

**Isaiah Saw His Glory #1
His glorious birth
(Isaiah 7:14)**

Intro: The apostle John in the final chapters of his description of Jesus' ministry reports what may at first be a surprising conclusion. He has spent the greater part of the gospel giving clear evidence to support the claims that Jesus was the Christ the Son of God. Yet in chapter 12 He candidly admits that the people who longed so much for the Christ did not believe in Him when He appeared. But even, this John, said was a fulfillment of the words of God's prophet Isaiah:

But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him; that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, "He has blinded their eyes, and He hardened their heart; lest they see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and be converted, and I heal them." These things Isaiah said, because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him (John 12:37-41).

As we read the book of Isaiah over the next two to three weeks together I want to keep this theme before you. John says, "Isaiah saw His glory and spoke of Him". This statement may refer to the vision of Isaiah 6 where John saw a vision of the Holy One of Israel; but John may also be thinking of Isaiah's numerous prophecies of Jesus Christ. Indeed "Isaiah saw His glory and spoke of Him!" One way Isaiah saw His glory and spoke of Him is the prophecy of His glorious birth (Is. 7:1-14).

The prophet Isaiah predicted the glorious birth of Jesus.

Centuries earlier God had sent to the prophet Isaiah to help the faith of Ahaz as his kingdom faced the threat of destruction by Syria and Israel. Through Isaiah God offered to help Ahaz to trust in Him by giving him the opportunity to ask for any sign to prove that Judah would be delivered of her enemies. Ahaz already had his own solution (to depend upon diplomacy with the Assyrians) so he piously rejected God's offer. The Lord was not pleased with Ahaz's unbelief and gave Ahaz a sign of his own! It was a sign to display the great power of God to protect his people from all enemies. "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14) "Behold"...Isaiah invites the house of David to see with prophetic insight. The word arouses attention to something significant. A virgin shall conceive and give birth to a son.

"Virgin" translates the Heb. word "almah" means a young unmarried woman of marriageable age, who by implication is a virgin. The LXX translation uses "parthenos" (virgin) because it is the best Greek word to convey the idea.

So Is. 7:14 suggests a child born of a maiden who is still a virgin. What a remarkable sign. Nothing since the creation itself had ever happened in the history of the world that had demonstrated more power than the event of the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ! God would make an exception to the laws of procreation to signify His coming into the world.

She shall name him Immanuel.

Usually the father named the child but in this case there is no human father. Only the mother can attest to his divine origin; for she alone knows that the child is conceived by miraculous power of God. Thus, "she" shall name him...

Immanuel is in Hebrew "God with us". In a very real sense, Isaiah sees a child who brings God into the world.

This child of the future had a message for the present!

In the same time span in which this future child would grow to know good and evil (i.e. in a few years) the kings that Ahaz has dreaded would be destroyed by the Assyrians. And thus it was.

For those who trusted God, the promise of the child to come was a reminder of God's presence with them and was tantamount to a promise of deliverance from Israel's enemies.

For seven centuries God left this word as a witness of what He was about to do.

The angel Gabriel announced the glorious birth of Jesus.

"And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end." (Luke 1:31-33)

Today people say they have difficulty with the idea of miracles. Did you ever think how hard it would have been for Mary to believe Gabriel's promise? It was her body that would receive this child; yet she was engaged to a man but they had not been together as husband and wife.

Gabriel gave her the following evidence for her faith:

He told her how it would take place.

And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35)

For Mary this would have been enough. For she knew of how God had by the Holy Spirit accomplished great and miraculous things through the prophets.

He told her why it could take place.

"For nothing will be impossible with God." (Luke 1:37)

Whatever difficulties people have today with the miracles of the Bible is really rooted in their presumptions about God. If

one is unwilling to entertain the possibility that God exists, then all such stories are rejected in a priori fashion as myth or fabrications.

However, if one is willing to entertain the possibility that God exists, then what is too difficult for God? If God can create a world from nothing, if he can give life to lifeless matter, if he can establish laws of procreation that make childbirth possible, it is not a difficulty at all to accept the idea that he could create a body in Mary's womb for the reception of His Son's spirit! It just depends upon whether you spell "God" with a big or a little "G"!

The conduct of Mary confirms the glorious birth of Jesus.

Does Mary's conduct confirm Luke's report that her child was conceived by the Holy Spirit?

Consider her moral character

There is no doubt in my mind that God selected Mary to be the mother of His Son because of her godly character. She was trusting. She asked questions, but not to disbelieve but to obtain evidence to believe. She was submissive to God's purpose.

And Mary said, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (Luke 1:38)

Consider her relationship with Jesus

After Jesus' ministry on earth, his disciples gathered in part because of their faith in His claims that He was the Son of God. Notice that Mary is among them!

These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. (Acts 1:14)

If the account of the virgin birth was not true, why would Mary be there? She of all people would know that Jesus was not the Son of God!

Consider her silence at the crucifixion

Imagine this. Mary stands by and watches her son go on trial for saying He was the Son of God. She follows tearfully as she sees him stripped and laid back on the crossbeam to be nailed down. No mother alive would withhold information that would save her son from such cruel and torturous death. Did you think of this? If Jesus were not the Son of God, Mary had the power to save His life. All she had to do was name the father!! Her silence is deafening!

Conclusion: Indeed "Isaiah saw His glory and spoke of Him". Why? In order that those who read the prophets and the gospels can see the truth about Him, that He is the Christ of OT prophecy, the Son of the living God. It is why we believe in Him and follow Him.