nation). He was speaking of their salvation from the deserved wrath that Isaiah had expounded upon in the preceding chapter 8. But from the whole of scripture we know these words are applicable to all who are eternally chosen in Christ (not just from among the Jews). All for whom Christ lived and died, make up the “us” unto whom Isaiah declares a child is born and the “us” unto whom a Son is given. This is directed to all for whom Christ would (and did) perform His intercessory, justifying, substitutionary work on their behalf – that work that would be upon His shoulders as we read in verse 7. So all who are, in time, granted the gift of faith that would have them trusting solely in this Person and His finished work for all of their salvation, they are the “us” unto whom this child is born and unto whom this Son is given.

B. A child is born: First let’s examine who He is so as to see how the Person of Christ is uniquely suited and qualified to be the Savior. We read, “***For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.***” The 1<sup>st</sup> part of this, “For unto us a child is born” speaks of Christ’s humanity – a physical birth. A human body was prepared for Him in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

1. We read in Galatians 4:4-5, “***But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, <sup>5</sup>To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.***”

If Christ died as your redeemer, you will in time receive or learn of your eternal adoption as a child of God. Now for satisfaction to be made to the justice of God (for Christ to establish this everlasting heavenly kingdom “with judgment and justice” as Isaiah put it), for sinners whom He saves, it was necessary that He walk on this earth in their place, under the same law or jurisdiction which they were under, taking on the nature of all those He represented, both body and soul, so that He might fulfill God’s requirement of perfect satisfaction to His holy justice on their behalf.

2. Redemption speaks (not of a mere attempt made) but of a payment paid in full due to their guilt before a holy God. God’s law and justice had to be satisfied in that nature which had sinned. Christ had to take on humanity to be a fit Mediator and redeem His people – to be capable of executing the substitutionary work which He was sent to do.
  3. But this child that was born, unlike all of us, was not the seed of man. The scriptures refer to Him as the seed of woman, conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary by God the Holy Spirit. Look with me at Luke chapter 1. Here the angel had been speaking to Mary and telling her that a child would be conceived in her womb, the very Son of the Highest, the Son of God Himself. And in verse 34 she responds as we read: ***“Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?”***<sup>35</sup> ***And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”*** What a glorious person!
  4. Consider had He been conceived as we were, by another fallen son of Adam. He certainly wouldn’t have been the Son of God. He too then would have inherited Adam’s fallen, sinful nature. But He wasn’t the seed of Adam. It was absolutely necessary, in order for Him to be a suitable sacrifice for the sins of His people, that His humanity be a perfect, sinless one. He is the sinless, unblemished eternal Lamb of God. Oh, this babe in the manger was like no other. He was “that holy thing.”
- C. A Son is given: Now we also read, ***“Unto us a Son is given.”*** Here, Isaiah speaks of the very Deity of Christ. He indeed is God. Deity cannot be created. This, the eternal Son of God, wasn’t created or born, but rather is given. He took into unity with His divine nature a body, a sinless humanity.
- D. God and man:
1. Earlier in this book, back in Isaiah 7:14, the Prophet had prophesied: ***“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”*** Actually here we have another birth announcement and a name is given and the name is “Immanuel.” We will look again at this in a few moments when we examine the 2<sup>nd</sup> of these 3 birth announcements as recorded in Matthew chapter 1 where this very prophecy is quoted, but with some added insight to the meaning of this name as it reads ***“...and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”***

2. This Person is both God and man, the God-man mediator, Jesus Christ. – God with us!!! In order for Christ’s substitutionary death to truly pay the debt to God’s injured justice for all the sins, (past, present, and future) of all those He represented, His blood sacrifice had to be of such precious value, adequate to satisfy an infinitely holy God for all the sins of all those who are saved. For that to take place, the sacrifice had to be of infinite value. It was His deity that set apart and gave this value to the sacrifice of His sinless humanity. God cannot die but this man who was God did die. Wow – I suspect I’ll spend eternity marveling, and perhaps never fully comprehending the majesty of the Person of Christ. As the scripture proclaims, “***And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh,...***” (I Timothy 3:16a)

E. His Name: Now in the latter part of Isaiah 9:6 we read, “***...and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.***”

1. Isaiah gives us 5 names that tell us more of just who our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ is. These names are so rich and deep, but our time today will not allow me to expound on them all. Oh, He is “Wonderful” – as His Person and works described here are indeed marvelous. He is a “Counsellor” – who not only guides us but purposes the end from the beginning – His counsel, the scriptures tell us, shall stand. He is undoubtedly “The Mighty God” – mightily able to save His people. And He’s the “everlasting Father” – Isaiah not trying to confuse God the Son with God the Father here, but rather speaking of how He would father an everlasting, eternal kingdom, having adopted His children into His family.
2. See here how His name speaks of more than a title but gets to the essence of who He is, how He is to be known. Now entire sermons could be preached on each of these various names listed here but given our time limitations today, and in keeping with this season of the year, I’ll only elaborate further on the last name in this list, the “Prince of Peace.” And in this name we see something of His glorious work.
3. First, Christ is truly a prince, being the only begotten Son of the King. And as the Son of God, He’s the heir to His throne – to reign over God’s kingdom, where the Bible tells us He sits even now, making intercession for His people. And we also see in this passage, He is, as the promised Messiah of Israel, the lawful heir to the throne of David. Indeed He is a Prince, but not just any Prince – He is the Prince of PEACE. Now I want to come back and elaborate further on this description when we get to the last birth announcement so just keep this name in mind when I revisit it a little later – The Prince of Peace!

F. His Work:

1. Now I skipped over the middle of verse 6 in our text so let’s go back there for here’s where we see that this God-man would bear the responsibility for the reign and rule of God’s kingdom as we’re told that “***...the government shall be upon his shoulder:...***” It will all rest upon Christ. He will shoulder the entire responsibility for establishing and reigning over this spiritual kingdom. We’re now talking about His work whereby sinners are saved.

2. Verse 7a speaks further to that as it declares, ***“Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”***
3. We see here that Christ shall rule or govern a kingdom – one that He will establish with judgment and justice. Salvation itself is a matter of God’s law and justice being satisfied. The Biblical term justification, being a judicial or legal term itself, makes this clear. To be justified before God is to be declared righteous, not guilty. And God, being holy, cannot commune with sin. He will accept nothing less than perfect and continual obedience to His law, His revealed will. Partial compliance will not suffice. Salvation is not a matter of you doing the best you can do and Christ somehow making up the difference. Christ is the only difference! He alone establishes this spiritual kingdom – this reign of grace.
4. This government, this everlasting kingdom, is just that. It’s a reign of grace. Being of grace means that those who inhabitant this kingdom do so based upon being accepted before God, but NOT based upon any merit of their own. Grace refers to the unmerited favor of God – unmerited by the ones upon whom God’s grace is bestowed. As Romans 5:21 reads: ***“That as sin hath reigned unto death, <as we read elsewhere, what we can merit or earn, the wages of sin is death> even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”*** So grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. Whose righteousness? – By Jesus Christ our Lord. It is on the basis of His work of righteousness that this kingdom is established with judgment and justice. To be a recipient of God’s saving grace then is to be blessed and favored by God, but not based upon your own merits. That would be the antithesis of grace. And yet salvation is indeed merited. It is merited or earned by the doing and dying of a suitable Substitute, this God-man.
5. Righteousness refers to the perfect satisfaction to God’s holy law and justice that only Christ, the sinless God-man, could and did render by His obedience unto death. If our righteousness doesn’t measure up to His, we can’t enter into His eternal kingdom. So that means we must have His righteousness, that which He merited, accounted (or imputed) to us, in the same way that the demerit of our sin was imputed (or accounted) unto Him that He might bear the penalty due unto those sins in perfect satisfaction to the justice of God. We often read of that great exchange in 2 Corinthians 5:21. As Romans 5:9 declares, believers are those who are justified (declared not guilty) by His blood – His substitutionary death! This kingdom, this everlasting reign of grace magnifies the justice of God.
6. Now notice at the end of verse 7 we’re told that ***“...The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”*** It doesn’t say He might perform it, or that He will do so with our concurrence or assistance, but rather – that which would be done, He would do. It reads specifically that His “zeal” would perform this. In looking up the Hebrew word translated “zeal” I discovered it meant more than just an ardent desire, as we commonly use the word.

Rather, it carries a connotation of jealousy or envy. In this context, we see that it is referring to God's own glory which other scriptures tell us God is jealous of – and will not share. This is important because this speaks to WHY He would do all of this (Why Christ came and established a kingdom – Why He would save any sinner). For that matter, this speaks of the “why” or the principal moving cause underlying all that God does. It's for His own glory!

7. Most of religion is so man-focused – all about what you the sinner should do (or refrain from doing). The key question often posed is “Will you accept Jesus?” The vital, God-focused question is: “How could a holy God accept sinners such as you and me?” The answer is set forth in the Gospel of God's grace. And that answer that is revealed by true God-given faith is that God accepts His people (sinners saved by grace) in Christ, their Substitute, based solely upon His Person and work He accomplished on the cross– based upon His imputed righteousness. Thereby God's chief design is realized. He gets all the glory.

Now I've spent most of our time on this first birth announcement from our primary text. So I will briefly point out how the revelation of (1) who He is and (2) what He has accomplished as it is set forth in Isaiah is likewise reinforced in 2 other announcements of our Savior's birth.

- G. Announcement # 2, Matthew 1:18-23: Look with me now at the 2<sup>nd</sup> birth announcement in Matthew chapter 1. This announcement also takes place before the birth of Christ, but after Mary and Joseph had become engaged to be married, only to discover she was expecting a child. And the angel of the Lord appears to Joseph and reveals the truth concerning her child and then proceeds to announce His birth in a way that again tells us something of who He is and what He would accomplish. In Matthew 1, beginning in verse 18, we read: “*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: <or took place as follows> When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. <sup>19</sup>Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. <sup>20</sup>But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.*

<sup>21</sup>*And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.* <sup>22</sup>*Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,* <sup>23</sup>*Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*” Briefly, let me focus your attention on a few reinforcing observations from this announcement to Joseph by the angel:

1. First the angel confirmed that this child (this child in the Virgin Mary's womb) was of God, conceived by God, the Holy Spirit. Again – He is both God and man!
2. Secondly, the angel told Joseph, “*..thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*” The word “Jesus” here means Jehovah (God) our Savior. And notice the angel did not say that he was to be called Jesus because He would “try” to save his people from their sins. Nor did the angel say that Jesus would merely make salvation possible for His people. Nor did the angel say that Jesus would execute His saving work for everyone, but rather only “His people” – those given to Him out of Adam's fallen race by God the Father in His electing love. In this announcement we see just as certainly as the Prophet Isaiah prophesied, that Jesus, the God-man, could not and did not fail to accomplish what He came to do – He would establish this kingdom. It was all upon His shoulder. The angel's explanation for why His name was to be Jesus was “*..for he shall save his people from their sins.*” See how His name is far more than just a title. Oh what a joyous birth announcement for all who are brought by God's grace to trust in Him and His righteousness alone for their salvation. That's how His people are identified. They believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ – on His doing and dying.
3. I included verses 22 and 23 as they are quoted from that passage I read from earlier in Isaiah. I simply wanted you to see in its context, the reiteration of the virgin birth announcement and the name “Emmanuel” – meaning God with us!

H. Announcement #3, Luke 2:6-14: Finally, look with me at the 3<sup>rd</sup> announcement of Christ's birth – an announcement delivered on the day that Christ was born by the angels to the shepherds who were out in the field watching over their flocks. We read of this in Luke chapter 2. Starting with verse 6 we read, “*And so it was, that, while they were there, <Mary and Joseph having traveled to Bethlehem> the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. <sup>7</sup>And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. <sup>8</sup>And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.*

*<sup>10</sup>And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. <sup>11</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, <sup>14</sup>Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*

Again, let me focus your attention on a few reinforcing observations from this announcement to the shepherds by the angels:

1. First, recall that God's prophecy through the Prophet Isaiah was that "unto us a child is born" and "unto us a Son is given," emphasizing that this holy thing would be both God and man. But here the angel announces His birth by saying "unto you is born...a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." As I've already shown, only one who was both God and man is suited and qualified to be called a Savior for sinners like you me – One uniquely qualified to save us in a way that achieves God's chief design to glorify Himself, a way that is consistent with the glory of God – the revelation of God as He is – that He might receive all glory in their salvation.
2. Here, the host of angels, in wonder and awe of the arrival of this Savior, Christ the Lord, sing "Glory to God in the highest." This speaks of the highest glory of all – that which is only seen in the Person and work of Christ – that which is made known in the hearts of all those Christ represented when they come by faith to know Him – seeing that in Christ and in the truth of salvation by grace, i.e. - based upon His finished work alone, all of His glorious character attributes come together. Here, we uniquely see how God can be who He is – a merciful, gracious, loving Savior of sinners, but also Holy and just.
3. Only by God's way salvation by grace in Christ can we see how God in mercy saves His people, but not at the expense of His justice. He doesn't save us by pretending as if we didn't sin. No, He sent His Son as a sacrifice to pay that sin debt. We see how He can be both a just God and a Savior. God the Father is revealed and gloried in this, in the Person and redemptive work of His Son. That's glory to God in the highest! This zeal of God that we read of in Isaiah, this reasonable, justifiable jealousy for His own redemptive glory insures that He would deliver. God's greatest glory is found in the redemptive work of Christ, in the establishment of His kingdom in judgment and justice. His redemptive glory (this highest glory) is that which is uniquely revealed in the Gospel that proclaims how Christ truly saves His people.
4. In 2 Corinthians 4:6 we read, "***For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, <who in creation said, 'Let there be light' and there was light> hath <likewise> shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.***" That is, in salvation, He shines a light in our hearts that reveals the unique knowledge of God in the "face" – that is the person and work of Jesus Christ. This understanding that accompanies God's revelation in the sinner's heart, is something that can't be gained by an observation of any other work of God, but this aspect of His glory, His highest glory, is uniquely seen in the face, or person and work of Jesus Christ.



5. Those God saves shall come to know Him – who He is and what He accomplished. So when God grants a sinner spiritual life, by “turning on the lights” for them, so to speak, God reveals of Himself, that which only can be understood in a Spirit-revealed comprehension of the person and work, of Jesus Christ. Knowing God’s glory to be His chief design, God’s people take great comfort in knowing that His jealous zeal for His glory, His determination to be glorified, will insure that He will perform it – His kingdom will be established. All of His people, in each successive generation, are given the blood-bought gift of spiritual life and faith to behold the glory of the triune God in the Person and work of the Savior, Christ the Lord.
6. Finally, I told you I wanted to come back to Isaiah’s reference to Christ not just as a Prince, being the Son of the eternal King, but as the Prince of Peace. When this Prince of Peace gives life to one of His own, He shows them how they are reconciled (peace having been made between them and God) based solely upon HIS righteousness imputed to them. Romans 5:1 tells us that, “***Therefore being justified, by faith*** <when we’re brought into an awareness of that justification> ***we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.***” – the One who reconciled His people unto God by paying their debt at the cross of Calvary – satisfying God’s law and justice – (making peace).
7. Here, at the end of this 3<sup>rd</sup> birth announcement in Luke we have recorded the host of heavenly angels singing, “***Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.***” Many suggest that this verse speaks of peace among men or among warring nations. But Christ hasn’t brought that kind of peace has He? The zeal of the Lord of hosts hasn’t performed that – certainly not yet in recorded history nor has it been promised. No, God’s greatest glory is seen in how peace is made between God and man, based upon this Savior and that which He established – righteousness on earth, the righteousness which is imputed to all those whose sins were imputed to Him. Now that’s Peace on earth and good will toward men

III. Conclusion: Now to all who hear this message, I challenge you to ask yourself, is the one called Jesus whose birth you, and me, and countless others celebrate this time of year, the same as the One that we read of today from God’s Word? I ask this because so many in our day worship a “Jesus” who they think merely makes salvation possible, believing you’ll be saved if you do your part – if you believe, if you’ll just accept Him, if you will do your part, etc. But if that’s the case, it’s you, not Him that you are presuming can shoulder the responsibility by performing the crowning event that would meet the requirement for entering into God’s holy presence in heaven. But God requires a perfection that you and I can’t render. That’s why Christ came. Many mistakenly presume that they ultimately establish their own place in His kingdom, looking to be saved either by something other than (or in addition to) His imputed righteousness alone. That’s faith in faith, not faith in Christ. That’s salvation based upon self-righteousness, not His righteousness.

But, today I hope you've seen in these 3 birth announcements of Jesus Christ the truth of both of (1) who He is and (2) what He accomplished. Salvation is based upon His righteousness, not one of our presumed making. He established this kingdom in judgment and justice for as we saw, it is a reign of righteousness – His justice-satisfying righteousness, the government of which is truly upon His shoulders.

Let me leave you with an easy to remember, concise summary of this spiritual reign of grace, this eternal kingdom of which Isaiah prophesied that Christ, the promised Messiah, would later establish. God provides this for us through the pen of Paul as he wrote in Romans 14:17, “***For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; <It’s not a physical kingdom,> but <the kingdom of God is...> righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost***”. Think on that: The spiritual, eternal kingdom of God has (1) been established by the justice-satisfying righteousness of Christ’s substitutionary obedience unto death on Calvary’s cross (righteousness) whereby (2) an everlasting peace was made between sinners and a holy God (peace) – a peace or reconciliation that is eventually revealed to all those God saves in their successive generations which (3) brings them unspeakable, eternal joy! Righteousness, peace, and joy!

I pray that you’ll find righteousness, peace and joy in the Savior, Christ the Lord!

I also pray that you and yours will have a wonderful week of fellowship together and safe travels for all those who will be on the road. Winston, let’s close by singing the 1<sup>st</sup> and last verses of Joy to the World.

Footnote from the author: While this sermon was prepared and delivered by me, I often utilize the commentaries, study helps, and teachings of others to supplement my own prayerful study of the scriptures. Since this document was not originally prepared for publication in print, please excuse and recognize that it was unfeasible to properly identify and credit all of the various original sources used to develop the content herein. Ultimately, it is my sincere and foremost objective to accurately present the gospel of God’s grace found in the only infallible source, God’s word itself – the Bible.