

# Unto Us a Son Is Born

*by: Ronald L. Dart*

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[The first day of the Feast of Tabernacles in the year 2001 was 20 days after the 9/11 date of the Terrorist attack on America and Ronald L. Dart opens the Feast of Tabernacles with this message.]

This is a time of trouble for our nation. There was another time of trouble. A long time ago. Jerusalem was even more frightened than we are today. They had a powerful confederacy arrayed against them. Not only did they have the House of Israel in the North, led by Ephraim, they had the Syrians with them who were coming down combined against them and planning to besiege Jerusalem. All that stood between them and destruction were the walls of the city and that was not going to be enough.

According to the account in Isaiah 7, the hearts of King Ahaz and all of his people were shaken as the trees of the forest are shaken in the wind.

And I have a feeling a lot of us have a an idea of what it was like in that time, having experienced something ourselves, these last few weeks.

God, however, was not frightened. He had a man in place who would turn out to be the most eloquent of all the prophets. His name was Isaiah, and you'll find his account of what happens here in the seventh chapter of his prophecy. God spoke to him, and told him to take his boy and go out and meet the king and give him a message and so they met him at a conduit of the pool and walked out there where they knew he would be. Isaiah and his son, and he spoke to the king whose name was Ahaz.

Then the LORD said to Isaiah, {4} "Say to the king, "Be careful, keep calm. Don't be afraid. Do not lose heart. Because of these two smoldering stubs of firewood because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram, the son of Remaliah. Don't be afraid of them."

God's contempt for them just drips from the message.

Verse 5, "Aram, Ephraim and Remaliah's son have plotted your ruin, saying, {6} "Let us invade Judah; let us tear it apart and divide it among ourselves, and put our own king over it." There is no point leaving those riches down there, let's go down and get them. {7} "This is what the sovereign Yehovah says, "It will never happen. It will never take place, {8} For

the head of Aram is Damascus, the head of Damascus is Rezin and within 65 years Ephraim shall be shattered. They won't even be a people any longer." Don't sweat it. Don't worry about it.

Again the LORD said, {11} "Tell you what we will do. I want you to ask Me for a sign, ask it in the deepest depths of the highest heights." {12} Ahaz says, "I'm not going to ask, I'm not going to put the LORD to the test."

Stop reading your Bible. Don't read any further in your Bible.

Ahaz said, "I'm not going to ask, I'm not going to put the LORD to the test." {13} "Then Isaiah said, "Listen house of David, is it not enough for you to try the patience of men? Will you try the patience of God also?"

### **What Is The Next Verse?**

Now I wonder how many of you know what the next verse is? Do any of you know? Without looking? Listen to it.

Isaiah 7 verse 14, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall be with child and give birth to a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

You knew the Scripture, didn't you? You just didn't realize the context in which it falls, a time when there was a great crisis going on and the LORD said "I'm going to give you a sign." It was an unusual thing that He did here.

The LORD inspired Isaiah to say about this child, "His name is Immanuel, (which means God with us,) and he says that a child was born to Isaiah and his wife, but this child was never called Immanuel.

It says of this child, verse 15, "He will eat curds and honey when he knows enough to reject wrong and choose the right. {16} But before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste."

Now this is a prophecy current for Isaiah's day. It was a current, right now prophecy. "A virgin is going to conceive, a maiden is going to conceive, bear a child. You will call his name Immanuel. But before this child is old enough to know right from wrong or right hand for left hand, that land that you are afraid of up there, both of the kings up there are going to be gone.

The curds and honey is an interesting aside, I'm not going to go there now, but it's an interesting study. I'll leave it for you to make your own judgment about that.

## **Mahershalalhashbaz**

Now let's go on in Isaiah chapter 8.

"The Lord said to me, take a great scroll and writing with a man's pen concerning Mahershalalhashbaz. {2} I took to me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. {3} And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Mahershalalhashbaz."

Now this is really odd because first of all, the sign he's going to give Ahaz is that a child is going to be born and then Isaiah goes to his wife, the prophetess. She has a child, now she's not a virgin because she already has one child. Remember when we met him before, he went with Isaiah out to meet King. So we have this curious mixture in his prophecy that makes it difficult to really fathom what he is talking about.

### **Behold, A Virgin Shall Conceive**

Now every Christian knows that this verse that says "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and you shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14). If you've ever heard the Messiah, you've heard that and you understand clearly that this is a prophecy about 'The Christ' (The Messiah) who was to be born. And yet, in its original form, it was not about that at all. It was about two kings in the north and the length of time it was going to be before they both turned room temperature. That was the way it was going to go.

### **Let God Be Your Fear**

So Isaiah says in Isaiah 8 verse 13, "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, let him be your fear."

If you are going to be afraid of something, be afraid of God . Now that is not a bad piece of advice is it? If we sit around worrying about when the next terrorist attack is going to come from, God comes down and says, "If you are going to be afraid of something, be afraid of me."

Verse 13, "Let me be your fear. Let me be your dread. {14} Because God will be a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both houses of Israel, for a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. {15} Many among them shall stumble and fall and be broken, and snared, and taken. {16} Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. {17} I will wait upon the Lord who hides his face from the house of Jacob. I'll look for him."

Listen now to what Isaiah says, in verse 18, "Look, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts that dwells in Mount Zion."

They were for, if this were in Greek, it would read. "They are for types," in other words, Mahershalahashbaz, was in this context, a type of the Messiah who was to come in later generations.

Then he says this interesting thing, {19} "When they shall say to you, "Seek to them that have familiar spirits and wizards that peep and mutter. Shouldn't the people seek their God? Should the living go talking to the dead?" (To try to find out what's going on? NO!). {20} "Look to this, to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them.""

### **The Word "Testimony"**

Now that is a fascinating statement and in case you didn't realize this, the word "testimony" as is it used in the Old Testament, is a reference to the Ten Commandments, they were the testimony of God. They were put in the ark of the testimony. If you go back and look in your Bible you'll find for a long time, the ark was always called the "ark of the testimony" because the testimony of God was in it. It was only later called "the ark of the covenant". It is the testimony of God.

"Look to the law and to the Ten Commandments, if they don't speak according this word, it is because there is no light in them."

And then comes another scripture that is cited in the New Testament.

Continuing in Isaiah 8 verse 21, "And they shall pass through it, hard pressed and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward. {22} And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness."

### **They Have Seen A Great Light**

Isaiah chapter 9 verse 1, "Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan— {2} The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."

Is that a familiar scripture to you? It ought to be. If you ever heard "The Messiah", it certainly would be. But listen to this, Matthew 4 verse 12, "When Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; {13} And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea coast, in the borders of Zebulun and Nephthali." Remember Zebulun and Nephthali. {14} "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by

Isaiah the prophet, saying: {15} "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:{16} The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And to them who sat in the region and shadow of death Light is sprung up. {17} From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Now we have had two insertions and it's funny the way prophecy works like this. Prophecy often has multiple fulfillments and sometimes these fulfillments get interweaved together. It's a principal sometimes referred to as duality in prophecy.

First, we have a child of Isaiah, named Mahershalalhashbaz, who is a type of another child to come, who will be called Immanuel. Then, we have this tragedy of the armies coming down and the darkness in the northern areas caused by the Syrians and later by the Assyrians, who would come in. With all of that darkness and yet He says the people will see a great light (Isaiah 9:2).

Then, Isaiah says this in verse three of Isaiah 9, "You enlarged the nation and increased their joy. They rejoiced before you like people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice dividing the spoil. {4} For in the days of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. {5} Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning and will be fuel for the fire."

### **Unto Us A Child Is Born**

Isaiah 9 verse 6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulders, and He will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and I came all the way through the sermon to this point to tell you He is also the Prince of Peace.

Verse 7, "Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts has spoken it."

And here out of a time of terrible crisis comes a marvelous promise that out there a child will be born who will set up the government of God and will rule forever and the increase of his kingdom there will be no end.

## The Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle

Now, in a truly astonishing confluence of events, one of the leading political figures of our time, the Senate majority leader Tom Daschle quoted a verse from the following section on the very morning after the World Trade Center terrorist attack. He said this. Actually, he didn't say this, but listen to Isaiah, and I'll tell you where Tom Daschle chose his quote.

Isaiah 9 verse 8, "The Lord has sent a message against Jacob, and it will fall on Israel. {9} All the people will know it, Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, who say with pride and arrogance of heart."

And then here comes the verse that Sen. Daschle quoted and it was recorded in the Congressional record: {10} "The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with dressed stone, the fig trees have been felled, but we will replace them with cedars."

I was having breakfast at the time and I nearly fell off my chair. I said, "No, don't say that!" Why would I say that? Because I know the context of the verse. I knew the passage that followed it.

Here is verse 13, "But the people have not returned to Him, who struck them, neither have they sought the LORD Almighty. {14} So the Lord will cut off from Israel, head and tail, branch and rush, in a single day, {15} The elders and prominent men are the head and the prophets who teach lies are the tail. {16} Those who guide this people mislead them and those who are guided are led astray. {17} Therefore, the Lord will take no pleasure in the young men, nor will he pity the fatherless, and the widows for everyone is ungodly and wicked. Every mouth speaks vileness, yet for all this, His anger is not turned away. His hand is stretched out still. {18} Surely wickedness burns like a fire, it consumes briars and thorns. It sets the forest thickets ablaze, so that it rolls up in a column of smoke. {19} By the wrath of the Lord Almighty the land will be scorched and the people will be fuel for the fire. No one will spare his brother."

The passage was way too close for comfort and I really found myself wishing that the Senator had not chosen this occasion to quote that particular verse. Now in his defense, he had no idea of the context of it, his speech writer put it in there. It sounded good to him and he gave the speech. But it really gave me pause.

Now, I'm not sure that we are at where this prophecy might be pointing at an end time thing at all, but I do feel that a warning shot has been fired across our bow.

In the midst of all this tragedy, we had these verses. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace, the Everlasting Father, of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his

kingdom, establishing, upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time forth and forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this."

### **When Was Jesus Born?**

Now for those who are new to CEM (Christian Educational Ministries) and our friends, you should know this. We do not observe Christmas! We recognize as nearly everyone does, that Jesus was not born on December 25, or anywhere near December 25. We reject all the commercialism and the pagan trappings that have been connected with Christmas down through the generations. I mean even our founding fathers knew better than this. Many parts of this country would not even allow the observance of Christmas for many years until the commercial interests took over.

But we do recognize the truth of this marvelous passage out of the prophet Isaiah, "A virgin shall conceive and bear a son and will call his name Immanuel, unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace."

I personally believe that while Jesus was conceived in late December, He was born somewhere near this night, perhaps on this very night of the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles in the autumn of the year. I know the autumn season is right and you know, I know something else is right. The symbolism is right to! You may be familiar with the Scripture.

In John chapter 1 verse one, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. {2} The same was in the beginning with God. {3} All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. {4} In him was life, and the life was the light of men. {5} The light shines in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not."

And then there is this startling revelation in verse 14, "And the Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Hopefully we all understand that the "Word" is referring to Jesus Christ.

### **The Word "Tabernacle"**

The word "Tabernacle" is used so frequently in the Bible as a temporary dwelling. It's a tent, it is a hut, but the human body is also referred too, Paul does it, he particularly refers to the body as a tabernacle because of the temporary nature of the human body. We are here today, we are gone tomorrow. We are like the grass of the field. We grow up today and then the wind comes and the heat comes and we are gone. We leave this world.

So our own body is a tabernacle and what the scriptures tell us is that the Word became flesh and tabernacled, tented, camped out, as it were, among us, and we know that Jesus Christ came and began that tabernacling and with us somewhere very close to this night, at the beginning of the Feast of Tabernacles and that is where we are.

### **Jesus Came In The Flesh**

I know the season is right and I know the symbolism is right, so we take this occasion to do two things at the Feast. To confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. Remember what the apostle John said, in 1 John 4 verse 2, "Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, {3} and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist."

### **The Most Important Event In History**

So, we take this occasion to confess that Jesus came in the flesh, and the second thing we do is that we take this occasion to rejoice in the birth of our Savior. It is one of the single most important events in all of salvation history.

You know, there might've been a time when you didn't hear this particular passage of Scripture all that often in a sermon. And so I love to bring it up tonight, the first night of the Feast of Tabernacles.

It's in the second chapter of Luke verse four. Joseph went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David. {5} To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. {6} And so it was that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. {7} And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

What a night. The Savior of the world is born and He comes into the world, not as a man on a white horse, not as a full-grown Messiah, not as somebody huge and awesome in his personage. He comes as a baby, a tiny little thing with 10 tiny fingers and 10 tiny toes, all of it just like Mary and just like every mother all through time inspected her baby to be sure everything was like it ought to be, perfect in every way.

Continuing in verse 8, "There were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night."

I've always been so fascinated by this. I imagine some angels who were watching over all of this and they had the responsibility for seeing that everything worked out like it was supposed to be and finally it got to the place to where they were so full of excitement they

said, "Look, Father, we have gotta tell somebody or make an announcement somewhere. We gotta say something. We can't stand it. We can't be quiet anymore." The Father replies, "Okay, okay, don't go to Jerusalem, don't go to the high priest, don't go to Herod. Let's see, there's some shepherds down there in that field." The Father goes to the lowest edge of society as it were, to the common shepherd, out in the fields at night and these men sitting there minding their own business, keeping watch over their flock by night under a moon, like the moon you saw coming in here tonight. The first night of the Feast of Tabernacles always begins on the full moon of the month.

Verse 9, "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid."

I don't doubt that for a minute. It must've been an awesome sight to them.

The angel said {10} "Don't be afraid, 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 angel said two things, Savior and Messiah, and these men knew precisely what that meant, because the whole Jewish world, at that time was looking for a Savior and were looking for a Messiah.

"And this shall be a sign unto you," {12} "You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

And this is the reason why I'm jealous of these guys.

"Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace goodwill toward men."

One the reasons I'm jealous is because many times I have sung in a choral group singing "The Messiah" and you come to this magnificent chorus where we all come roaring in with the conductor singing, "Glory to God" and I know that we are like popcorn compared to what these shepherds, humble shepherds, heard on this night.

"It came to pass" {15} "as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, "Let's go to Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us." {16} And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and a baby."

I think to these men, it was a baby that looked like just any other little baby they might have seen. If it hadn't been for the announcement of the Angels who told them who this child

was, it would've been a totally unremarkable event. But for these men, I think it had to be life changing.

### **Let God Be Your Fear**

Now, I know that we are in a time of national trouble and there are people who tell us it is probably going to get worse before it's going to get better, that there will be more people who will die. There will be servicemen who will die, that there may well be attacks by terrorists within our own country and people will die.

But you know you have to remember what God said to the people in Jerusalem in a time when they were even more frightened than we are.

"Let God be your fear, let Him be your dread." You don't have to worry about what man can do to you, why? Because a child is born, a son is given, and the government is going to be on His shoulders and He will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace and of the increase of His government and peace, there will be no end.

Funny isn't it, how all that could come into focus with the birth of a child. "Unto us a son is given."

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This article was transcribed with minor editing from a message given by the late Ronald L. Dart titled: "Unto Us a Son Is Born" (01F1) 10/1/01  
Transcribed by: bb 12/4/20

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