

Sermons by the Greatest 'Christmas Prophet'

By **DR. JOHN C. WHITCOMB**

President, Whitcomb Ministries, Inc.

The prophet Isaiah was surely the greatest “Christmas Prophet” of the Old Testament. Let us briefly consider two of his most famous Christmas sermons.

Isaiah Chapter 7

One of the great marvels surrounding Jesus’ birth was the fact of His virgin conception.

But how could a virgin be with child and bear a son? Luke explains: “*The Holy Spirit will come upon you [Mary], and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God*” (Luke 1:35). Was this impossible? No, “For with God nothing will be impossible” (Luke 1:37).

Not only was it not impossible, it was predicted 700 years before by Isaiah. He received the message that Christ, the Messiah, would be one Person with two natures – divine and human.

At a time of great crisis for Israel, the house of David was given a great promise. “Then he said, ‘Hear now, O house of David! *Is it* a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son [i.e., fully human], and shall call His name Immanuel [i.e., “God with us,” fully divine]” (Isa. 7:13, 14). In the very next chapter, the prophet is told that the God of Israel is “Immanuel” (Isa. 8:8; cf. v. 10).

Notice that God told Israel that He would give them a great sign. The coming of the Messiah/Christ would be so great that “the depth” of Sheol or “the height” of heaven could not compare (Isa. 7:11)! That is a measure of God's love for the world.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is called Immanuel. What does that mean? It means that Jesus is not merely a man – He is also God. Otherwise, He could not have paid for all of our sins on the cross. What a Person, and what a gift!

Without Immanuel, Israel could never have survived. To all of her enemies, God said:

“Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing;
Speak the word, but it will not stand,
For God *is* with us [Hebrew, “Immanuel”]” (Isa. 8:10).

That is still true for Israel today.

Sadly, Ahaz, the ancient king of Israel, refused to believe in Immanuel, the Savior. And when He finally came, the vast majority of Jews rejected Him – and still do. But someday soon, thank God, the nation of Israel will acknowledge Him, and will “be grafted into their own olive tree” (Rom. 11:24) of divine blessing. God is merciful!

Isaiah Chapter 9

The dual nature of our Savior was also revealed to Isaiah in Isaiah 9:6:

“For unto us a Child is born [i.e., human nature],
Unto us a Son is given [i.e., divine nature];
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Where would Jesus, the Light of the world, perform His first miracle? “In Galilee of the Gentiles” (Isa. 9:1; cf. John 2:11) – despised by Judean Jews! Thus, Nathaniel asked Philip, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46). But Isaiah had long since written:

‘The people who walked in darkness [i.e., Galileans]
Have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them a light has shined” (Isa. 9:2).

Who was this great Light?

“Unto us a Child is born [His true human nature],
Unto us a Son is given [His divine nature]” (Isa. 9:6).

The Second Person of the eternal Godhead – Who added a sinless human nature to His divine nature – is now and forever one Person with two distinct natures, in order that He, Jesus Christ, might be able to die for our sins.

Does Christ truly possess the qualities that would be essential to be our Savior? God, the Holy Spirit, who is the ultimate author of the Bible (cf. 2 Pet. 1:21), lists His qualifications:

“And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father [see Isa. 63:16], Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6).

What more could sinful humanity ask for?

The Lord Jesus is not only our Savior, He is also our coming King. Yes,

‘The government [of the entire world] will be upon His shoulder’ (Isa. 9:6).

He will rule the world all by Himself? Yes!

“For the LORD *is* our Judge [i.e., Supreme Court],
The LORD *is* our Lawgiver [i.e., Congress],
The LORD *is* our King [i.e., executive branch];
He will save us” (Isa. 33:22).

When our Savior becomes our King, He will be so forever!

“Of the increase of *His* government and peace
There will be no end” (Isa. 9:7a).

For He will,

“Order it and establish it with judgment and justice
From that time forward, even forever” (Isa. 9:7b).

But how can this occur? May all mankind hear the answer:

“The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:7c).

Merry Christmas! May you be blessed this day by the hearing of the great “Christmas Prophet.”
He reminds us that, indeed, God’s Word is true from the beginning to the end.

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