

The Christmas Marvel – 2010

By **DR. JOHN C. WHITCOMB**

President, Whitcomb Ministries, Inc.

Seven hundred years before Christ (i.e., Messiah) was born, the prophet Isaiah was told that He 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).

But how could a virgin have a child? That was the urgent question that Mary asked Gabriel, the messenger-angel sent from God: “How can this be, since I do not know a man?” (Luke 1:34). The answer was astounding, and is recorded by Luke, “the beloved physician” (Col. 4:14): “And the angel answered and said to her, ‘*The Holy Spirit* (i.e., the third Person of the triune God) will come upon you, 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...For with God nothing will be impossible’” (Luke 1:35-37).

Please note here the ultimate marvel: the reason why her child would be “holy” (i.e., without a sin nature) is not because she was holy (for Mary confessed her need of a Savior – Luke 1:47; cf. 11:27, 28; 18:19), but because the Holy Spirit would “come upon” her and “overshadow” her. The stupendous miracle of the incarnation (i.e., a divine Person adding a true human nature to His Personhood without becoming two persons) was essential for our salvation. He was not just a man – not even a sinless man (like Adam before his fall) – but one Person who was both God and man who was thus fully capable of paying for the sins of the whole world upon the cross. “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the

head of all principality and power” (Col. 2:9, 10).

The dual nature of our Savior was also revealed to Isaiah in Isa. 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.”

See what infinite self-emptying our Savior experienced on that first Christmas to become “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29): “who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:6-11).

May the Christ of Isaiah and the Christ of the New Testament be honored in each of our hearts – perhaps as never before – during this Christmas season of 2010 A.D.

Copyright © 2010 by Whitcomb Ministries, Inc.

Scripture taken from the New King James Version®.
Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.