

# The Lord's Sign

Isaiah 7:14-15

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**FOCAL Read Responsively** Isaiah 7:14-15 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; **Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. {15} Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.**

Everywhere we go we see signs that tells us we're in a holiday season. Evergreen trees are decorated with with lights and bulbs. Green wreaths hang on doors, on walls, over baptisteries and windows in local Church buildings. The markets are flooded with people. Though we're hearing that America has been in a recession for some time now, you wouldn't know it by the crowds you see at the stores. I'm sure you all hear of the poor man who was trampled to death at a store in Rhode Island. Some two thousand people lined up outside of this store the day after Thanksgiving, lured there by “sale” and “clearance” signs. When the store didn't open its doors on time the crowd surged forward, broke the doors down, and trampled an employee to death while injuring several others. A man was killed in Rhode Island for *trinkets and baubles*. That is so tragic!

Dear friends, Christmas isn't about mistletoe, parties, presents, and trees. These things come and go, and truly have no lasting value. If I asked you what you received as a Christmas present two years ago you probably couldn't tell me. If I asked you what you ate at the last Church social, or at your last family holiday meal, you wouldn't be able to say. Why? These things are not life changing. They may give momentary satisfaction, but in time they pass away. King Solomon said of this life that “..all is vanity. {3} **What profit hath a man of all his**

**labor which he taketh under the sun?” (Ecclesiastes 1:2-3).** Everything we do apart from God is temporary and fleeting. God calls us to something higher. God offers us something greater.

**FOCAL** Isaiah 7:14 Therefore **the Lord himself shall give you a sign ...**

If you don't believe in miracles, then you cannot be a Christian. Our faith is built on the **miracle of the virgin birth of Christ.**

This is not an *accident* nor a *coincidence*, but a deliberate miracle that **the LORD HIMSELF gave to us.** The Bible tells us that "**the Lord Himself shall give us a SIGN**" - a **miraculous marker.**

*It is miraculous to me that our Perfect and Holy God should care anything at all about mankind.* After all, we rarely care for Him. If we all spoke the truth we would admit that - on average - we spend more time thinking about ourselves, our wants and our desires than we do about God. And yet - even though God "**looketh on the heart**" (1 Samuel 16:7), and though God knows that we easily drift away from Him, He nonetheless loves us and wants the best for us. What a miraculous love that God has for us all!

**The Lord Himself has given you a sign.** This sign is more important than a present, a tree, or a party. "**A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel**". God would do something out of

the ordinary. He would cause a woman who had never known a man to bear a son. This would be no ordinary boy, for He would be named **Immanuel - "God with us"**. Holy and Almighty God would lower Himself, and would cause Himself to be born into humanity through a virgin. Jesus Christ, Son of God, the Word Who created all things,

**John 1:3 ... All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.**

willingly took upon Himself humanity. Through the miracle of the virgin birth Christ would be born in a manger in Bethlehem, and be raised in the little town of Nazareth. At the appointed time Jesus Christ would leave His earthly mother and go out to do good and to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Jesus Christ was willingly sent into this world to be the covering for our sin.

God the Son was sent by God the Father into this world. He was born in obscurity, lived sinlessly, loved perfectly, and laid down His life unselfishly for you and for me.

What a great Sign God has given us! What a great gift God has given us all! The Sign of the virgin birth of Christ was prophesied by Isaiah 700 years before it ever occurred. It has been roughly 2000 years since Jesus Christ, Eternal God and Sinless Man, was born in a manger in Bethlehem. This sign has endured while other signs have passed into obscurity. Why?

Because in the virgin Birth of Christ we see Eternal Love lowering Himself to reach out to fallen man. **God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son.** The coming of Christ was a sign, a miracle, a significant event in the history of humanity. The virgin birth in obscure Bethlehem, the rock manger, the shepherds watching and the angels singing are a magnificent sign from God. This Child would grow up to give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, strength to the crippled, and life to those who were dead. This Child – the Lord of all Creation come into His creation – would change every life that believed on Him. This Child, the Lamb of God, would go to a Cross on Calvary and, lovingly lay down His life for His people. Do not let the man made signs of Christmas distract you from the more important God made sign.

**Why lies He in such mean estate,  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,  
The cross be borne for me, for you.  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.**

(from “What Child Is This?”)

**1. Perfect Came From The Imperfect  
And Royalty From That Which Was Common**

**FOCAL** Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself

shall give you a sign; **Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.**

"A virgin would conceive". You have all heard of babies being spawned in test tubes, or women becoming with child when a medical doctor intervened using male donors. But that's not what this text speaks of. This is "a **virgin**", a woman that has never known a man. This woman would **conceive** or become "**with child**".

The prophecy God gave Isaiah was both *forward* as well as *backward* looking.

It looked forward to the coming of Christ some 700 years later. But it also looked backward at a promise God made to Satan in the Garden of Eden – the very first preaching of the Gospel. God said:

**Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.**

God said "Satan, you've not won this battle. Though you tempted Adam to follow you, and though He did follow you ...

**Romans 5:12 ... as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:**

and in so doing plunged all creation into a pool of sin, you have not won. There is coming a day when the

*seed of the woman* - not the seed of man but *the seed of the woman* - will crush your head.

Satan thought he had triumphed. That which was perfect was now soiled. **Both Jew and Gentile are all under sin (Romans 3:9).**

Sin is woven throughout the fabric of mankind. We are all imperfect beings. God proved that by giving us the Law. **Mankind hated the Law of God so much that he has systematically removed it's precepts from every public place.**

**Ignoring a problem doesn't make it go away.** The Law was given, but we failed to follow it at every step. The Bible says:

**Romans 3:19-20** Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. {20} Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

**Romans 3:23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

All have sinned and come short. We are unable to save ourselves. It will take a miracle to save man. Our God is a miracle working God!

**FOCAL** Isaiah 7:14 ... Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son ...

The Lord Himself would intervene. Since all of creation is under sin, God would **prepare a covering for us**. He would move on a virgin. We see the first part of Isaiah prophecy fulfilled in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Scriptures tell us that ...

**Luke 1:26-27 ... the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, {27} To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.**

Who was Mary? She was just a virgin. She wasn't perfect, nor was she without sin. The Apostle wrote "**the whole world lieth in wickedness**" (1 John 5:19). Mary was not perfect. When Mary heard the pronouncement of Gabriel she was astonished.

How could a virgin have a Child? How could a sinner bring forth the sinless Lamb of God? This would be a *miraculous conception*. The Child was not born of the hand of man, but of the hand of God.

Gabriel told Mary:

**Luke 1:35 ... The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.**

God can do anything that He wants to do in any way that He wants to do it. If God can form a perfect Adam from the dust of the ground, and form a perfect Eve from one of Adam's ribs, then God can use an imperfect Mary to create a perfect and sinless Humanity. Mary praise the Lord, singing:

**Luke 1:46-49 ... My soul doth magnify the Lord, {47} And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. {48} For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. {49} For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.**

She was not perfect - God was. But because God is God He was going to use imperfect Mary to bring forth the Perfect Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ had to be sinless and perfect in every way. If it is true that

**1 John 4:14 ... the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.**

He could not be our Savior if He were a sinner as we are. Jesus Christ is the **Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the world**. If Jesus were a sinner as we are sinners then we are without hope - for our sins have not been punished!

Yet the Scripture clearly states that this Jesus - this **virgin born Messiah** - is able to save us to the

uttermost. Why? Because:

**Hebrews 7:25-27 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. {26} For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; {27} Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.**

Jesus is separate from sinners, pure and undefiled. He offered Himself **once for our sins**. Jesus **washed us from our sins in His own Blood (Revelation 1:5)**, standing in the place of judgment for us.

**1 John 3:5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.**

Just as God took a sinner – Mary – and brought that which is perfect – Jesus Christ – out of her, God can also take a sinner – you or I – and through the miracle of salvation take our lives from death to life.

**FOCAL** **Isaiah 7:14 ... Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son ...**

Perfect came from imperfect. But also consider this: our text states "**a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son**". It does not say "**a princess shall conceive**". The birth of Christ was not only miraculous in that God made the

perfect from the imperfect, but it is wonderful in that the King of Kings and Lord of Lords - the very Son of God - would be born of Mary.

Jesus Christ came into this earth through – not a princess or a rich person – but through a humble virgin. That which is Perfect King of Kings came to earth through a lowly virgin. What God did physically through Mary He can do *spiritually* through each and every one of you!

Jesus Christ came to this earth to be the Savior of *all who would believe*. Though the Bible tells us that both Mary and Joseph's lineage can be traced all the way back to King David, neither were royalty, nor born to a palace. **C.H. Spurgeon** said:

**"Tradition tells us that His manger was cut in the solid rock; there was he laid, and the oxen likely enough came to feed from the selfsame manger, the hay and the fodder of which was his only bed. Oh! wondrous stoop of condescension, that our blessed Jesus should be girded with humility, and stoop so low! ... Let us take courage here. If Jesus Christ was born in a manger in a rock, why should he not come and live in our rocky hearts? If he was born in a stable, why should not the stable of our souls be made into a habitation for him? If he was born in poverty, may not the poor in spirit expect that he will be their Friend? If he thus endured degradation at the first, will he count it any dishonor to come to the very poorest and humblest of his creatures, and tabernacle**

**in the souls of his children? ... we can rejoice that not a queen, or an empress, but that a humble woman became the mother of the Lord of glory"**

The first ones to hear of the birth of Christ was not Kings, nor even Wise Men - but simple shepherds. The Angel Gabriel came to them, saying:

**Luke 2:10-11 ... Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. {11} For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.**

The news that Jesus is virgin born is not just to the highest, but **to all people**. He is the Savior of all who will believe in Him, **Christ the Lord**. You can tell that He is the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the world, for **He is meek and lowly, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.**

## **2. God With Us To Save Us**

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

The name Immanuel literally means "God With Us".

Matthew 1:21-23 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt **call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.** {22} Now all this was

done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, {23} Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

God is with us. God is the Savior of His people. God the Son came to be our Savior. He is not *lesser* God than God the Father, Jesus is co-equal and co-eternal with both God the Father and God the Son. The Scripture says:

Hebrews 1:8-9 But unto the Son {the Father} saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. {9} Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

The Baby in the manger would grow to maturity just as every child who has ever been born grows to maturity.

Jesus not only fulfilled *prophecy* by His virgin birth, but He fulfilled the *Law of God* by the perfect life He lived.

But this Baby – Emmanuel, God With us, Jesus Christ – would not be like other babies. **He would love righteousness and hate iniquity, just as God loves righteousness and hates iniquity.** Our focal text tells us:

**FOCAL** Isaiah 7:15 ... Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

“Butter and honey shall He eat”. Jesus would eat more than just butter and honey as He grew up, but the text emphasizes that Jesus would eat only *clean foods* under the Law of God. Jesus would fulfill the Law perfectly. He told His disciples:

Matthew 5:17-18 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. {18} For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Jesus lived His life – from cradle to the grave – *perfectly*. The first Adam betrayed God in the Garden, but Jesus Christ as the Second Adam fulfilled the Law in every way.

Jesus Christ *never knew sin*. Though He was tempted as all of mankind is tempted, He never gave in to temptation. Where the Law said “yea” Jesus said “yea”, and where God's Law said “nay” Jesus said “nay”.

Jesus Christ **knew to refuse the evil and choose the good**. He made a choice, the right choice, and unlike the first Adam retained His perfection.

Why did God have to come to earth as Man? Because our sins could not be fixed by us. By Adam came death,

and death – spiritual death – was on all of God's creation. Man sinned, and man had to pay the penalty for sin. Man could not save himself, so God the Son became the Son of Man to save us. John the Baptist said it best when he, upon seeing Jesus, said “**Behold the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the world**”. Only One could stand in the gap for us. Only One could say “**send Me, dear Father, to save My people**”.

Never was sin found in Christ. His enemies invented lies about Him, but were caught in their lies. Even Pilate, the Governor of the land, said of Jesus “I find no fault in Him”. Every word He uttered was pure. Every action He did was without sin. His eyes never looked with lust, nor did His lips ever speak untruth or corruptly. When He slept His dreams were of of Heaven, and when awake His thoughts were of His Father's business. Jesus Christ, the Great Creator God:

**Colossians 1:16-17 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: {17} And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.**

entered creation with one purpose. He came to take our sin on Himself. This is exactly what He did. God the Son grew to maturity, and at 30 years old He began to minister. He was – as God in the flesh would be – a walking miracle. One of His Apostles – John – said of Jesus Christ:

**1 John 3:5 And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.**

Jesus Christ came to this earth to **take away our sins**. He did this by living a sinless life, and then by willingly going to Calvary to suffer in our place. The Scripture says:

**2 Corinthians 5:21 For {God the Father} hath made {God The Son} to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.**

Perfect Christ would come from imperfect virgin. Perfect Jesus would die on Calvary for imperfect people. But all those who understand that they are imperfect, if they believe on Him Who is perfect, His sinlessness is given to us while our sinfulness is place on Him.

Have you believed on Him? Have you called upon the Name of Jesus? Do you *know Him*? **Dr. Adrian Rogers** rightly said:

**“You may know all sorts of facts, but if you don't know the Lord, it's all wasted. You can understand biology, but if you don't know the giver of life, you're still uneducated. You can comprehend geology, but if you don't know the Rock of Ages, you don't really know anything of importance. You can know all about botany, but if you haven't met the Lily of the Valley, your knowledge is useless. You can know all the facts of history, but if you reject the central figure of history, your time has been wasted.**

**The wise man who doesn't know God is ignorant. The strong man who doesn't know God is weak. The rich man who doesn't know God is poor. Only the Lord can fulfill all our needs and answer all our questions. Jesus came to fulfill all things.”**

This Christmas present from God isn't under a tree, but He hung on a tree. This is **Immanuel – God with us**.

We come together as a local Church because **God is with us**. We meet adversity and trial because **God is with us**. Though the whole world is in turmoil because of the economy and wars, nevertheless **God is with us**. He is with us to protect us, to keep us, to guide us, to love us. Lost in a wilderness or a desert, we will not fear, for **“God is with us”**. Ride a sunbeam to the sky or dive into the deepest sea, yet **“God is with us”**. Let our enemies whisper slander and seek to do us harm, yet we will not fret for **“God is with us”**. Let the specter of death come into the hospital room, and let the doctor whisper the word *hopeless*, yet we shall have hope for **“God is with us”**. That is our battle cry, a shout that brings cheers from Heaven and shakes the foundation of Hell: **“God with us”**. Satan trembles at those words, yet they comfort the weakest soul.

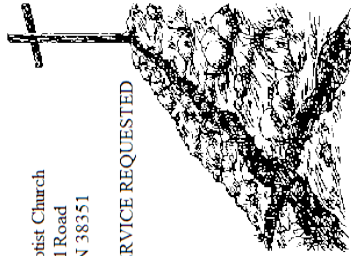
Is God with you? I pray that you all have a wonderful Christmas, with great times with your families, and great meals of plenty. I pray that every child receives great blessings under every tree and in every household. But if God is not with you then you have missed the greatest thing of all.

Unwrap the Present that God offers you. Surrender your hearts to Jesus Christ. Believe that God came to earth through a virgin, the Perfect through the imperfect, so that He could save you from your sins. **Whoever calls upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved.**

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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Ecclesiastes 1:2-3; Isaiah 7:14; John 1:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
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Why lies He in such mean estate,  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,  
The cross be borne for me, for you.  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

**1. Perfect Came From The Imperfect  
And Royalty From That Which Was Common**

Isaiah 7:14; Genesis 3:15; Romans 5:12; Romans 3:9;  
Romans 3:19-20; Romans 3:23; Luke 1:26-27; 1 John  
5:19; Luke 1:35; Luke 1:46-49; 1 John 4:14; Hebrews  
7:25-27; Revelation 1:5; 1 John 3:5; Luke 2:10-11  
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**2. God With Us To Save Us**

Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:21-23; Hebrews 1:8-9; Isaiah  
7:15; Matthew 5:17-18; Colossians 1:16-17; 1 John  
3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21  
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