

# **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VILLA RICA, PCA**

## **The Divine Son Is Given**

By  
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*Isaiah 9:1-7*

Isaiah prophesied during a period of urgency and foreboding. The Assyrian juggernaut was poised for conquest. The political situation of Judah was continually desperate. Since Rehoboam's reign following his father Solomon's death the kingdom had been divided with Judah in the South and Israel to the north. Assyria, under Tiglath-pileser III, was bent on World Empire. Both Israel and Judah lay in the Fertile Crescent between Assyria and Egypt.

As Isaiah began his ministry Judah's king Uzziah had just died. His son Jothan ascended to the throne. He wasn't the man his father had been. The people were apprehensive. But instead of turning more to God in their hour of need they turned more to wicked intrigue and political conniving. They gave lip service to God but the heart of the nation was corrupt. They delighted more in sin and evil than in the Lord. When a nation turns away from God sin increases. Sin is progressive.

Does it seem strange that during a time of crisis when trouble looms large, when disaster is threatening, when evil seems poised like a serpent ready to strike, that a man or nation will expose his true character? A coward will show himself a coward in battle; a thief will show himself a thief when an opportunity presents itself. The difference between a righteous man and a wicked man is to be seen in how each handles temptation.

Temptation takes many forms. What is your temptation? Is it some attraction, some thrill, some exciting adventure that will satisfy some craving or hunger? Or is your temptation some trouble or crisis that looms large for you? Faith will take different a path from unbelief. Faith desires to please God and obey his Word. Unbelief will show itself as trusting something other than God.

Israel put confidence in alliances with her pagan neighbors instead of in her God. The fact that she would not trust God but instead turn to pagan idols was her besetting sin, her greatest weakness, for the Lord was her strength. He alone could fight her battles. He had over and over shown himself mighty on Israel's behalf. He had brought them out of slavery in the face of impossible human odds. He gave them victory over their enemies. He had brought them into the Promised Land and prospered them beyond other nations. But now the Lord was chastening them in order to lead them back to himself. But instead of accepting his chastening she only rebelled more and more. As the prophet says in Isaiah chapter 1:2-9 ...<sup>2</sup> **Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the LORD speaks, "Sons I have reared and brought up, But they have revolted against Me.** <sup>3</sup> **"An ox knows its owner,**

**And a donkey its master's manger,  
But Israel does not know, My people do not understand."** <sup>4</sup> **Alas, sinful nation,  
People weighed down with iniquity, Offspring of evildoers,  
Sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD, They have despised  
the Holy One of Israel,  
They have turned away from Him.**

<sup>5</sup> **Where will you be stricken again,  
As you continue in your rebellion?  
The whole head is sick  
And the whole heart is faint.**

<sup>6</sup> **From the sole of the foot even to the head  
There is nothing sound in it,  
Only bruises, welts and raw wounds,  
Not pressed out or bandaged,  
Nor softened with oil.**

<sup>7</sup> **Your land is desolate,  
Your cities are burned with fire,**

Your fields—strangers are devouring them in your presence;  
 It is desolation, as overthrown by strangers.  
<sup>8</sup> The daughter of Zion is left like a shelter in a vineyard,  
 Like a watchman's hut in a cucumber field, like a besieged city.  
<sup>9</sup> Unless the LORD of hosts  
 Had left us a few survivors,  
 We would be like Sodom,  
 We would be like Gomorrah.

This was the sad picture of apostasy and chastisement. It was bleak. It was black. Humanly speaking it would seem that the Lord was fed up with them. No one could blame him if he just washed his hands of the whole lying, adulterous, rebellious and corrupt crew. It was so bad that God said that had he not reserved to himself a very small remnant they would have been every bit as bad as Sodom and Gomorrah. Indeed, God did in less than a generation terminate permanently the northern kingdom of Israel as a further, final warning to Judah to repent or suffer similar consequences. But alas, Judah too finally had to go into captivity for seventy years in order to change the picture and preserve the nation unto the coming of the Messiah.

But God's purpose is not thwarted by the sinfulness and apostasy of his people. In the midst of increasing crime we come upon this wonderful prophecy of the promise of a Messiah to come. <sup>6</sup> **For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders;**

**And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
 Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.**

Many people reject out of hand the thought of God appearing in human history as a man. It seems just too incredible, too unbelievable, too fantastic. God is just too remote, too distant, and too inscrutable for many people to think that he would become incarnate in a human form and appear on this earth. To them the idea smacks of science fiction.

Ophrah Winfrey is quoted as saying, "I keep telling Shirley MacLaine, You can't go around telling people you are God. It's a very difficult concept to accept." -- Ophrah Winfrey in the New York Times Magazine (June 11, 1989). *Christianity Today*, Vol. 33, no. 12.

But right here in Isaiah the manner of the divine Son coming by a virgin birth was prophesied hundreds of years before it happened. Indeed, there are numerous prophecies in scripture beginning immediately after the fall in the garden when God promised that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent. This would require one greater than Satan, who is referred to the prophecy. Jesus Christ himself assures us and all of the apostles teach that he is the fulfillment all of the Bible prophecies that foretold the coming of the Jewish Messiah. He told the Jews <sup>23</sup> **"You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world. <sup>24</sup> Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."** John 8:23-24

It was necessary that the Son of God be born of a virgin for this was the only way he could bypass the genealogy of Adam and remain sinless in his human nature. And Isaiah's prophecy tells us plainly that this person to be born of the virgin was Immanuel, which means God with us. This Son was the Son of God, God incarnate, the Divine Son. Fantastic! Yes. Unbelievable - No.

However, I might make mention of the fact that in our day this truth is being obscured and denied. There are those who would make Jesus less than God, more than man, somewhere in-between.

A Gallup poll conducted for *Christianity Today* a few years ago revealed that only 26 percent of those in the age bracket of 18-49 believed that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. Those fifty and older did not do much better with their score of 28 percent. In other words, less than one-third of the U. S. population would ascribe deity to Jesus Christ. Indeed, even among those who claim to be born again no more than 43 percent affirmed this truth and Protestants generally ranked only 26 percent on the scale.

May I say this morning; if our congregation would fall into those percentages I would be seriously concerned. The apostle John wrote, <sup>7</sup> **For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the**

deceiver and the antichrist. <sup>8</sup>Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. <sup>9</sup>Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. 2 John 1:7-9

The Word of God requires belief in Jesus Christ as God incarnate, the God-man, the Son of God, Immanuel.

**By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; <sup>3</sup>and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. (1 John 4:2-3)**

C. T. Studd, missionary at large early in the last century, abandoned a comfortable middle-class life and a stunning athletic career with these words: "If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice I make for him can be too great." With that he left Cambridge and sailed for China, India, and Africa, sacrificing health and wealth for the One he believed to be God.

Looking further at the passage from which we have read today we learn that the birth of this Son would bring about vastly improved conditions for the people favored by his light and his might. Before his coming the people walked in darkness and distress, their land was under the shadow of death but the birth of this Son sheds a great light. Gloom vanishes away. Joy and rejoicing like that which people feel at the time of harvest, or when they have victory over enemies and divide the plunder, will be their portion.

Not only that, the nation is enlarged. Millions more enter the kingdom of God because of his coming. The nations of the earth are evangelized. Because of this Son of God the rod of their oppressor, Satan, is shattered.

This people know nothing but victory. No power can overcome them, for they have been delivered, redeemed, empowered. The victorious life belongs to this people because of the birth of this Son.

Verse. 6 states that this Son has the government on his shoulder We are given to know that the throne of David is his, to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice. The authority of this Son is absolute. All will yield obedience to him, and his reign will be one of perfect righteousness.

Vs. 7 tells us that of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. God's own zeal will perform all of this. He will not allow this kingdom to be weakened or impoverished. On the contrary, it will have no equal. No power forged against it can succeed. The perfections of his government assure peace and prosperity for all. And how could it be otherwise when we consider the attributes ascribed to this one who is born of the virgin.

(1) He is called Wonderful -- a Person of matchless excellence. A Person to delight and astonish all who come to know him. The joy of all the earth; God Himself in the flesh comes to rule over us.

(2) Counselor – He is able to give perfect advice. He is the one to go to with any problem. The divine Psychiatrist. He knows your problem before you tell him. He can read your mind. But he does expect you to come to him and ask for his counsel.

By joining the two names together we get "Wonderful Counselor" He is all-wise in his estimations and evaluations of all situations. Seeking his mind assures success and victory. Oh, listen beloved, Do you go to him with your problems and difficulties, your fears and questions? He can solve any problem, any difficulty.

(3) He is the Mighty God. No figurative language here. A plain statement of his power. God Himself with all the prerogatives of God. Not an angel. Not some outstanding leader who lives a good life and has the Spirit of God leading him. This Son is the Mighty God.

(4) The everlasting Father. As Jesus Christ declared, the Father and I are one. Not less than the Father. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. He is the one who begets children by his saving Word. He chooses all who come to him to be joint heirs with himself. He alone has the Word that speaks life and overcomes the greatest enemy we all face – death. He is the everlasting Father.

(5) He is the Prince of Peace. Whatever peace there is he is the Lord of it. He has the power to bring peace. He speaks peace to his children. Without him there is no peace.

Do you know Him today as your Savior and Lord? Do you have his peace? Do you serve him today? Then you have the assurance that all of your problems, all of your fears, all of your disappointments are sure to be resolved in Him. He offers himself today. Receive him into your heart today.

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