

“MIGHTY GOD”
—The supernatural power of Jesus Christ—
Isaiah 9:6

Introduction:

Here we are in week two of our Christmas series, “GOD WITH US—looking at the special names given to the, “...child who was to be born...the son who was given.” There are many, many names attributed to Jesus Christ throughout the Scripture—and none perhaps as powerful and seasonally timely as the four we find right here in Isaiah’s prophecy: **“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 Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).**

We believe that when Isaiah made this prophesy, he was referring to the sign the Lord had given to King Ahaz, namely, “A virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel” (Isa. 7:14). Immanuel is a name which means, “God with us.” Last week we learned that Jesus is the one that is spoken of here in both Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6. And further, that if God is with us, we have a *Wonderful Counselor* who provides us with *supernatural guidance*.

Today we learn that through Jesus, we have *supernatural power* for our lives which comes from his title here in Isaiah 9:6, **Mighty God**. This title reminds us that Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth—and no matter what predicament, impossibility, hardship, headache or heartache we face, we can have the power we need to overcome. If you are struggling with what feels like a lack of power in your life today, you will be encouraged to know that Jesus is Mighty God! Is he in your life today?

For outlining purposes, I’m going to start with the second half of this couplet because it is important to place the emphasis where it

needs to be. Once we have that established, everything else will fall into place very quickly. So notice...

I. Jesus is “Mighty God” because of His deity.

I realize that most of us here today are already convinced about the deity of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, it may be helpful for us to restate an argument for why we believe Jesus is God—especially in light of the fact that there are lots of people—and even religious systems that reject Christ’s deity outright. There are also many, religious people who stop short of confessing the deity of Christ. They willingly admit Jesus was a great religious or moral teacher, or perhaps some kind of “enlightened” leader, but refuse to confess Him as ***the God who was made flesh and made his dwelling among us (John 1:14)***.

The testimony of Scripture provides irrefutable evidence that Jesus, was in fact, God in human flesh. We are seeing this in each of these titles ascribed to Christ here in Isaiah 9:6. And this, of course, is at the foundation of what Isaiah is declaring about this child that would be born—this Son that would be given (even in this description, Isaiah is suggesting that He has been preexistent which alludes to deity).

But Isaiah couldn’t have said it more clearly than when adding “Mighty God” to the list of prophetic titles given to the coming Messiah here in Isaiah 9:6. One Hebrew term for “God” is “El” and it’s found all over the OT. His full title here in Isaiah 9:6 is “El-Gibbor” or, “The God who is the Mighty One.” There is no getting around the fact that Isaiah’s prophetic announcement is the definitive answer for whether or not Jesus was God.

But for the sake of review, allow me offer to you a list of categories—which can be studied in greater detail on your own—as evidence of Christ’s deity.

A. The evidence of Jesus Christ’s deity is overwhelming.

1. Prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah provide evidence for Christ's deity.

Perhaps the most significant prophecy comes right here in Isaiah—where we've been already seeing that He, the Messiah, will be born of a virgin.

Remember that back in Isaiah 7, wicked King Ahaz, who ruled over the Southern Kingdom of Judah with his capital city of Jerusalem was told by the prophet not to worry about this Northern Alliance (Syria and Israel) that was attempting to overpower him. The prophet tells the King that God was actually going to send Assyria to overpower the Northern kingdom. Knowing that Ahaz would view his message with suspicion, God offers to give King Ahaz the opportunity to ask for a sign from him to serve as proof that the events foretold by Isaiah would come true so that he would stand firm in his faith.

But Ahaz' faith was hypocritical—and not wanting to engage with God on this level, refuses to ask God for a sign—of course under the cloak of sounding very spiritual in his desire to not test the Lord. Because of this, Isaiah informs Ahaz that because he would not take the Lord up on his terms, the Lord himself would give HIM a sign: ***“The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14)***. The fact that the virgin would call him Immanuel (God with us) is just one example of how OT prophecy is evidence of Christ's deity. Of course, this prophecy was fulfilled through the life of Mary—who had not been with any man before she conceived and became pregnant with the Son of God (see Lk. 1:34-35).

Another example of prophecy related to the deity of Christ happened when God judged the Serpent after the sin of Adam and Eve back in Eden. God tells the Serpent: ***“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring (seed) and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Gen. 3:15)***. This prophecy anticipated the coming Messiah

fulfilled through Mary, who had found favor in God's eyes to be the birth mother of Jesus.

We could delve into prophecies related to the Messiah coming from the tribe of Judah—as a descendent of King David himself—which according to Genesis 49:10, Jeremiah 33:14-16 and Luke 1:32, he did. Or that he would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2-5). Or that he would perform miracles (Isa. 35:5-6). Or that he would be hated, betrayed and pierced for our transgressions (Ps. 69:4; Ps. 41:9; Isa. 53:5; Zech. 12:10). Or that after his death, would be buried in a borrowed grave (Isa. 53:9). Or that after he was buried, he would be resurrected from the dead (Psalm 16:10). We're only scratching the surface here about the many ways that Jesus, the child who was born—the Son who was given—fulfilled Biblical prophecy proving him to be God in human flesh.

Not only fulfilled prophecies provide evidence for his deity, but also

2. History itself provides evidence for Christ's deity.

What I mean here is that there's more written on the extraordinary life of Jesus Christ than anyone else in history. And history records that each of Jesus Christ's apostles were martyred for believing him to be God's Son who was raised from death itself.

From an historical viewpoint, even the spread of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire in less than a generation—amidst affliction and persecution and the subsequent the growth of the Church of Jesus Christ even to this day is evidence of the supernatural nature of Jesus Christ as the God-man.

So fulfilled prophecy, the evidence of history and of course, another evidence is that the...

3. New Testament Scriptures provide testimony for Christ's deity.

I always encourage people who question whether Jesus was in fact, God in human flesh, to check out John 1:1, 14, Col. 2:9; Phil. 2:5-8; Hebrews 1:3 and read for themselves what the Bible has to say about who Jesus was. And of course, Jesus' personal claims of His deity shouldn't be left out of this discussion either such as what we read in passages like John 8:58; 10:30-33; and Mk. 14:62-64.

And then of course there are claims of his followers that also provide evidence for Christ's deity. His disciples claim Jesus' deity in places like John 20:28 where after seeing and touching the hands and side of Jesus after his resurrection proclaims, ***"My Lord and my God."*** Or when Peter, when asked by Jesus who He really was responds, ***"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"*** (Matthew 16:15-16) Or, when in a boat, the entire group of disciples confessed to him being the Son of God (Matthew 14:33).

Even those outside of God's immediate family came to believe Jesus was the God-man. For example, a Roman guard who had witnessed Christ's crucifixion came to the settled conviction that Jesus was truly God's Son (Mark 15:39). Jesus' neighbors, who witnessed him in real life growing up and later carrying out his mission said things like, ***"Where did this man get these things? they asked. 'What's this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles'"***(Mark 6:2)! Even demonic beings came to this conclusion: ***"Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, 'You are the Son of God!' But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Christ"*** (Luke 4:41).

Jesus' miracles provide evidence for His deity (See Lk. 7:22). But the greatest miracle of all—His own resurrection provides the greatest evidence that Jesus was no mere man. He had to be God! The NT provides the clear connection between Christ's resurrection and His Deity (See 1 Cor. 15:13; Acts 17:31).

I think the evidence is overwhelming that Jesus Christ is God—and in fact, as we read here in Isaiah 9:6 that He is MIGHTY

GOD. This brings us to the second aspect of this pairing, "Mighty God."

II. Jesus is "Mighty God" because of His power.

The Hebrew word that Isaiah uses—that translates into our English word, "Mighty" is "ghibbore" or, transliterated, Ghibowr" which encompasses several distinct concepts—all having to do with power and character. What is fascinating about this word is the people and situations it is attributed to in Scripture. The first thing Bible scholars will point out is that "ghibbore" isn't a word always attributed to God. It is more often attributed to people. Therefore the concepts which we discover from this word—when applied to the life of Christ—offer us insight into His personal nature. Let me offer three distinct meanings of this word and how they present a portrait of his power. First...

A. There's something here about reputation.

More specifically, it touches on the idea of one's reputation being widely known. In this sense, reputation could be seen as something with renown. But what makes it even more interesting is that often in Scripture, the word "mighty" is associated with the reputation of the rebellious. We see this in passages like Isa. 5:22 where those of ill-repute are called the "ghibbore" of mixing drinks: ***"Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine and champions at mixing drinks..."*** (Isa. 5:22). I may know some individuals right now who fit that description.

The prophet Ezekiel also uses this title to describe the wicked rebels of countries who waged war against God's covenant people: ***"Do they not lie with the other uncircumcised warriors (Heb., ghibbore) who have fallen, who went down to the grave with their weapons of war, whose swords were placed under their heads?"*** (Ezek. 32:27)

Notice that in just these two examples, the reputation of the subjects is *negative*. But don't miss the point. The focus of this

word isn't on the behavior itself—but on the *reputation that follows one's behavior*. Often it's tyranny and mayhem that garners such wide reputation quickly. But in the Messiah's case, it's obviously His righteousness. No other being ever has such a widely held reputation even for evil, as Jesus' reputation is for righteousness. That this word is attributed to Jesus Christ here in Isaiah 9:6, focuses on His reputation being widely known and received—albeit one that is good as opposed to the typical examples from those who are evil.

That is why, as shown above, some translations actually use the word, **“hero”** for “ghibbor.” Meaning that whatever one's reputation is, if it is of a spectacular nature (good or bad) it is a fitting word. This means that we have in Jesus one whose character is renown! His reputation is spectacular. He would be a true and good hero. He would be larger than life—someone whose character and strength would inspire admiration and emulation. And, of course, this is what we find true of Jesus Christ. Perhaps you have never called him this, but according to him being called, Mighty God, Jesus is our hero!

Heroes inspire us. They move us. They make us want to be just like them. People of renown find themselves in the interesting position of being examples to all who come to know of them. This happens with athletes, public figures, public servants, entertainers—hero-worship happens in practically every corner of life. There is something in all of us that seeks to “be like” those who are renown. ***Our spiritual condition is what determines who we seek to emulate***—and if you are seeking to emulate something good and worthy in life, than we should look no further than to Jesus Himself. Why? He's Mighty God!

Let's stop here for a moment. Who are you looking to for your ultimate example in life? This Christmas, and every season of life, Isaiah is reminding us that Jesus is our one true example. His character is so spectacular that when you see Him for who He is, you can't help but want to be like Him. So here is my question: Are you focused on Him today? Or, has other people or even

circumstances moved into your vision? Is HE your hero? We all need to heed what the writer of Hebrews wrote so powerfully: ***“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2).***

The Psalmist makes the Lord's renown his prayer: ***“Your name, O Lord, endures forever, your renown, O LORD, through all generations” (Psa. 135:13).***

This should be our prayer as well—even as we find recorded here in Isaiah, ***“Yes, LORD, walking in the way of your laws, we wait for you; your name and renown are the desire of our hearts” (Isa. 26:8).*** Is this your desire today? I hope so!

So, in this title, “Mighty God” there is something that points to reputation. Let me offer another nuance of this Hebrew word for “Mighty.” Notice also...

B. There's something here about representation.

We just saw that the word ghibbore often is attached to those of a more evil nature simply because notoriety often stems from bad behaviors more quickly than from good ones. We don't often think of someone as a hero who does evil things. But that's because we always see the word, “hero” as only someone who does good. And it can apply just as much to someone who does good, but the real meaning behind it is the reputation that comes from it.

But this word also carries the sense of being a representative for something. When I hear about a hero, I'm usually thinking of someone who is the biggest or strongest one in the contest—whatever the contest is. But the word hero can also be seen more as a representative of a larger movement of people or ideas.

For example, if I am a hero of human rights, I lobby for laws that protect the innocent or sanctions against brutal despots who thrive on oppression and tyranny. In this sense, we see how our Savior Jesus is our ghibbore—for he represents to all of us, the true meaning of life and sets an example we all wish to follow. He alone is our hero for he represents all of us who call on His name.

We see this idea of “representation” with this word, “ghibbore” in the OT story of David and Goliath. The great Philistine giant, Goliath, defied the armies of Israel, taunting them to come and fight against him. The winner of the contest would determine whose nation would rule. The Philistines’ hero (ghibbore) was Goliath and he was calling out Israel to set forth their champion to fight him to the death. If Goliath won against Israel’s champion—whoever he may be—then Israel would surrender to the Philistines—and visa-versa.

Goliath was called a “hero” (ghibbore) before he ever fought someone in the ranks of Israel. But here, the idea of “representation” was behind the term. He represented everyone he was fighting *for*. David, not seen by his brothers or the armies of Saul as a strong warrior—was actually, Israel’s champion—for he represented all of Israel that day in the battle. We know the outcome of this story: ***“David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him. 51 David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine’s sword and drew it from the scabbard. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword. When the Philistines saw that their hero (ghibbore) was dead, they turned and ran” (1 Samuel 17:50-51).***

Goliath represented the Philistine army. David represented Israel’s army. They were representatives of a larger group.

That Jesus is called, “Mighty God” conveys a reminder that He would represent a people. Yes, Jesus is *our ghibbore*. He represents the people of God—who, for ages have looked for the one true champion to stand and do battle against the forces of

Satan. When he came to earth and lived a perfect life, willingly went to Calvary and then arose from the grave—he did all that for us—for you and for me. He represents the sinner by his death on the cross and represents the righteous through his risen life. Remember? ***“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21).***

This means that Jesus power is right now available to work through us. He is our hero, our champion—and because He represents us, we now have the power to represent Him. He is available to all who truly believe in and follow Him. This is why the Apostle Paul prayed, ***“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” (Eph. 3:16-17).*** It is also why he assured those he prayed for by saying, ***“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work with us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen” (Eph. 3:20-21).***

Yes, Jesus our “Mighty God” has this incredible reputation—it’s renown. But he is also *representative* of us. Reputation...representation...and finally...

C. There’s something here about redemption.

Of all the nuances of this Hebrew word, this to me is the one with the most beauty and meaning. The word from which our translations use “hero” or even “champion” comes from this word that Isaiah uses when calling this child, “Mighty God.” It has something to do with reputation and representation, but there’s also something here about redemption. And that redemption comes in the concept of a warrior going to battle. So there’s this idea of hero, champion and here, warrior.

When I hear the word, “warrior” and know that it is the very word that Isaiah used to describe who the coming Messiah would be, it

pumps me up! Jesus is our “warrior-God.” **He is our one true warrior.**

Warriors fight. They go to battle. They get into the conflict. They are not passive or disinterested in the battle—they are “in” the fray—or they are not warriors at all. The picture we have from this term used in other portions of God’s word shows that the implication is always in them going to conquer or having a mission to accomplish. For example, When the angel of the Lord (probably the pre-incarnate Christ) approached the OT character Gideon, he says, “***The Lord is with you, mighty warrior***” (***Judges 6:12***). In the Hebrew, it’s (Heb., ghibbore hehayil) God saw Gideon as a mighty warrior—this word “warrior” paired with the “Ghibbore” of God. Gideon’s mission was to deliver Israel from the hand of the Medianites. He only saw Gideon as a warrior because of the power he was ready to vest within him. And in doing so, God intended Gideon to get into the fight.

David’s mighty men (same word describing the ghibbore--warriors) were those who protected David from the hands of the Philistines. They risked their very lives so that they could accomplish their mission of deliverance for David or his purposes. (see 2 Sam 23). A careful look at these mighty men and those who served in that company of individuals were brave, risk-taking, sacrificial and determined to do whatever they needed to do at whatever cost to protect David. They were the ultimate bodyguards. What an image for our consideration of the redemptive power of Jesus Christ don’t you think? Do you see Jesus as the one who fights for you. He protects you? He’s your body guard! He is! In the Spiritual realm, he guards our lives from the vicious attack of Satan and his minions. How many times when the enemy is coming against me has my MIGHTY GOD stepped in and said, “Not so fast! He belongs to me and I won’t let you destroy him!” Thank you, Jesus. Apart from Jesus’ supervisory protection, where would any of us be?

The Psalmist describes the Lord as one with this redemptive power: “***Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and***

mighty, the LORD mighty in battle” (***Ps. 24:8***). And I love, “***The Lord is a warrior, the Lord is His name***” (***Ex. 15:3***)!

All this means that when Jesus is in your life, you have the God of the universe, whose reputation is *renown*—and who is your *representative*...and works redemption in your life because he fought for you. And he won the battle. This is why Jesus came to earth. He is our MIGHTY GOD...to wage the battle of all time between Satan and God and to purchase our victory by his death and resurrection. He is our mighty ***warrior***! He is our ***champion*** and he is our ***hero***. He is MIGHTY GOD. Every day we should wake up with praise on our lips for this very reason alone!

Stop right here. As I get ready to wrap this up today, I can’t help but imagine that some of us here feel as if we are losing our particular battle. It may be a battle with some addiction. We might be battling with some temptation. Our battle may be in the realm of believing God when our circumstances are waging war in our minds to not trust him and do things our own way.

And Jesus came to this earth and fought for us—to redeem us and deliver us from the power of Satan and the penalty of sin. Today, if you feel that you are going down in the battle, God is with you—through Jesus! He is MIGHTY GOD! He is your example. Pattern your life after him. He is your true representative—he stands before you as your leader. And He fights for you—so that you can stand fully assured that you belong to Him—and that the battle has been won. He is your conquering King—your MIGHTY GOD!

We see Jesus as MIGHTY GOD because the evidence of His deity, and the example of His character. His character is *renown*, *representative* & *redemptive*. He is our *hero*, our *champion* & our *warrior* in battle. He is MIGHTY GOD. He is GOD WITH US!

Give him your life today, won’t you? And if you have already, live for him with true passion and sincerity.
Invitation and prayer