

Isaiah Chapter 9B  
Advent 2015

It is always a joy when you are sorting through the mail, separating the bills from the junk and you stumble upon a postcard that joyfully announces the birth of a baby.

- Just a couple of weeks ago I experienced this joy for myself when I received a postcard in the mail announcing that my brother's wife had given birth to their second son.
  - Simon Jessup Parsons
- Birth announcements are sent out in the hopes that family and friends will share in the JOY of the proud parents.
- That is exactly what Isaiah has provided here for us in Chapter 9. It is the joyful announcement of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

BUT this birth announcement is very different from the ones that we receive in the mail.

- For one thing we would never send a birth announcement out in advance of the child's actual delivery. Only after the child is born does the announcement get dropped at the post office.
  - And yet the prophet Isaiah announces the birth of Jesus Christ more than 700 years before his actual delivery in Bethlehem of Judea.
- And if that is not strange enough, Isaiah includes in his announcement a clear description of the character and the ultimate destiny of the child who will be born.
  - The divine nature of Isaiah's communication is seen in the fact that everything he foretells about Jesus Christ will eventually be fulfilled.

Imagine receiving a birth announcement telling the name, the height and weight of the baby like normal but then that same announcement moves on to describe this child as the tallest member of his family. It states that He will graduate first in his class from Harvard and will eventually become the CEO of a fortune 500 company. He will marry his childhood sweetheart and they will have three children.

- You might think that is ludicrous! Who could possibly know those details?
- Only someone who knows the end from the beginning, one who is omniscient could provide such a detailed picture of the future.
- God alone knows the end from the beginning and is sovereign over the affairs of man.

It is God, through the mouth of his prophet who tells us that this child to be born, this son who is given will be called:

- **Wonderful counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.** He is the one on whose shoulders all human government will finally and fully rest.

Very often when a birth announcement is sent out, those who receive the joyful news respond by sending a gift to the happy parents.

- BUT here, in the birth announcement of Jesus Christ, it is the child who is born, the son who is given that is spoken of as God's gift to men.
  - I realize that there are people in this world who THINK that they are God's gift to men but THIS ONE who is called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, ACTUALLY is God's gracious gift to men.

As we dig into Isaiah's birth announcement let's keep our eyes open for these 3 points.

- The child will be human
- The child will be divine
- The child will be God's gift to men.

Isaiah 9: 6 **For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;**

- I want to draw your attention to how carefully that statement anticipates and describes for us the dual nature of Jesus Christ in his incarnation.
- What do I mean by that? When he walked upon the earth Jesus Christ lived among us as God in all of his deity and yet He was also a man, yes he was fully man.

Listen carefully:

- God's Son did not come into existence in the virgin's womb. Rather the one who lived eternally as God's Son entered Mary's womb in order to put on human flesh and come to dwell among us.

The Apostle John writes:

John 1:1 **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

- Jesus - the Word of God lived eternally with the Father and the Spirit in a perfect relationship of love.

14 **And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

- The Eternal Son put on human flesh and lived among us for 33 years.

The Nicene Creed states it this way:

"I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who, for us men for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man."

Let's take a few minutes to contemplate the unique dual nature of this child who is called Immanuel. (God with us)

Isaiah 9: 6 **For to us a child is born** He was fully man. Although he was conceived by the Holy Spirit, Jesus was born like every other man who has ever lived:

- He came into the world through the birth canal.
- He relied upon his mother for the necessary nutrition that he might grow.
- He learned to crawl, to walk and ties his shoes (or in his case, his Sandals)

Luke 2: 40 **And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.**

Luke 2: 52 **And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.**

Throughout his life He struggled with some of the same human frailties that afflict all of us:

- He became tired, thirsty and hungry: **John 4:6.**
- He became physically weakened in the wilderness: **Matthew 4:11**

- He was troubled in his soul: **John 12:27** Sorrowful of mind: **Matthew 26:38**
- By taking on flesh Jesus is uniquely qualified for his position as the mediator between God and man.

1 Timothy 2: 5 **For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.**

- From the very beginning of time the Scripture anticipates the coming of a child a real baby who would be: a Deliverer, Messiah, Savior.

- In Genesis 3 we are introduced to this child as the Seed of a Woman:

Genesis 3: 15 **I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”**

- In Genesis 17: The child will be the offspring of Abraham.

Genesis 17:7 **And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.**

- The people who were near Jesus saw him as a man and that caused them to wonder about his marvelous works.

Matthew 13: 54 **and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? 55 Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?”**

While this is just a small portion of the many scriptures that bear testimony of Jesus’ human nature, I think that we could all agree: the child who was born to Mary was in fact fully man.

- BUT Isaiah doesn’t merely communicate Jesus’ human nature, he also declares his divinity.

Isaiah 9: 6 **For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;**

- As I said earlier the eternal Son of God did not come into existence in Mary’s womb, rather the one who lived eternally as God’s Son, entered the virgin’s womb, put on human flesh and came to dwell among us.
- **“Unto us a Son is given”** The Baby who was born was God’s Son who was given.
- Pondering that phrase for just a moment, my mind is immediately drawn to the most popular Bible verse in all of the New Testament.

John 3: 16 **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.**

- The Son of God is GIVEN, SENT by the Father;

1 John 4: 14 **we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.**

- The Son who is given is divine, Isaiah already told us that his name shall be Immanuel. (God with us)

Isaiah 7: 14 **Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.**

- Reading through the Gospels, the Apostles of Christ bear witness to his deity.

John 20: 28 When Thomas saw the risen Christ for the first time, when he put his finger on His wounded hands he cried out, **“My Lord and my God!”**

- The Apostle Paul affirms the deity of Christ.

Romans 9: 5 **To them (to the Israelites) belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.**

Titus 2: 13 **waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,**

The dual nature of the child who is born, the Son who is given can be traced throughout the pages of Holy Scripture but that doesn't necessarily mean that we are able to fully comprehend it. Can any man fully comprehend the majesty and glory of God??

Spurgeon: The doctrine of the eternal affiliation of Christ is to be received as an undoubted truth of our holy religion. But as to any explanation of it, no man should venture thereon, for it remains among the deep things of God. One of those solemn mysteries indeed into which angels dare not look.”

- Spurgeon said, “As well a gnat might seek to drink in the ocean, as a finite creature to comprehend the eternal God.”

While we may not be able to fully understand the wonder and majesty of this one we know as Immanuel our hearts are set ablaze with the revelation of God and like the Humble Disciple, Thomas, we fall on our faces before him in adoration and worship.

- That Worship is lifted even higher when we realize that the Son who was GIVEN was also GIVEN up, sent by the Father to be the sacrifice for our sins.

1 John 4: 10 **In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

- The perfect and holy justice of God demands that the soul that sins surely die. This was confirmed by the Apostle Paul when he wrote:

Romans 6:23 **For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

- The justice and mercy of God meet together on the cross where Jesus bore the wrath of God on behalf of all who would believe. This is the ultimate meaning of the Son who was given.

That brings us to the final point where the words of Isaiah become PERSONAL through the phrase: “Unto Us.”

- That phrase directs the good news of this birth announcement to the very heart of God's people.

If you remember the context of Isaiah's writing he is speaking to the children of Israel, God's chosen people who were living in the gloomy darkness of sin, idolatry and judgment.

- AND God shattered their darkness with a glorious birth announcement.

Going back to the illustration with which I began today's teaching, I will remind you that I received the good news of Simon Jessup's birth because I am in a relationship with his Father.

- Even so the Good News of Jesus Christ comes FIRST to the people of Israel.
- Their Father Abraham entered into a covenant relationship with God by grace through faith in God's promise.
- Moses representing the people of Israel entered into a covenant of Law with God whereby they would be constantly reminded of His holiness and their sinfulness.
- Throughout the years the relationship between Israel and God was directed by the words of the Prophets.
- And the Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ came to them FIRST.

Ro 1:16 **For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.**

- So it is that the Coming of Jesus Christ, the God Man, was first announced to the people of Israel through the mouth of the prophets.
- But FROM Israel the Gospel would GO forth to the ends of the Earth!

Think about it: when a child is born there are TWO different kinds of announcements that are made; one that is mailed off to friends and family members and another one that is displayed for the whole world to see.

- Lawn posters, cigars, balloons, are freely distributed by ecstatic fathers to everyone when they are blessed with a child.

Listen to the words of the prophet Malachi:

Malachi 1:11 **from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.**

The Angels who gave the birth announcement to the shepherds on the night that Jesus was born spoke of the Good News that would be for ALL people.

Luke 2: 10 **And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.**

- The Good news of Jesus Christ is good news for ALL people.
- God invites ALL PEOPLE indiscriminately to salvation through the proclamation of the Gospel. The disciples were commanded to take this Gospel to the ends of the earth.

BUT while the Gospel is Good News NOT everybody receives it as such.

- Herod was infuriated by the news and went on a murderous rampage when he heard about the birth of Israel's King.
- The Priests who heard the news that came through the wise men were disinterested. They answered Herod's question and returned to their homes unmoved by the news of the Messiah.
  - BUT Simeon and Anna who Luke describes as *waiting for the consolation of Israel* rejoiced with ecstatic delight when they saw Jesus for the first time.

And now my friends, this birth announcements, the lawn displays, the cigars and balloons are in OUR hands, in your hands and in my hands.

- If God has revealed the truth of Jesus Christ to YOUR heart through the proclamation of the Gospel.
- If He has graciously, personally shattered the darkness of sin and judgment through the revelation of Jesus Christ to your own soul
- Then YOU are in possession of the birth announcement. YOU have the Lawn displays, the cigars and balloons in your own hands.

In the O.T. God spoke through the mouth of the prophets but in the New Testament he has spoken through His own Son; we have what Peter calls a "**More sure word of prophecy.**"

- We have the WHOLE, the complete, the inspired Word of God, We have been filled and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.
- We have received a commission from Jesus himself to **go into all the world** with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This Christmas season we can boldly declare:

The "*Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace* has come.

- He has made peace with God through his death on the cross.
- The forgiveness of sin and eternal life is a reality for ALL who will repent of their sin and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is my prayer that YOU have repented of your sins and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ

For those of us who believe: Break out the cigars, there is Good News to spread.