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The Messiah Would Be Born Of A Virgin

Isaiah 7:14 prophecies:

*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign:
Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,
and shall call His name Immanuel.*

Luke 1:26-31 records the fulfilment:

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to ... a virgin betrothed to ... Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"
... *"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.*

This is one of the greatest prophecies Christ fulfilled because it is fulfilled in such an amazing and miraculous way.

Firstly, the prophecy may not seem a very great prophecy as it's not uncommon for virgins to conceive upon their first sexual experience. Those who first heard the prophecy may have simply understood it this way, as I believe a careful reading of chapters 7 and 8 of Isaiah identifies the virgin as Isaiah's wife and the child as Maher Shalal-Hash-Baz. No big deal, nothing special, you might say - a woman falling pregnant the first time she gets physically close to her husband, which indeed in those days was commonly the first time she had been so close to any man. This would,

however, be a big deal today as many have forgotten or ignore the fact God wants us to remain virgins until marriage.

As unusual as it might seem for a virgin to marry today and conceive though, this prophecy goes much further than that. We saw in Luke 1:26-31 above Jesus's birth was a supernatural birth and it fulfilled this prophecy in a miraculous way. Mary the virgin, whom the Bible calls *blessed*, conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit fertilising her egg! Joseph, the man she was only engaged to, was not involved. Amazing! Who would predict such a thing?



The prophecy says the virgin's child shall be called *Immanuel*. Again, you might think, no big deal, nothing special, many babies are called *Immanuel*.

This prophecy gets even more interesting when we consider what the name *Immanuel* means. It means *God with us*. Jesus was not given the birth name, *Immanuel*. Whilst Jesus was not given the name, millions since the day of His birth, including millions today call Him 'God with us'. Indeed, the Holy Scriptures do as well. The apostle Thomas was one example of someone close to Jesus who called him God. John 20:27-28 says:

Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

The apostle Paul also called him *God with us* in 1 Timothy 3:16:

*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.** (my emphasis)*

Jesus said Himself, *if you have seen Me, you have seen the Father* (John 14:9) and He expected all to honour Him just as the Father is honoured (John 5:23). We as Christians today commonly call Him *God with us*.

We see from this, it's the meaning of a name Bible writers give primary importance to and not the actual name, since Jesus was not named Immanuel. I urge you to remember the importance of a name's meaning because one day you might meet a Christian who will insist you must use the *correct* Hebrew name for Jesus – *Yeshua* (or something similar). Or they will insist you must use the name *Yahweh* or *Jehovah* for God. They will say or imply you are not a true Christian, or are lacking as a Christian, if you don't use the right names. Jesus, even at a time when you would most expect Him to use *Yahweh* or *Jehovah* (if it were so essential) didn't call His Father by these names when he cried out from the cross. He said, *Eloi* or *Eli*. Remember, Jesus/ *Yeshua* means Saviour. What matters most is He is your Saviour. Just be sure Jesus born of the virgin Mary, as prophesied and fulfilled, is your personal Saviour.

Another reason this prophecy is so amazing is because it makes the unbelievable prediction God would come to us fully human, accepting the physical limitations,

weaknesses and sufferings of a human body and experiencing everything we do, except the guilt of personal sin.

God with us in human flesh! What a prophecy? Who could have predicted this? Who would have believed this? Some religions see the idea of God associating in such a close way with our humanity as repulsive. The Gnostic philosophers, for example, could never accept this concept. Indeed, one would have to admit, it is hard to imagine how the holy and high Creator of all things could stoop so low. What a humiliation for one so majestic and one so pure not only to be in human flesh (often sweaty and smelly), but also to suffer the absolute humiliation and suffering of the crucifixion experience.



(Creator of all things)

In light of such an amazing prediction coming to pass just as the ancient prophet prophesied, I urge you to consider the chances of another prophecy (perhaps even more amazing) being fulfilled in your future. The apostle John writes in 1 John 3:2 that instead of God becoming very much like us, we shall incredibly become very much like Him:

*Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, **we shall be like Him**, for we shall see Him as He is.* (my emphasis)

Article written by David Kidd

JESUS THE MESSIAH:



PROPHECY FULFILLED

Bible prophecies offer convincing evidence that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. Old Testament predications about Jesus' birth, life, and ministry are quoted by New Testament writers to identify Him as the Messiah.....The purpose of this booklet is to review some of the more prominent prophecies that verify Jesus as "the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16).

Please send for the free booklet.

When I say, “I am a Christian”

*When I say, “I am a Christian”
I’m not shouting, “I’ve been saved!”
I’m whispering, “I get lost sometimes
That’s why I chose this way”*

*When I say, “I am a Christian”
I don’t speak with human pride
I’m confessing that I stumble –
needing God to be my guide*

*When I say, “I am a Christian”
I’m not trying to be strong
I’m professing that I’m weak and
pray for strength to carry on*

*When I say, “I am a Christian”
I’m not bragging of success
I’m admitting that I’ve failed
and cannot ever pay the debt*

*When I say, “I am a Christian”
I don’t think I know it all
I submit to my confusion
asking humbly to be taught*

*When I say, “I am a Christian”
I’m not claiming to be perfect
My flaws are far too visible
but God believes I’m worth it*

*When I say, “I am a Christian”
I still feel the sting of pain
I have my share of heartache
which is why I seek God’s name*

*When I say, “I am a Christian”
I do not wish to judge
I have no authority
I only know I’m loved*



Law of God: A Blessing to The People Of God

Many Christians shudder at the very mention of the law, especially those who have been captured by legalism in the past and others who consider law to be something that kills - a burden that Christians do not want to bear.

The Apostle Paul held law in high esteem; he considered it valid, relevant, good - and worthy of obedience.

*“I delight in God’s law according to the
inward man”*

Romans 7 : 22

***Please send for this free booklet and it will
help you find a clearer understanding of
law and grace.***

Carol Wimmer

Medical Update

When it comes to jobs that require ‘working with your hands’, there are two types of people. Those who are good at it and those who need someone to fix up their mistakes after they have completed the task. I fall into the last category. Despite an interest in discovering how things work through disassembling something, I usually have excess parts left over, wondering how important they were.

It is also my experience that when you want something important fixed it is best to use OEM parts (Original Equipment Manufacturer) - the parts the manufacturer designed to suit its intended purpose. After-market parts may look identical but you can’t always know the quality you are getting.

In the medical field to date, the medical literature and opinion is that the appendix serves no known bodily function. It is considered useless, or even dangerous, given a number of ‘burst appendixes’. From their evolutionary viewpoint that may seem reasonable, even standing as ‘evidence’ of an evolving human being that simply has outgrown the organ’s need.

From a Christian viewpoint I know that the appendix is and always was, important. I do not need complete knowledge to know or believe this. God made man after His own image. He is the pinnacle of God’s creation and was made perfect. No parts left over or forgotten and everything fit for its intended purpose.



Orthodox medicine has now learned that our ‘useless’ appendix does in fact have a vital role to play and according to researchers from Midwestern University in the US removing the appendix could be a mistake. It turns out that it is a reservoir for beneficial bacteria, especially for good gut bacteria. It also lubricates the bowel and releases hormones that stimulate bowel motions. It also seems to play a vital role as a secondary immune organ.

This goes to highlight the vast difference between God and godless man. When there is no God, according to man’s thoughts, then he must come up with an explanation or hypothesis as to why something (that God created) exists.

For shall the thing made say of him who made it, “He did not make me”? Or shall the thing formed say of him who formed it, “He has no understanding”? Isaiah 29:16

Article written by Richard Todd

The heart and core of our calling and ministry

is to preach and teach the gospel of Jesus Christ in everything we say and do. In other words, we're called to evangelise, and this directly leads to conversions, baptisms and more disciples being made in the name of Jesus.

For some a calling to evangelise can be daunting, challenging and worrying. Yet for others, evangelism is enlivening and a natural expression in what at times can often be assigned as a gifts-based ministry. The question arises, then, of what is the key or well-spring for successful and authentic evangelism?

The answer comes from something deep and dear in our hearts. It's called hope!

Faith in Christ gives us a great hope, whereas the opposing worldly and secular outlook offers just the opposite, that of hopelessness.

A belief in God gives us an identity in that we have a loving Father. It gives us nobler values, meaning and purpose. We recognise that law is based on higher, transcendent values. We will live sacrificially for the benefit of others, knowing that this life isn't all there is. We recognise that humans have a spiritual component that reflects the capacity to know our heavenly Father. We believe we will be resurrected by Jesus, and it is this faith that gives us absolutes to live by. Furthermore, we'll teach and mentor those absolutes among our families, work places and throughout our communities. In other words, we are energised by certain hope.

The alternative is a life without hope. Atheism touts that there is no personable, knowable and Almighty God. With an ethos of the "survival of the fittest", law simply becomes arbitrarily human, and love is viewed as an evolutionary method of "getting our way". Our ancestors were nothing more than apes. Thus, morally, it's not hard to abort our babies, or institutionalise our elderly. And, the suffering of others doesn't particularly bother us. Traditional marriage is viewed as patriarchal bondage; sexuality as pluralistic and consensual; and the metaphysical is completely discounted. In this atheistic model, you

have no hope – apart from freezing your body at death in the bleak possibility science may in the future be able to enliven your DNA and recreate you.

These are the two polarising and opposing views with diametrically opposite consequences. And, for followers of Jesus, it is a challenging time to live in which to nurture and protect our children and grandchildren.

The apostle Paul, in defence of the Christian faith, wrote of the three primary virtues of Faith, Hope and Love. All are distinctly God-things and are virtues and qualities that should define our lives. Faith, hope and love are inseparable, as love is built on faith and hope. Sadly, in an evolutionary model, love becomes

lust, faith become unbelief, and hope becomes hopelessness. But in a Christ-centred, heavenly Father-honouring life, faith, hope and love become authentic expressions of wholeness.

Love says: I will honour the God who made me by loving and blessing others (including my adversaries); furthermore, I will live sacrificially for others, not looking for reward in this life.

Faith says that: I believe in an Almighty Creator, knowable God, and the Son of God, Jesus, who loves me, died for me and lives in and for me.

Hope says: I believe and hold onto the promises I have in God, and therefore, for example, I look forward to the day of resurrected glory to eternal life.

A God-centred hope is more than, for example, expressing the notion that: *"I hope the weather will be fine tomorrow,"* or, *"I hope my footy team will win the derby"*. This kind of hope is uncertain, the outcome yet undetermined. A hope in God, however, is based on absolute certainty.

Hope and faith endures and perseveres even when all else around may dictate otherwise. Without hope, we lose our identity, purpose, as well as a capacity to endure hardship and suffering – believing that there's something much better ahead that doesn't compare with our current circumstances.



In Christ, we're called to pick up that cross and face a jeering crowd, in other words, to accept a life that involves disadvantage, often scorn as well as suffering.

The apostle Paul likewise suffered. His letters mention shipwrecks, beatings, imprisonment, hunger, scorn and cold as part of the price he paid for his *"hope in God"*. Paul often used terms in his letters, such as, *"a hope in God"*, *"in this hope we are saved"*, *"you may abound in hope"*, *"on him we have set our hope"*, *"our blessed hope"*, *"full assurance of hope"*, and numerous other similar hope-oriented statements.

And this certain hope is the key to authentic and successful evangelism – this is precisely what motivated Paul. In Christ, we become heralds and witnesses to the hope that inspires and motivates us forward. In denying the old self, a hope-perspective helps us love even the unlovable. We have a faith testimony based on certain hope.

We equally recognise that sharing our faith testimony is often amidst a hostile and challenging environment. And yet, we're commanded to *"shine your light"*, to *"confess Jesus before men"*, and *"carry the cross"* that, as Paul said, *"that by all means I might save some."* (I Corinthians 9:22)



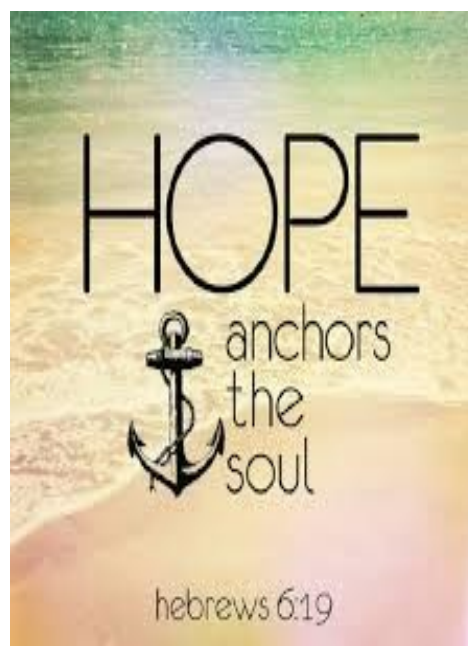
The apostle Peter reminded his readers, that in sharing their life's testimony as a witness, to *"have no fear of them"*, but in esteeming Christ as holy, *"always be prepared to make a defence to anyone who ask you for a reason for the hope that is in you..."* (I Peter 3:14-15 ESV)

Peter knew following Jesus would be difficult, as in the next verse (16) he says, *"when you are slandered..."* – indicating the toughness of the work we're called to.

Any disadvantage we experience in this life, however is countered by the firm faith we have in certain hope. And where we lack, Paul assures us, after extolling *"hope"* numerous times in Romans 8:24-25 that, *"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness."* Jesus' promise was that the Holy Spirit would bring to mind all our heavenly Father has invested in us. Thus, none of His words *"fall to the ground"*, or *"return empty"*.

Perhaps we better understand why most of Jesus' apostles died for what they believed in, as their testimony to what they hoped and believed in also becomes ours. Their key to evangelism, as is ours, was an undying hope in the name of Christ, which finds expression in personal testimony and charitable service.

Article written by John Klassek



(5) John

(4) Benjamin

(3) Christ's

(2) Priest

(1) 2 John

Answers to Test Your Knowledge

Youth Vibe



Going through the teenage years can be difficult and sometimes lonely. Constantly being bombarded with the media and your peers telling you what you should be doing. Many times the message is that you are not good enough or that you will never measure up.

In God's Word the Bible, there is much love, hope, comfort and encouragement for the youth. These verses below are there to help and inspire you on your journey through life.

Proverbs 3:5-6

..... in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

Psalms 119:9

How can a young man his way? By takingaccording to Your word.

Isaiah 41:10

Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will you, Yes, I will you, I will you with My righteous right hand.'

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of and not of evil, to give you a and a hope.

1 Timothy 4:12

Let no one your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in, in love, in spirit, in, in purity.

All verses were taken from the New King James Version.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- (1) What is the shortest book in the New Testament?
.....
- (2) Who was the first person to come upon the injured man in the parable of the Good Samaritan?
.....
- (3) Whose example does Paul say Christians should follow in Chapter 5 of Ephesians?
.....
- (4) What tribe is Paul from?
.....
- (5) Which Gospel is most concerned with the mystery and identity of the person of Jesus?
.....

Emergency Numbers

1. When In Sorrow.....call John 14
2. When you have sinned.....call Psalm 51
3. When you worry.....call Matthew 6:19-34
4. When you are in danger.....call Psalm 91
5. When your faith needs stirring.....call Hebrews 11
6. When you feel down and out.....call Romans 8:31
7. When you want peace and rest.....call Matthew 11:25-30
8. When the world seems bigger than God....call Psalm 90
9. If your pockets are empty.....call Psalm 37
10. When you are lonely and fearful.....call Psalm 23
11. When you grow bitter and critical.....call 1 Corinthians 13
12. For how to get along with other men.....call Romans 12
13. If you are depressed.....call Psalm 27
14. If people seem unkind.....call John 15

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