

ROAD TO REVIVAL

By

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Fleming H. Revell Company NEW YORK

Four -

WONDERFUL

"His name shall be called Wonderful." (Isaiah 9:6).

THAT little word "wonderful" has been worn pretty threadbare in these days. We speak of "a wonderful time," "a wonderful person," "a wonderful book," and apply the word to a thousand things entirely unworthy of it. But I would give the word its rightful place as set forth in GOD's Word. The prophet Isaiah said, concerning the Lord JESUS CHRIST, **"His name shall be called Wonderful."**

Truly He was wonderful in the way He fulfilled the many prophecies concerning Him. **"God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets"** (Hebrews 1:1) spoke to Abraham and provided a nation through which our Lord should come. Then He spoke to Jacob and revealed the chosen tribe of the Saviour's ancestry, the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10). There must also be a family, so to Isaiah He made known that it should be of Jesse. To Micah He whispered the name of the birthplace, Bethlehem. Through Daniel He made known the time of JESUS' birth (Daniel 9:25). In Malachi He spoke of the forerunner, John the Baptist, and in Jonah He set forth a picture of our Lord's resurrection. And when the CHRIST came, He fulfilled to the letter all these predictions. Truly that is wonderful!

He was wonderful in His birth. He was the earthly child of a Heavenly Father and the heavenly child of an earthly mother.

If men had arranged His birthplace they might have chosen a palace; GOD chose a barn.
Men might have prepared a royal crib; GOD prepared a feed trough.
Men might have provided silken robes; GOD chose the swaddling clothes of a poor peasant.
Men might have selected choice perfumes and spices; GOD came in the malodors of a stable.

Think of it! The Prince of Glory couldn't find room in a Bethlehem boarding house! The King of kings, the son of a carpenter's wife! What a rebuke to our pride that He Who was so rich became so poor, when we who are so poor pretend to be so rich!

As a baby, our Lord was made known:

- to shepherds, who represent the working class
- To wise men, who represent the student class

- To Simeon and Anna, who represent the worshipping class.

Since that day He has been the crown of all true work: "**This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent**" (John 6:29). He has been the object of all true study for "**in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**" (Colossians 2:3). He is the object of all true worship, and one day at His Name every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of GOD the Father. Truly, in all this He is Wonderful!

He was wonderful in His life.

With only a few years to live, at the age of thirty He was still a carpenter.

- He never was in a hurry, for He is the First and the Last, and why should He hurry?
- He was the Bread of Life, but He went hungry for forty days.
- He offered the Water of Life, but He Himself thirsted for an ordinary drink of plain water.
- He could still a raging sea or He could bless little children.
- He could preach to multitudes and He could also take time out to talk with a poor woman taken in sin.
- He wrote no books, but ever since He lived, the presses have ground out libraries about Him.
- He founded no colleges, but the world's scholarship has said, "**Never man spake like this man.**"
- He led no army, but He has been the spiritual Captain of more soldiers than ever followed the Caesars and Napoleons.
- He did not bother with politics, but He has upset every government that has rejected Him, and He is the Smiting Stone that will smash the last world empire.
- He had no money, but all charitable institutions look back to Him as their inspiration.

Ingersoll founded no orphanages, nor did Tom Paine provide homes for the aged!

Our Lord never married, but He attended wedding feasts.

- He had no home, but every Christian home bears His name.
- He was a baby and sanctified childhood.
- He was a young man and sanctified youth.
- He was an adult and sanctified maturity.

But He did not die of old age:

- He is eternal and he that liveth and believeth in Him shall never die.
- He was the King of kings but the kings of earth sought to kill Him.
- He was the Teacher of all teachers, but the scribes of His day would have nothing to do with Him.
- He was the object of all worship, but the religious people of His day crucified Him.
- He was the Sinless One, but it was the sinners who invited Him to dinner.
- He was the Prince of Glory, but it was the common people who heard Him gladly.
- He could stop a funeral procession to raise the dead, but nobody stopped His funeral procession

when He carried His own deathbed in the form of a cross.

- He laid aside a crown in glory, but all that earth gave Him was a diadem of thorns.

- His hands touched feverish brows and made the sick well again, but our hands slapped His face until His countenance was marred.

- He spat on the ground and made clay that blind eyes might see; we spat in His face until His eyes could hardly see.

He was wonderful in His death. Condemned by the authorities of His time, He was murdered outside the city gates as though His blood might defile Jerusalem. Even nature revolted: the sun would not shine, an earthquake aroused the dead, and the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom. Before Him as He died every type of humanity went by. Ignorance was there in the Roman soldiers who knew not what they did. Insolence passed by, wagging its head. Irreverence looked on and taunted Him that He had saved others, but could not save Himself. Indifference was there in the people who stood beholding. And of all that motley throng, the one who was blessed most was the dying thief who

"rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day,
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away."

The Lord JESUS CHRIST was wonderful in His resurrection. When His body was laid in the grave, Pilate gave orders at the request of the Pharisees to seal the sepulchre. "**Make it as sure as ye can**" (Matthew 27:65). And they did!

Nature made it as sure as she could, for a large stone was before the sepulchre, but "up from the grave He arose," the angel of the Lord rolled the stone away and sat upon it.

The Roman government made it as sure as it could and placed its seal upon the grave; but "up from the grave He arose" to break the seal of Rome as later He broke the back of Rome and as even later He will smash the last Roman world empire.

Unbelief made it as sure as it could for Pharisaism tried to discredit His resurrection but "up from the grave He arose" and whenever unbelief thinks it has buried the truth, the "corpse" always comes to life in the midst of the funeral to outlive all the pallbearers.

Death made it as sure as it could but "up from the grave He arose" and now He carries the keys of death and hell. The world, the flesh and the devil conspired to keep Him in the grave but "up from the grave He arose" so that "**Death is swallowed up in victory.**"

He is wonderful in His present ministry. He is not a mere memory in a Palestine tomb. He ever liveth to make intercession for us and if any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the Righteous. He not only arose, He ascended, yet where two or three gather in His Name He is present. He is not far away but nigh, for "**Jesus of Nazareth passeth by**" and "where cross the crowded ways of man" we hear the voice of the Son of Man.

Finally, He is wonderful in His power to save. They called His name JESUS for He should save

His people from their sins, and truly if any man be in Him he is a new creation.

A godly woman married to a sour and cynical sinner persuaded him one evening to go to revival services in the near-by church. That night he was gloriously saved. Next morning before breakfast he stood before the window looking out on the bleak winter landscape. But it was not bleak to him. He called to his wife, "Come, see how beautiful the whole world is this morning. It looks as though the very trees are clapping their hands." And why not? **"For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace; the mountains and hills shall break forth before you into singing and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands"** (Isaiah 55:12).

"Heaven above is softer blue,
Earth around is sweeter green;
Something lives in every hue,
Christless eyes have never seen;
Birds with gladder songs O'erflow,
Flowers with deeper beauty shine
Since I know as now I know,
I am His and He is mine."

A passenger on one of the great trains going west was observed to exclaim every few minutes the word "wonderful!" He would feel the plush on the seats, look out the window, look at the passengers; and everything he saw drew from him the word "wonderful!" When curiosity got the better of a fellow passenger and he inquired what all this meant, the man replied, "Until a few days ago I was blind from my birth. But a great doctor recently gave me my sight and now everything looks wonderful to me. The landscape, you passengers, even these seats look wonderful to me."

And when the Great Physician touches our blind eyes so that we see, does not everything take on a new appearance because we have seen Him? And shall we not find ourselves singing to His praise?

"Wonderful, wonderful, JESUS is to me:
Prince of Peace, Counsellor, Mighty GOD is He;
Saving me and keeping me from all sin and shame,
He is my Redeemer, praise His Name!"

~ end of chapter 4 ~
