

CHRISTMAS MIRACLE

Isaiah 7:14 (AV)

“Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

Jesus performed many miracles. He healed lepers. He gave sight to a man who was born blind. He cast out demons. He raised Jairus’s daughter and Lazarus from death. He Himself raised from the grave and ascended into heaven where He now reigns over the universe. Birth is itself a miracle. Hundreds of millions of babies have been born since creation. Despite the universal commonness of births, this passage is astounding. *First*, it may be the only place in the Bible where it says that God Himself will give a sign. The passage could be read this way: “God *Himself* shall be a sign.” Genesis 22:8 provides perhaps a correlative reading: “God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.” (KJV) Presaging the crucifixion, the Genesis passage could be read this way: “God will provide Himself as a lamb for a burnt offering.” Jesus is God and He offered up Himself as the Lamb of Sacrifice. “Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins.” *Hebrews 10:12*

Second, the Isaiah passage says, “ a virgin shall conceive...a son.” Typically, men have one X and one Y chromosome (XY) whereas females have two X chromosomes. In order to have a male child, the father must contribute the Y chromosome. Mary was a virgin when she was married to Joseph and they did not come together until *after* Jesus was born. So, the Holy Spirit contributed the necessary Y chromosome.

The greatest, most stupefying miracle is the Incarnation: God became flesh and dwelt among us. The Incarnation is the basis of all the miracles concerning Jesus. If there were no

Incarnation, there would be no substitutionary death, resurrection, salvation, or sanctification. It is the basis of all other miracles. John Donne, the famous English poet and scholar born in 1572, wrote in one of his most beloved poems about this miracle: “Immensity cloistered in thy dear womb.” How can immaculate impeccability enter the world through the womb of a daughter of Adam; a wondrous woman but still possessing the sinful Adamic nature? How can sin be imputed to perfect sinlessness? How does the infinite dwell within the finite? How does the eternal enter time and be constrained by it, going through stages of gestation, birth, childhood, maturation, and manhood? We are all stained with sin, yet Jesus remained sinless. He bore our sin but was always impeccable. How does Divine Aseity, self-sufficient and self-sustaining, suckle at a mother’s breast. It would be an infinitely smaller task to capture all the light and heat of the sun in the wick of a candle or to pour all the oceans of the world into a thimble. That El Shaddai, God Almighty, would do this is more than the mind can take in without the intervention of the Holy Spirit. That God would *want* to do this to save wretched sinners who deny Him, turn their backs to Him, is incomprehensible but for the Holy Spirit opening our understanding to *reality*. Not what we *think* is real, but true reality. Even the angels in heaven were overwhelmed by this reality, and the revelation compelled them to exultant praise: “And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”¹

All other miracles flow from the Divine Incarnation. If we are not utterly amazed that God became flesh and dwelt among us, we will miss the divine miracle of Christmas.

¹ Luke 2: 13-14