

HIS NAME

By Malcolm H. Watts

Kept in the special treasury of the Tower of London are the Crown Jewels and among these priceless symbols of monarchy are the Crowns of England. St. Edward's Crown, made for Charles II's crowning, is all of gold, set with diamonds and many precious stones. The Imperial State Crown which was made for Queen Victoria, has in it, 3,000 gems, which include the famous Black Ruby given to Edward the Black Prince in 1367, a sapphire from the coronation ring of Edward the Confessor, the large Stuart sapphire which was kept by the exiled House of Stuart for many years, four magnificent pearls, and an enormous diamond which is one of the four 'Stars of Africa' cut from the Cullinan diamond, the largest diamond ever found.

Kept in the sacred treasury of God's Word are the glorious prophecies of Christ. Like

gem-encrusted crowns, these prophecies sparkle with His famous names and titles. One such prophecy is Isaiah 9:6, 'His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.'

Wonderful

He was 'wonderful' in His birth. This word generally occurs with reference to miracles, because miracles are astonishing events — (Exod 7:3; 15:11). When the almighty and eternal God became man for man's salvation, He was miraculously conceived by the Holy Ghost and was born of a virgin mother. "All this was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, '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.'" (Mt 1:21,22). Was not this the miracle of all miracles? Unparalleled in

history, it will excite the amazement and admiration of men to the end of time, and throughout all eternity. 'Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh...' (1 Timothy 3:16).

Counsellor

He was 'Counsellor' in His life. When, in eternity past, the plans and purposes of redemption were made, the Son of God was, as Boston expresses it, 'a member of the cabinet-council of Heaven.' According to Scripture, it was then that the Father and the Son united in a scheme to secure the salvation of sinners. Theirs was a binding and lasting agreement. 'The counsel of peace (the plan for the reconciliation of man) shall be between them both.' (Zech 6:13; cf Eph 3:11). The Son of God, having taken part in these eternal counsels, was every-way fitted to be our 'Counsellor.' He entered a world full of ignorance and confusion, but when He spoke, He spoke as if He knew. There was awesome authority in His preaching. No-one had ever spoken like it before. 'I speak to the world', He said, 'those things which I have heard of Him.' (Jn 8:26; cf 14:24; 17:8). What exactly was He saying? What was His message? He continually advised sinners to trust in Him alone for salvation. He said: 'This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life.' (Jn 6:40). That, my friends, is still the counsel of God to each and every one of us.

The Mighty God

He was 'the Mighty God' in His death and resurrection. This title, which is never applied to anyone but Jehovah (Is 10:21; Jer 32:18), is made up of two words: God (El) and hero (gibbor). A literal translation would be 'Hero-God'. What a name for our Saviour! When there was no-one to help, He himself came into the world to save His people. I would remind you that the essence of that salvation was substitution, His life for ours. He did not hesitate. He saw us on the brink of hell and, offering Himself in our place, He then endured the pains and pangs of hell, that we might know the blessedness of heaven. The account of what He did is in the Bible for all to read. 'While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' (Rom 5:8). When, on the third day, He rose in triumph from the grave, it was to show that the work of salvation was successfully concluded and that believers could now have full assurance of a joyful resurrection to eternal life. Today we sing the praises of a hero — a divine hero — who has won for Himself immortal honours.

'Mighty Christ from time eternal,
Mighty, He man's nature takes,
Mighty, when on Calv'ry dying,
Mighty, death itself He breaks.
See His might,
Infinite,
King of heaven and earth by right!'

The Everlasting Father

He is 'the Everlasting Father' in the present exercise of His kingly office. Such a title does not interfere in any way with the special relationship of the Father in the Godhead, but it simply refers to the loving and gracious manner in which Christ now administers the affairs of His kingdom. Though He is exalted in glory, yet He is far from forgetful of us on the earth. In fact, He has been made 'head over all things to the church (i.e. for its benefit and advantage).' (Eph 1:22). He therefore, even now, directs His people, provides for their needs, keeps them safe in times of danger, comforts them by His Word and Spirit, and listens always to the prayers they offer. What a blessing it is to know that there is One above, whom we love and who loves us, who is tenderly watching over us! He will not fail us. His name is 'the Everlasting Father'; and, as John Newton said in one of his sermons, this means that 'His relation to His people subsists unchangeably and therefore they cannot be destitute.'

The Prince of Peace

He will be 'the Prince of Peace' at His return. Of course, there is a sense in which He is 'the Prince of Peace' now. He has made our peace with God by the blood of His cross and He sovereignly dispenses peace to all His believing people. True as

that is, the Bible promises more. He will come again, and at His appearing, He will banish all peace-disturbing influences from this world. 'There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.' (Rev 21:4). In that glorious kingdom of His, peace will not only be perfect; it will last for ever. Though now we may have trouble and heartache, let us cherish the hope of one day seeing the Saviour and of enjoying the peace of God in all its eternal fulness. 'To you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven...' (2 Thess 1:7).