

23T01a Everlasting Father

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me today for an @ the PUNLA coffee table.

Merry Christmas. Okay. I know it's not Christmas time anymore. But Merry Christmas anyway. Or maybe I should say Merry Remembrance of the Birth of Jesus which we should do everyday of the year. Let me read a scripture I bet we all hear over and over again in December each year. *For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.* That is from Isaiah 9:6 in the King James Bible. That's exactly how I remember it from my childhood.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father thank you. Thank you for coming to make a way for us to be near you. Thank you for being you. You are wonderful, you are counselor, you are almighty, you are God. Bless our time together and I pray all these things in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

Before I begin today. I want to offer a word of caution to all of you studious sorts like me out there. Sometimes in our search for truth we can make things more complicated than they need to be. And be sure you know and trust your sources, because there is a lot of information out there with unknown origins. Please keep this in mind today.

Okay. Isaiah 9:6 what a beautiful picture of who Jesus is. My pastor was recently teaching on the four names of Jesus from this scripture. Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. Seemed like a grand topic for the Christmas season. When he spoke about Everlasting Father, he struggled. He told me that he struggled to describe how Jesus the son was also the Everlasting Father. Remember the distinct persons of the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So, if Jesus is the Everlasting Father, well this does become pretty confusing.

So, it became apparent we should ask a simple question. What does the text in Isaiah 9:6 mean by the phrase Everlasting Father.

The first thing I did was look at some of the many English translations I often read. All of the typical translations had Everlasting Father. KJV, NKJV, NIV, ESV, ASV, NLT, all said Everlasting Father. The only outlier was the NAS which said Eternal Father. Seemed to be a consensus but then I started looking at some translations I don't use regularly like the Aramaic Bible in Plain English which said *"the Mighty Man of Eternity"*, or the Brenton Septuagint Translation which said *"his name is called the Messenger of great counsel: for I will bring peace upon the princes, and health to him."*

I noticed quite quickly this was not going to be an easy question. So, I did what I typically do. I looked at the lexicon in my favorite bible study app, biblehub.com. here it is.

◀ Isaiah 9:6 ▶

NASB Lexicon

NASB ©	Hebrew	Strong's	Origin
For a child	יָלֵד (ye-led)	3206: child, son, boy, youth	from yalad
will be born	יָלַדַּךְ (yul-lad-)	3205: to bear, bring forth, beget	a prim. root
to us, a son	בֶּן (ben)	1121: son	a prim. root
will be given	נָתַן (nit-tan-)	5414: to give, put, set	a prim. root
to us; And the government	הַמִּשְׁרָה (ham-mis-rah)	4951: rule, dominion	from an unused word
will rest	וַתְּהִי (vat-te-hi)	1961: to fall out, come to pass, become, be	a prim. root
on His shoulders;	שִׁיחַמֹּוֹ (shich-mov,)	7926: shoulder	from an unused word
And His name	שֵׁמוֹ (she-mov)	8034: a name	of uncertain derivation
will be called	וַיִּקְרָא (vai-yik-ra)	7121: to call, proclaim, read	a prim. root
Wonderful	פִּלְאֵ (pe-le)	6382: a wonder	from an unused word
Counselor,	יוֹעֵזֵן (yo-v-'etz)	3289: to advise, counsel	a prim. root
Mighty	גִּבּוֹר (gib-bo-vr,)	1368: strong, mighty	from gabar
God,	אֱלֹ (el)	410: God, in pl. gods	a prim. root
Eternal	אֲבִי־עַד (a-vi-'ad)	5703: perpetuity	from adah
Father,		1: father	from an unused word
Prince	שָׂרֵ- (sar-)	8269: chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince	from an unused word
of Peace.	שְׁלוֹמַי (sha-lo-vm.)	7965: completeness, soundness, welfare, peace	from shalem

As I read down through the lexicon, I came to Everlasting Father. אֲבִי־עַד (a-vi-'ad) Which means perpetual or perpetually. But no word for Father. Father would be “**ab**” or “**aba**” in Hebrew.

To say the least I was a little stunned. Everlasting, but not Everlasting Father. I began to believe this might not be four names of Jesus but rather a list of some of the character traits of Jesus instead. Wonderful, (comma) Counselor, (comma) God, (comma) Almighty, (comma) Everlasting, (comma) Prince, (comma) Peace.

I really loved the way this sounded in Hebrew. **Pele Yaats Ad El Gibbor Sar Shalom** or Wonderful, Counselor, Perpetual, God, Almighty, Prince, Peace.

But I was not satisfied with this although it was very possible. But still no father.

So, I decided to study further. I went to my other favorite bible study app. BlueLetterBible. I pulled up Isaiah 9:6 in the Masoretic Text and this is what I saw. **“Ab ad ab”** or father eternal father. There it was “ab” or father but it looked odd. I dug and dug and could not lock down the origins of this.



The	H1 ↓	אָבִי אָב 'āḇ
everlasting	H5703	עַד עַד 'ad
Father,	H1 ↑	אָבִי אָב 'āḇ

Then I started to get frustrated. I thought why not just look at the Hebrew Bible. Instead of the Hebrew translated to Greek or maybe Latin then to English. So, I went to another resource I like but use a lot less. StudyBible.info. Here I found a Hebrew text translated to English what is referred to as the Interlinear Hebrew Old Testament.

As I scrolled down to Isaiah 9:6 I found this. Wonderful פֶּלֶא or “*pele*”, Counselor יוֹעֵץ or “*yaats*”, God אֵל or “*el*”, The mighty גִּבּוֹר or “*gibbor*”, the everlasting אָבִי עַד or “*ad*”, the Prince שֵׁר or “*sar*” and Peace שְׁלוֹם or “*shalom*”.

Let’s pray. Father God, thank you for these amazing tools. Help us Lord to listen to you so that we can use these amazing tools as you would have us use them. I pray you guide us and focus us on what is really important. I pray these things in your name Lord Jesus, Amen

So, which is right, Everlasting or Everlasting Father? Does it really matter? I don't think so.

Jesus is God. Jesus is Wonderful. Jesus is our Counselor. Jesus is a Wonderful Counselor. Jesus is God, Jesus is Mighty, Jesus is God almighty. Jesus is the Everlasting God Almighty. But is Jesus our Everlasting Father? I'll leave that up to you. But for me using this as a name of Jesus creates confusion and contradiction. The trinity is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is without a doubt the Everlasting God Almighty.

Let me leave you with this. If I read this Everlasting God Almighty and you read it Mighty God, Everlasting Father. Does it matter. It is not essential. No matter which you believe, it should not affect how you follow Jesus. It does not affect how we reach others for Jesus. It does not affect how I live my life as a follower of Jesus. So, yes this is very interesting and a great conversation but it's two letters folks. **“ab”** These two letters do not change our reverence to God, Jesus or the Holly Spirit. These two letters don't really change anything one way or the other. The context and message of the scripture in Isaiah does not change. The context and the message in the new testament references of this scriptures does not change. My moral for this, let's keep our focus on Jesus. Every Christian should learn all we can about scripture and be satisfied to say “I don't know” when we don't really know.

So why is this important then? Because too often and too many teach things like this as fact when we don't know for sure. Our Church traditions and the opinions of church forefathers too often override what the scriptures actually say or don't say. It creates confusion and sometimes contradictions. It is always better to know the truth or at least when we are uncertain of what the truth is. God is definitely our perpetual father in heaven. We, as Christians, all know this to be true. We would know this to be true without Isaiah. Jesus said it in the gospels and that enough for me. But Jesus never referred to himself as “the Father.”

So, for all of you who teach, take time to make sure your opinion or tradition is clearly supported by the Bible or when you teach it, say clearly it is opinion and not fact. The people listening may still be confused by the concept but hopefully you can stimulate them to read, study and dig deeper into the scriptures to resolve for themselves these issues.

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Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.