

# Born to Win

## The Authentic Jesus #2

by Ronald L. Dart

Poor Joseph. It's hard to imagine what a *shock* it was to him when he learned that his betrothed wife was with child. Now, understand; in that society, at that time, this was a *much* bigger thing than it is today. The role of women in society was different. Her marriageability was all that stood between a young woman and starvation...or perhaps prostitution. In some societies, it led to what is called an "honor killing"—that is, the girl had shamed her family and the father *killed* her for it. One suspects there was more than honor at stake: The girl, no longer a virgin, would not find a husband; and therefore would become a burden on her family—a permanent one—and they just got rid of her. Israelite law allowed for stoning the girl for playing the harlot, but it was not required. You didn't *have* to do it [make the event known]. And thus, when Joseph learned that Mary was with child, he decided he would just quietly put her away instead of having her killed.

God had chosen well in this man and this girl; they were *good* people. Joseph was a just man, and his betrothed Mary was a *remarkably poised* young woman. Thus, a messenger from God appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him, "Don't hesitate to take Mary as your wife. The child she is carrying will be a son who will save his people from their sins, and it is a child of the Holy Spirit." Joseph had to understand that this boy Mary was carrying would be the Messiah. He was to be named "Jesus". And Matthew adds one relevant fact. He says:

### Matthew 1

AKJV

<sup>22</sup> Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

<sup>23</sup> 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.

Now, the prophet being cited here was Isaiah; and the prophecy came in a *definite* time and a *definite* place in history. Taken in isolation, I would *never* have connected this prophecy with the Messiah; because what Isaiah will now offer to us is a "type" of something yet to come.

I explained the terms "type" and "anti-type" in the last program. (And if you contact us and request *this* program, we'll send you *both* programs free of charge. We'll give you contact information in a moment, so you might be ready to take it down.) For now, know this: The word "type" comes from the Greek [τύπος, *typos*, Strong's G5179]. It refers to a die that one would use to stamp an image into something—like a piece of metal or perhaps clay. Anti-type would be the image *produced* by the die. So you stamp it into clay, you fire the clay, and you have the type (that is, the die) and the anti-type (the image). A die, of course, could be used to produce a *number* of images in a *number* of different pots; and sometimes prophecies fulfilled in history are going to return again and again; and so type and anti-type are meaningful terms when you start discussing prophecy.

Keeping this in mind, and realizing that Isaiah has *no idea* that this prophecy would be applied to Christ by Matthew, let's look at the *context* of what Isaiah said. There was a war going on. Israel had long

since been divided into two kingdoms: the house of Israel (with its capital in Samaria, led by the tribe of Ephraim), the house of Judah (capital in Jerusalem). The king of the house of Israel was allied with the king of Syria. (Middle East politics and war—not all that different from some of the stuff going on today.) The king of Israel allied with the king of Syria. They were at war with King Ahaz of Judah. Just one more in a series of Middle East wars.

So Isaiah and his son met Ahaz the king with a message from God. “Don’t be afraid”, God said, “they will not succeed in this war, these two northern kings. Within 65 years, in fact, Ephraim will be broken and no longer be a people. After all”, he says,...

**Isaiah 7**

NIV '84

<sup>9</sup> The head of Ephraim is Samaria,  
and the head of Samaria is only Remaliah’s son. [...]

I take it, the way this is put, that that must have been in itself a *damning* statement.

**Isaiah 7**

NIV '84

<sup>9</sup> [...] If you do not stand firm in your faith,  
you will not stand at all.

Now, what follows is very unusual. I don’t recall anything like it elsewhere in the Bible.

**Isaiah 7**

AKJV

<sup>10</sup> Moreover the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying,  
<sup>11</sup> Ask you a sign of the LORD your God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.  
<sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD.  
<sup>13</sup> And he said, Hear you now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also?

Now, Ahaz was *afraid* to ask for a sign. (Apparently, I gather he must have been a rather tedious person.) He got his sign anyway. Now follows the prophecy that *Matthew* cites in his gospel about the birth of Jesus.

**Isaiah 7**

AKJV

<sup>14</sup> 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” [עִמָּנוּאֵל, Strong’s H6005] means “God with us”. Now, what makes this strange is that, in the historic fulfillment, the child that was born was not named Immanuel. This section in full is an excellent example of the duality of prophecy—of type and anti-type. Listen to how it develops as he goes along.

**Isaiah 7**

AKJV

<sup>14</sup> [...] Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.  
<sup>15</sup> Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

I think a better translation of that is “Butter and honey shall he eat *when* he knows to refuse the evil and choose the good.”

**Isaiah 7**

AKJV

<sup>16</sup> For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that you abhor shall be forsaken of both her kings.

The child’s going to be born. Before it gets old enough to know what’s going on, both those kings will be dead. In the historical context, this child would be born within the history of the days in which Isaiah wrote it. Before this child that is going to be born is old enough to know the difference between good and evil, both of the kings are gone. The butter and honey illusion, though, *puzzled* me for some time.

**Isaiah 7**

AKJV

<sup>17</sup> The LORD shall bring on you, and on your people, and on your father’s house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria.

A new world power, the likes of which *no one had ever seen*, would appear and would be the instrument of destruction for both Ephraim and Syria. But more than that, this king of Assyria would also come into Judah. Isaiah continues:

**Isaiah 7**

AKJV

<sup>18</sup> And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.

<sup>19</sup> And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and on all thorns, and on all bushes.

It’s like a great insect plague coming from Egypt and Assyria and settling upon the whole land around there. Well, what happens when these things happen: all the people in the areas surrounding Jerusalem and the other walled cities would retreat inside the walled cities for protection. They would carry with them cattle—they’d bring all their cows in there; they’d bring their goats and their sheep, whatever they could—and all the food they could manage to store, and they would try to hold out in these walled cities until the enemy went away. Well, all this takes place; and he says:

**Isaiah 7**

AKJV

<sup>20</sup> In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard.

In other words, they’re going to *shave* you right down to your bare skin.

**Isaiah 7**

AKJV

<sup>21</sup> And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep;

<sup>22</sup> And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land.

Now, this is so foreign to the modern mind we wouldn't even know what he's talking about; but if you can cast your mind back into that generation and that time, you realize that these people had to make do on what their animals produced.

**Isaiah 7**

ERV

<sup>23</sup> And it shall come to pass in that day, that every place, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, shall even be for briers and thorns.

*All the vines, all the vineyards, all the fields, all the olive trees—everything outside the city is stripped bare except for briers and thorns. And so all you can do is you could take your cows, your goats, and your sheep back out there and they can graze. You can eat your animals, if you have to. You can eat butter. You can find wild honey. But that's all there's going to be. Agricultural produce? Grapes, fruit, figs, olives? Forget about it.*

Now, all this seems to be an allusion to the Assyrian invasion where all the people in Judah were forced to flee into these walled cities with all their animals, all their provender, and agriculture on the outside was *impossible*. Now, even after the invasion is over they would have *some time* that they were dependent on their animals for food; all the crops were gone. He goes on to say:

**Isaiah 7**

AKJV

<sup>24</sup> With arrows and with bows shall men come thither; because all the land shall become briers and thorns.

<sup>25</sup> And on all hills that shall be dig with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.

But what about this child Immanuel that was to be born? How on earth does *he* fit into all this?

So God told Isaiah that a child was to be born, and before this child got old enough to know the difference between things both those northern kings would be dead and gone because of the invasion of the Assyrians and the Egyptians into the land—which was going to cause an awful lot of hardship to Judah in the process. Isaiah chapter eight, verse one, starts off this way:

**Isaiah 8**

AKJV

<sup>1</sup> Moreover the LORD said to me, Take you a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning Mahershalalhashbaz.

You have no idea how long I had to practice to get that name right.

**Isaiah 8**

AKJV

<sup>2</sup> And I took to me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.

They were to be witnesses of what God had said and when he had said it.

**Isaiah 8**

AKJV

<sup>3</sup> And I went to the prophetess; and she conceived, and bore a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Mahershalalhashbaz.

<sup>4</sup> For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.

But wait, wasn't that kid supposed to be Immanuel? "The prophetess", of course, would have been Isaiah's wife; and unless he had more than one wife, she was no virgin because Isaiah *already had a son*. And how come this child was not named Immanuel? The answer, I think, comes in a later statement by Isaiah—in chapter 8, verse 18. He said:

**Isaiah 8**

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<sup>18</sup> Here am I, and the children the LORD has given me. We are signs and symbols in Israel from the LORD Almighty, who dwells on Mount Zion.

Isaiah and his boys were *types*. Consider their names: Shear-Jashub [שָׁאֵר יָשׁוּב, Strong's H7610] meant "a remnant shall return". Mahershalalhashbaz (the name I practiced so much to say correctly) [מְהַר שָׁלַלְתָּ, Strong's H4122] which means "hasting to the booty and swift to the prey". So they were types, and the fulfillment of all this took place *in their lifetimes*. Now, by that I mean the *first* fulfillment. The *latter* fulfillment, according to Matthew, was Jesus. But even there the child was not named Immanuel.

Now, here's our problem: In English, if names have meaning most people don't know it. I suppose most of us know the meaning of their own name, but the chances are you don't know anybody else's name. Names are nothing to us but a phonetic symbol; they designate a *person* by that sound. But in other cultures—not just Hebrew—names have meaning in day-to-day speech. Do you want a good analogy? You've seen it the good old cowboy movies: American Indian names like Running Bear, Flying Eagle, and so forth. They are words in common use in the language, not just names that you encounter. And Jesus was, after all, "God with us". This is an important aspect to understand in all of this. So that's where this prophecy comes into play. Now, in Matthew 2 it tells us:

**Matthew 2**

AKJV

<sup>1</sup> Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

<sup>2</sup> Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

Who on earth were these men? They're called "wise men" in the King James Version. Actually they are "magi" or magicians (some people call them this)—sages who come from the far east of Jerusalem. One source even said that they were astrologers. And what they meant by this: "We have seen his star in the ascension in the heavens", and they did this by astrological signs and times and seasons, and now they knew there was a king of the Jews born, and they've come all this way to do obeisance to him. Who were they? No one knows. Were there three of them? That's the tradition. I think the tradition arises from the fact that there were three different gifts given. The Bible does not tell us how many there were. And the odd thing is: In Christian tradition, there are even *names* for these guys.

**Matthew 2**

AKJV

<sup>3</sup> When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

And anybody would be if he's king of Judea and he finds out there's another one just been born.

**Matthew 2**

AKJV

<sup>4</sup> And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

Now, of course, this is...you know, we are so used to Christ and all the things that are with him and "Jesus the Christ", we may not realize that what he said to them was, "Where is the *Messiah* to be born?" The truth is: During this day and time, there was all sorts of messianic fever among Jewish people; for the Old Testament prophesied—from Isaiah to all the others—that a messiah would come and deliver God's people from the oppression of their oppressors. He wanted to know: "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?"

**Matthew 2**

KJ2000

<sup>5</sup> And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

<sup>6</sup> And you Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of you shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Of course, Bethlehem was the City of David. So many of the prophecies in the Old Testament about the Messiah all focused on King David, and so it plays out in this way.

**Matthew 2**

AKJV

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod, when he had privately called the wise men, inquired of them diligently [*carefully*] what time the star appeared.

He wanted to know what time that child was born.

**Matthew 2**

AKJV

<sup>8</sup> And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

The old liar.

**Matthew 2**

AKJV

<sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they departed; and, see, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

Now, this doesn't work with the astrology idea; because in astrology you're just seeing the star in the sky. It's not moving all over the place; it has risen to a certain point in a constellation, as it were. But nevertheless, somehow or other they were able to see the place—the stable—where the young child was because the star led them there.

**Matthew 2**

AKJV

<sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

<sup>11</sup> And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child [*now, not a baby*] with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented to him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.

And it would turn out to be very helpful that they had brought these gifts for a reason nobody really expected.

**Matthew 2**

*AKJV*

<sup>12</sup> And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

<sup>13</sup> And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be you there until I bring you word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

And you know, I think about this and it reminds me once again that Jesus Christ emptied himself of his divinity, he emptied himself of his power and of his glory, and became *completely vulnerable* in the flesh. When you think of him...the shepherds that came to see him: they found a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger—and Mary and Joseph, who were there. And that was all they saw. There was not some great king. It was a vulnerable little child who had to be cared for in every aspect of his life. He could have died, he could have been killed, a stroke could have done away with him. And, of course, Herod would have been after him in due time to kill him. So Joseph...

**Matthew 2**

*AKJV*

<sup>14</sup> [...] arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

And I'm sure the gold and frankincense and myrrh were *very* helpful over this sojourn.

**Matthew 2**

*AKJV*

<sup>15</sup> And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

<sup>16</sup> Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

I have no idea how many kids that would have been; but all of them, from *two years old down*, this *evil* man had destroyed.

**Matthew 2**

*KJ2000*

<sup>17</sup> Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

<sup>18</sup> In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

And one is reminded once again of the most vulnerable people in our society—the children. And here we live in a generation where mothers are drowning their own babies in the bathtub, or women are

tossing them into a lake to drown. The prophecy comes back to mind:

#### Lamentations 4

KJ2000

<sup>3</sup> [T]he daughter of my people has become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.

And you think about this destruction of the most *vulnerable* of human life and realize that Jesus Christ entered the world in that *vulnerable* state.

#### Matthew 2

KJ2000

<sup>19</sup> But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

<sup>20</sup> Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead who sought the young child's life.

<sup>21</sup> And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

<sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there [*Things were still dangerous there.*]: and, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the district of Galilee:

<sup>23</sup> And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Now, do you notice how every time you turn around you're running into a *prophecy* about Jesus Christ; because all these things throughout the Old Testament are salted there—looking ahead, warning about, hoping for the Messiah to come. The only other gospel that deals with the birth of Jesus is Luke. John, in his very well-known opening, identifies Jesus as “the Word” which was with God and was God [**John 1:1**]; and he tells us that “the Word became flesh”, but he doesn't tell us really *how* that came about. Luke is the one who tells us in the greatest possible detail *how* it all came about. And one of the more interesting things about Luke's account is he is the only one who tells us anything at all about the time of year of Jesus' birth.

Now, you may have thought *nobody* said anything about the time of year in the Bible, or you may just have assumed everybody knew it was December 25<sup>th</sup> and that's that, but the information is here; and it's kind of incidental to the story. I don't know if Luke deliberately thought, “I better let people know *when* Jesus was born or they'll get the wrong impression.” Anyway...

#### Luke 1

KJ2000

<sup>5</sup> There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zachariah, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

<sup>6</sup> And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

<sup>7</sup> And they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they both were now well advanced in years.

What's the importance of this fellow? Well, he was the father of John the Baptist. What is more important is the inclusion of an incidental fact—something that... I don't know about you, but I overlooked it for a long time; didn't pay any attention to it. It was just some Old Testament reference. He was of the “course of Abia” or “Abijah”. The priesthood was divided into 24 groups, and they served in the temple at specific times of the year [**1 Chronicles 24**], so we know *precisely* (well, within



a week or two) of what time the angel appeared to this man and told him he's going to have a boy named John the Baptist. Why is that important? Well, the story goes on.

**Luke 1**

*KJ2000*

<sup>9</sup> According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

<sup>10</sup> And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the time of incense.

And so here's our man—Zacharias—in the temple doing his duty with the altar of incense, and there was *nobody* there. There wasn't *supposed* to be anybody there. They're very strict about that. He was burning this incense there; and then all of a sudden, where there had been no man before, there was a man standing there—an angel of the Lord.

**Luke 1**

*AKJV*

<sup>12</sup> And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell on him.

<sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him, Fear not, Zacharias: for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elisabeth shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

Now, I don't know what he thought about this at this time; you know, he's an *old* man and he says, "Your wife is going to conceive and bear a son." Imagine he's going to go home and tell his wife this?

**Luke 1**

*AKJV*

<sup>14</sup> And you shall have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

<sup>15</sup> For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord [...]

And then he went on to tell him about this child, that he would be a Nazarite from his mother's womb (which meant he wouldn't drink wine or strong drink; he'd let his hair grow).

**Luke 1**

*AKJV*

<sup>16</sup> And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

He's going to be a preacher, drawing people back to God.

**Luke 1**

*KJ2000*

<sup>17</sup> And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

A people *prepared* for the Lord? What do you mean by that? And who was the Lord he was preparing them for? Zacharias was stunned, and he said to the angel:

**Luke 1**

*AKJV*

<sup>18</sup> [...] Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

<sup>19</sup> And the angel answering said to him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak to you, and to show you these glad tidings.

“This is happy news, man!”

Well, I expect Zacharias and his wife had mixed emotions about having a child at their age, but he was a great man.

Until next time...

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*The Authentic Jesus #2*

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