



Jeff Sweeten

*Thus Saith the Lord*  
is presented by the

## **Park Heights Church of Christ**

1300 E. Boynton St.  
Hamilton  
254-386-3953

### **Schedule of Services**

#### **SUNDAY**

9:30 a.m. Bible Class  
10:25 a.m. Morning Worship  
1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship

#### **WEDNESDAY**

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

Please call or email if you  
have a question or comment  
254-386-3953  
jeffdsweeten@gmail.com or  
chelejones24@yahoo.com

Website:  
[www.parkheightscoc.com](http://www.parkheightscoc.com)

# *Thus Saith the Lord*

## **WHAT MANNER OF CHILD?**

By Jeff Sweeten

Birth is an amazing event. From conception to crowning, the envitro development is a wonder to behold, and with the advent of the sonogram, this process is partially accessible where once it was shrouded in mystery. Then, there is that wonderful moment when the child bursts on to the scene to the relief of both mother and family, and great shock to the child. Except for that brief moment when I passed out, I have witnessed this wondrous event three times. Who could have predicted the product?

When John the Immerser was born, the fanfare surrounding his birth was even more spectacular. His mother conceived beyond normal childbearing years. His father was mute from the child's announcement up until the naming of the newborn. Even in the womb, when the virgin Mary entered the presence of Elizabeth, in recognition of the King of kings, "*the babe leaped in my womb for joy*" (Luke 1:44). Little wonder that those surrounding this event would ponder, "*What manner of child shall this be!*" (Luke 1:66).

There's a similar, if less spectacular, fanfare associated with the New Year. It's a birth, or rebirth, of expectant time, and an opportunity for a new beginning. Caricatures of old, bearded geriatrics are contrasted with diapered infants to illustrate a commencement of sorts. Massive, nation-wide celebrations mark the zero hour, at which time even the worst of voices feel compelled to give way to an emotional stanza of Auld Lang Syne ("fondly remembered times"), signaling an "out with the old and in with the new" transition. Ever so suddenly, our mortality confronts us, and stripped of all the distractions and escapism we have employed for the last 364 days, in those reflective moments before the time-piece lifts its hands heavenward to its Maker (Genesis 1:1), we reminisce and gaze myopically into a blurry, uncertain future (James 4:14). It is in this contemplative moment that a Christian ought to ask: "What manner of child shall I be?"

The fact that God has graciously given us another day does not guarantee another year. The fallacy in making plans without God is heavily documented (Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13; et al.). Worse, the baseless assumption that we are due a tomorrow often manifests itself in a condemned arrogance that is frequently proactive (James 4:13ff). It is not that we should forego planning (Luke 14:28), but that God should be an integral part of our planning (Luke 12:16ff). Still, we must concern ourselves with the care and security of our soul; each moment is the birth of opportunity. How shall I feed this child of God in the New Year (John 6:47-51)? How shall I ensure the security of this child of God (Psalm 33:18-22)? As stewards of God's good gifts (Luke 11:13), our first priority is to God; everything else must run a distant second. What manner of child will you be?