

Christ in Isaiah

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Preacher: Dr. James White

[0 : 0 0] You can be seated, and if children would like to go out to children's ministry, they're welcome to do that, or they're welcome to stay as well. Thank you, guys.

And thank you to all that have worked so diligently over the past several weeks. Angela and I have been thinking about how we've just had so much going on, so much activity, and I want to praise you and celebrate you for the positivity that you've approached all of the various tasks we've had, including a 90-minute hymn sesh that none of us necessarily saw coming, but we're grateful for your cheerfulness and enduring the marathon that was Friday night.

Thank you also to those of you that gathered again this morning quickly to clean the church, and I'm just so grateful to see many hands at work in a variety of efforts.

Well, I do want to go through a couple of announcements with you. We've got a week or a month pivoting into hopefully less work and more fun. Coming up on December 20th, we have our church-wide Christmas party, and that'll be at 630.

That's a Wednesday. So we would love for you to come, even if you're visiting. We do the best white elephant gift part ever, like hands down. You know, I'm not overpromising.

[1 : 2 3] So if you'd like to come and join us on that, we'd love to have you on December 20th. And then just as a reminder, this Christmas Eve is a Sunday, and we'll have our regular worship service in the morning, and that's when the kids are singing.

So you know when to invite the grandparents. The kids are singing on Sunday morning. And then Sunday evening on Christmas Eve, we're going to have our candlelight service, which we do every Christmas Eve.

Well, I know that many of you are not here to listen to me tell you about announcements. You're here to hear Dr. James White bring the word this morning, and we are so grateful to have this man with us here this morning.

I think that as time goes on in my life, faithfulness becomes the biggest premium, the biggest bullet point on anybody's resume these days is how long you've been at it?

How long have you been faithful? How long has the Lord sustained you in your ministry and in your walk? Is there evidence in your life along obedience in the same direction? Those sorts of things become a primary asset.

[2 : 2 5] Lots of people have talent. Lots of people have intellect. Lots of people know the Bible. But to see someone walk with the Lord for many years, 40 years this year, is indeed to me one of the best things I could commend to you about Dr. White and his ministry.

If you're not familiar, James is the director of Alpha and Omega Ministries, a Christian apologetics organization based in Phoenix, Arizona. He's an elder at Apology of Church, along with Jeff Durbin, whom I know many of you are aware of.

And he's the author of many books, more than 20 books, and there's less than 20 of his books in our book stand back there. But you're welcome to take a look at the less than 20 books that we have.

Most importantly, he's been married since 1982, has two children and five living grandchildren. Dr. White, would you come bring the word to us this morning? Let's welcome Dr. White. Thank you.

Well, it is an honor to be with you. Some people are taller than I am. There you go. I was listening to the music and watching the talented musicians, and I was going, you know, one of the things that wasn't mentioned, you know, we talked about Apologia, Alpha and Omega.

[3 : 50] This is our 40th year. I've been married 41 years. I actually walked with the Lord, good grief, 56, 57 years, I think now.

And I'll be preaching next Sunday at Apologia Church on my birthday. That'll be enjoyable to do. December birthdays are always interesting, you know.

Thankfully, mine was just far enough away from Christmas that I still got something in December. But I was looking at the musicians, and I was going, you know, one thing I don't mention is I am the official theologian of a band as well.

And so I was looking up here, and I was going, well, let's see. The guitarist, where's my guitarist this morning? Okay. Ever heard of a guy named Seth Morrison?

Yeah, yeah, good. I've got right here. Yeah, yeah. And so where's our bassist? Where's our bassist? There's a bassist. Your name would be John.

[5 : 00] And guitarist, sorry, drummer, your name would be Jen. And, yeah, there you go. You know who I'm talking about, right? Oh, yeah. And so I guess our lead singer would end up being Corey.

But the hair is about the same length, but hers is purple. So, and no beard. So, yeah. So I'm obviously talking about Skillet. I am their official theologian.

That is not a joke. I can show you the text message for the whole band in here. And when they have questions and issues and stuff like that, I pull over to the side of the road a few times to do phone calls and resources and stuff like that.

So it's been amazing. I don't think my parents would at all approve of my association with Skillet. But that was a generational thing.

Then again, John's parents didn't approve of John's being Skillet. So it sort of works out that way. But anyway, turn with me to the book of Isaiah.

[6 : 05] I want to – I've sort of done this study many times over the years. And every time, I certainly enjoy seeing people see things they've not seen before in the text of Scripture and especially in the prophet Isaiah.

I remember in 2018, I've only gone to Israel one time. But I did have the opportunity of leading a Bible study right at the location of Qumran.

And in fact, there's some bleachers and seats you can sit under. And right to my back, so I was – if you looked right over my back, you could see Qumran Cave 1, which is where the Isaiah scroll was found many, many years ago.

And I think of that scroll and its testimony to the antiquity of the book of Isaiah. It's important for us to remember that what we are reading up until that discovery, the earliest Hebrew manuscripts that we possessed of the book of Isaiah came from about 900 years after Christ.

And then with the discovery of the Qumran, the Dead Sea Scrolls, that was pushed back 1,000 years. And so there is – there may be argumentation among scholars as to the dating of Isaiah.

[7 : 33] I mean, if you believe what the text itself says, it's pretty easy to figure out when it was written. But in scholarship today, you don't just accept those types of things, unfortunately.

And so there's argumentation about that. But one thing that there can be no argumentation about at all is that when we read Isaiah, we are reading material that was written hundreds of years before the birth of Christ.

And so when we see fulfillment, when we see prophecy being fulfilled in the life of Christ, there's no way around the reality that these words were written prior to the time of Christ.

Now, I know there are agnostics that will come up with arguments and reasons about everything to avoid acceptance of the authority of Scripture and things like that.

But the reality is we are looking at prophetic Scripture before us. And we're going to be looking especially at something we just sang about, and that is from Isaiah chapter 9.

[8 : 37] But I want to point something out to you that hopefully – maybe for some of you, you're just going to go, yeah, ho-hum, we already knew all about that.

Could you go on to something more interesting? But for a lot of folks, this is, I think, an important element of our study.

And that is if you'll turn back with me to Isaiah chapter 6, I want to show you how from Isaiah 6 to Isaiah 11, there is a running theme that finds fulfillment in the New Testament Scriptures.

And it's a beautiful theme, and I think once you see the role of Isaiah 9 in this series of texts, you'll see how it very much strengthens our understanding of what is going on there.

But in Isaiah chapter 6, hopefully everybody knows what Isaiah chapter 6 is. It's probably the most – I would argue the most famous chapter in the prophecy of Isaiah, and that is his commissioning as a prophet and his vision of Yahweh sitting upon his throne.

[9 : 54] And so, you know, in the year the king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord lofty and lifted up. And the train of his robe was filling the temple, is the normal translation of the Hebrew text at that point.

And you know that Isaiah sees the Lord, and he sees him being worshipped. Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory.

And then when Isaiah is sent, he is commissioned. You have that difficult judgment passage, and, you know, make their hearts hard and their ears deaf and so on and so forth.

It's an amazing text. But one thing I want to remind you of is that Isaiah chapter 6 is referenced in the Gospel of John, in John chapter 12, when the Greeks come seeking Jesus, and Jesus does not meet with them.

But it does prompt the discussion of the judgment upon Israel for Israel's rejection of Christ. And then you have a quotation from Isaiah 53, the suffering servant, the Messiah.

[11 : 09] And then the quotation from Isaiah chapter 6. And then John makes this interesting statement that often we just pass over in John 12, 41.

He says, these things Isaiah said because he saw his glory and he spoke about him. Now, people have argued, you know, is that talking about Isaiah 53?

Is that talking about Isaiah 6? It's talking about both. But in one of those two passages, Isaiah is telling us that he saw the very glory of Yahweh.

Where is that? Well, it's interesting. In the Hebrew text of Isaiah 6, 1, it says the train of his robe is filling the temple. But in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, which is called the Greek Septuagint, which is normally what John's quoting.

It's normally what's quoted in the New Testament because they're writing to Greek-speaking people, and that would be what they generally had available to them. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, there's what's called a textual variant.

[12 : 20] There's a difference. At the end of verse 1, the Greek Septuagint says, And so you specifically had, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and lifted up, and his glory was filling the temple.

So what would a person think who had the Greek Septuagint? And John says, These things Isaiah said because he saw his glory and he spoke about him. This is John's way of communicating to his audience that the one that was seen by Isaiah in his temple vision is the one that he is speaking about, Jesus, the Messiah.

And of course, he had started the Gospel of John with, In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God. So here is God incarnate, the Word made flesh, and there in John chapter 12, you have the assertion being made, Isaiah saw his glory.

So if you asked Isaiah, Isaiah, whose glory did you see? I saw Yahweh's glory. If you ask John, whose glory did Isaiah see? His answer is, he saw Jesus's glory.

And so here in Isaiah 6, you have one of many places where New Testament writers take passages from the Old Testament that are specifically about Jehovah and apply them to Jesus in the New Testament.

[13 : 49] Sometimes, things that are about Jehovah, such as in Hebrews chapter 1, that are only true of Jehovah. He is the unchanging, immutable God. That's Psalm 102, 25, 27, applied to the Son in Hebrews 1, 10 through 12.

So it's one thing to say, Well, Jesus is a king. Well, lots of people were kings. David was king, Solomon was king. Kingship isn't unique, but being the unchangeable God is unique.

And applying that to Jesus is very, very important. So here in Isaiah 6, one of those references to Jesus and his deity.

Let's think about the next chapter, Isaiah chapter 7. You don't even have to look down at your Bible to know what we're referring to here, right? Because we all know about the sign of Emmanuel.

Verse 14 of chapter 7, Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call his name Emmanuel.

[14 : 51] Now, we sang Emmanuel, and Emmanuel can be spelled different ways. But it is a Hebrew phrase, and sometimes different translations will render it as Emmanuel, capital I or capital E.

But then sometimes the same translation will then later on render it God with us, because that's what it means. Emmanuel with us, El, God, Emmanuel.

And so we know that this is a passage cited in the New Testament and reference made to it there. And you've probably heard of some of the controversies between Alma and Bethula and technicalities in regards to that.

We know that Luke, when he renders this, when the Greek translators, the Greek Septuagint rendered this, they put Parthenos, a very technical term for a virgin.

In the Greek Septuagint. But here you have a second reference to a sign that is given. Now, the sign had an immediate fulfillment in that day. I recognize that.

[16 : 00] That was talking about the kings that they feared and the king of Assyria and stuff like that. But there was a greater fulfillment that this virgin would be with child and bear a son, and she will call his name Emmanuel, God with us.

Now, keep that in mind, because then when we think about the next chapter, Isaiah chapter 8, you might go, I don't remember a specific Messianic text here.

But this is one of the most, in my opinion, one of the coolest of the Messianic texts is found in Isaiah chapter 8. So, if you look at beginning of verse 9 of chapter 8, Be broken, O peoples, and be shattered, and give ear all remote places of the earth.

Gird yourselves, yet be shattered. Gird yourselves, yet be shattered. Devise counsel, but it will be thwarted. Speak a word, but it will not stand. For what? Emmanuel. For God is with us.

It's translated normally, for God is with us, because it might be somewhat confusing to simply have for Emmanuel. But there it is. It's continuing this use for Emmanuel.

[17:13] And you might go, well, how is that fulfilled? Well, keep reading. For thus Yahweh spoke to me with a strong hand and disciplined me not to walk in the way of this people, saying, you are not to say it is a conspiracy in regard to all this people call conspiracy.

And you are not to fear what they fear, and you shall not tremble. It is Yahweh of hosts whom you should regard as holy, and he shall be your fear, and he shall be your cause of trembling.

Then he shall become a sanctuary, but to both the houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over, and a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Israel. Hmm, okay.

We are familiar about this rock of stumbling. We are familiar with that utilization in the New Testament. But most people miss the utilization of verses 12 and 13.

Verses 12 and 13 are quoted in the New Testament. And where are they quoted in the New Testament? Well, you probably have a reference to it, but it's in 1 Peter chapter 3.

[18:17] And it's in that text that, especially those of us who do apologetics, I'm an apologist. This is one of our key texts. It's sort of the classicus locus for us about giving an answer to anyone who asks you, I hope there's a prosapologian, to give a defense to those who ask.

But what's interesting is, I've all, for about 20 years now, I have taught that most apologists have misunderstood that text from Peter. Because if you look very closely at it, you discover that what Peter is doing, he's not talking to a group of people called apologists.

There is no office of apologists in the New Testament church. He's talking to all believers. And he's saying to all believers that they are to what? You are to set aside Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to give a defense.

But if you look at the preceding verse and look at it carefully, and I don't have time to go into this this morning, but in the Greek text, the editors have noted this.

When it says, you shall not fear what they fear, you shall not tremble, that's quoting the Greek Septuagint of Isaiah 8.12. And then when Peter says, but you shall sanctify Christ as Lord, well, that's the continuation of, in verse 13, it is Yahweh of hosts whom you should regard as holy.

[19:50] That's the term to sanctify, to treat as holy. So Peter, by quoting this text in his own epistle, is identifying Christ as Yahweh.

You are to set apart, sanctify Christ as kurios. The term kurios, the Greek term kurios, is what is used in the Greek Septuagint for the name Yahweh. Instead of using Yahweh, they use the term kurios.

And so here, and most people don't see it, unfortunately, a lot of translations don't continue using italics where they should continue to use italics to give indication that this is a citation.

Well, it depends on what your translation does. The NASB and LSB uses block quote, which to some people, because they've grown up on computers, thinks that you're yelling in the New Testament, but you're not.

You're quoting from the Old Testament. But it's one of those texts that a lot of people miss, and it really has a huge impact, because what Peter's really saying is, if you set Christ apart as Yahweh, if you recognize who He was, and you live your life in light of what it means to be under His Lordship, it's going to change how you respond to everything.

[21 : 07] And so when it says, be ready to give an answer to the people who would ask you a reason for the hope that's within you, it is living in the light of Christ's Lordship that means that you're going to respond to adversity and trial and difficulty in a way different than the world.

And that's why they are then going to ask you for that reason for the hope that's within you, is because you're walking under the Lordship of Christ. Most people don't see that. But there's Isaiah 6, Isaiah 7, Isaiah 8.

We're going to be in Isaiah 9, so we don't need to stop there for the moment. We will come back to it. What in the world, then, would you think would be in Isaiah 10?

Now, Isaiah 10, very, very important text, I would say to you, beginning at verses 5, 5 through 19, I think is one of the best Old Testament texts on what's called compatibility, the sovereignty of God and his proper judgment of man.

It's an incredible discussion about the king of Assyria and how God's going to use him as his instrument to punish Israel. And then he's going to punish the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria for having done what he did.

[22 : 25] And it's like, how can you do that? Well, because it's judgment based upon what fills the heart. Excellent discussion there. Can't go into it this morning, but I would recommend it to you. But after that discussion, beginning in verse 20, now it will be in that day that the remnant of Israel and those, the house of Jacob who have escaped will never again rely on the one who struck them, but they will truly rely on Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel.

A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. Now, we haven't gone into Isaiah 9 yet, but this is the exact same phrase, El Gabor, that is used in Isaiah 9 of the Messiah, El Gabor.

But here, notice, it says, a remnant will return, a remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God, to Yahweh. So there are people who have tried to argue, well, you know, even if Jesus is being referred to in Isaiah 9, he's just called mighty God.

Well, in the very next chapter, Yahweh's called mighty God. And so, if you're going to be consistent, then you need to recognize those things. But, as you may be aware, this section, verses 21 and 22, is cited where?

In Romans chapter 9, in regards to the remnant, according to the election of grace, in Paul's argument that takes place there. And who are they turning to?

[23 : 55] They're turning to Christ. Here they're turning to the mighty God, and that then becomes the one who has made himself incarnate in the mighty God. So we've gone through 10, and then you get to chapter 11, beginning, the very beginning of the chapter.

Then a shoot will spring forth from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The spirit of Yahweh will rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh.

He will delight in the fear of Yahweh, and he will not judge by what his eyes see, nor render a decision by what his ears hear, but with righteousness he will judge the poor. We all know how often this text ends up being cited in the New Testament of the ministry of Jesus.

It's another prophetic fulfillment. So I think what we've got going on here, first of all, it's one thing to just jump to Isaiah 9 and try to build a lot of theology on top of it, but when you see it is a part of an entire section where the New Testament writers are drawing from Isaiah 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and are making application to Christ in the New Testament, then that much, very much strengthens and gives us a proper foundation for making the comments that we do about Isaiah 9, 6, and 7.

But it also makes me wonder, honestly, if, and I've thought about this many times, you think in the Gospel of Luke when Jesus rises from the dead, what is the theme after Jesus' resurrection?

[25 : 30] He's walking with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and then once he appears to the disciples, what's the first thing he does? He upbraids them. He rebukes them for the slowness of heart to believe what?

Everything that the prophets had said concerning him, and then he starts with Moses, goes all the way through the prophets to do what? To demonstrate that they were speaking about him.

And he has to open their minds to understand. And there's this period of time that he is instructing them. Wouldn't you love to hear what was being said?

Well, I think you sort of can. If you listen to the sermons from the book of Acts, if you then follow the argumentation that is being presented in the epistles, when Paul is, you know, there in Romans 9, look what he's pulling from there, and see what Old Testament passages are being brought to the fore, that's where this came from.

That's where the apostles got all this, was from that ministry from the Lord Jesus Christ during that time period. And so, if you've ever thought about that and gone, you know, I have that painting actually in my fifth wheel.

[26 : 51] I've had that painting put onto a metal thing, and it's amazing. It's only taped to the wall, and it's still there. When you think about what that poor little RV goes through, and will go through tomorrow in seven and a half hours of driving, some states are better than others on maintaining interstates.

And one thing's for certain, in New Mexico, whoever they've got in charge of stuff does not know how to make a road, enter a bridge, and then come out the other side of the bridge without absolutely knocking your dentures out.

I mean, it's just absolutely amazing how that all works. And you all had a section on I-44 over there. I'm telling you, I want to know who to write a complaining letter to because that was impassable.

It just, it was some of the roughest road I've ever been forced to drive. I was at 15 miles per hour, and I was still getting thrown all over the place. That's on an interstate, so that wasn't good. But the point being, I have that painting, and you've seen it before, and it's the two disciples walking with Jesus on the road to Emmaus.

And even though they're just small little figures, it's a big painting and they're just small little figures, somehow the artist managed to communicate the amazement, just the stance of the disciples.

[28 : 14] They are just immersed in what Jesus is saying, and they're amazed at what he's revealing to them. And I love that, I love that story on the road to Emmaus, but I don't think that we're totally left out of knowing what was going on when we look at the scriptures in this way and especially see how the New Testament authors utilize the Old Testament text.

So I hope that's helpful to you, and I hope it also puts Isaiah 9, which is on half the Christmas cards you're going to get and everything else, into an appropriate context.

Isaiah 9, verses 6 and 7, again, is in a text, in a context, that does appear in, for example, citation in the New Testament.

For example, verse 2 is quoted at least three different places in the New Testament. And so it still does have a context of judgment that you see in verses 3 and 4 and 5.

But focusing finally, after all that introductory stuff, on verses 6 and 7, for a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us, and the government will rest on his shoulders.

[29 : 35] His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore.

The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will accomplish this. Most of us have the text memorized or at least close to memorized. We're very, very familiar with it.

And that is the danger, in some ways, in my experience, being raised in a Christian home, the son of a preacher. One of the dangers is you get used to certain texts. You've heard them so many times that it is difficult to hear something new or to come from another perspective and to see things you've not seen before.

And one such aspect of this text that back in seminary when I had the opportunity of learning the Hebrew language, that did strike me and has been made even more important to me since about 2006 when I really began having really a global ministry because I was traveling globally through 2019 and now I'm traveling on interstate highways in an RV.

And that's by my choice, by the way. I miss my overseas trips. In 2019, I flew 165,000 miles. I taught in Samara, Russia, Ukraine, Durban, South Africa, Johannesburg, Melbourne, Australia.

[31 : 12] Spent two months in London. I know how to get around London. I still have my Oyster card. I know the buses and the tube and everything else. But I'll miss all of that.

But the airlines decided that if you're going to fly with them, you had to cover your mouth with a useless rag. And when you cover my mouth due to a heart condition I have, I go into supraventricular tachycardia, which can be a very bad thing to have happen.

And they didn't care. There was no concern about people like me. It was like, hey, you've given us \$100,000 the past few years to fly. We don't care. Die. So I'm like, and then they fired my wife who had worked for airlines for 23 and a half years.

She wanted to work for 25, but they used that as an excuse of getting, American got rid of 40,000 of their longest term employees, which happened to be the ones they pay the most to, you know, used it as the excuse to get rid of all that.

So I'm sort of like, okay, later on, have fun, enjoy you guys. And so we're not traveling that way anymore. But anyway, in looking at this particular text and looking at the Hebrew, listening to what is found there in the original language, and then, as I said, when I began dealing with Islam, this became even more important to me.

[32 : 39] What am I referring to? For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us. Notice there's a difference. Now, I cannot prove beyond all shadow of a doubt that what you have here is anything other than what's called Hebrew parallelism.

And if you read the Psalter, if you read the prophets, you will see that in the Hebrew language, the way that they fill out and add color and depth to a statement is to repeat it using other terms.

So it is possible that this is just simply the same statement repeated twice in similar language. But, I think it is somewhat significant.

A child will be born to us. A child is a Yelid. Yelid. And to be born is Yelad. And so that's the natural term for regular childbirth.

Anyplace else, you go, oh, I was going to be really, really impressed if you put the Hebrew up. I was going to be going, now that's, that's pretty cool. But, now I've thrown a challenge out.

[33 : 55] It's probably going to go dark here a little while. So, we'll show him. Um, um, um, um, um, um, but it is the, the, the, the, the term for natural childbirth.

Um, but then when it says a son will be given to us, it's the term Nathan, Nathan means one given. Uh, so the prophet Nathan, uh, that's where that comes from.

So, Nathan means to be given. And it just strikes me the possibility that what we have here is a prophetic reference to the two natures of our Lord.

Because a child was born to us. Jesus was truly born as a human being. Unlike the second and third century Gnostics who came up with all sorts of gospels and stories that denied that Jesus was born as a human being.

Because that was against their beliefs. For example, there's something called the Protevangelium of James that comes up in the second century. And the Protevangelium of James, uh, Mary is, is ready to go into labor and then all of a sudden there is a bright light in the room and it's blinding and, and when it finally fades away, there's Jesus.

[35 : 25] Jesus in his cradle and Mary never had to give birth to him. It's, it's, the only way I can describe it that, that works for me is using a Star Trek analogy.

Jesus beamed out of Mary. There was no natural birth. And the Gnostics would like that because the idea of Jesus having a true physical body, no, that's, that's not what they believed.

Uh, in, in Gnostic idea that he has to be one of the eons, that means he's not really, he only seems to have a physical body, he doesn't really have a physical body. They told stories about how Jesus would walk with a disciple along the seashore, and the disciple would turn around, and there's only one set of footprints, and it's not because of that dumb poem.

Had nothing to do with it, it wasn't Jesus was carrying him, no, forget that one. it's because Jesus doesn't leave footprints in sand because he doesn't really have a physical body, he only seemed to have one.

It's called docetism, docetism, the Greek term, it seems. And so, the proteevangelium of James throws that out there, and why do I even bother to mention that? Why even give you a term like that?

[36 : 33] Because, I'll be perfectly honest with you, an honest church historian, and I am professor of church history at GBTS right now, an honest church historian will recognize that it was sources such as the proteevangelium of James that gave rise to the dogma in Roman Catholicism of the perpetual virginity of Mary.

If you're not familiar, Rome teaches that Mary was perpetually a virgin. That means she never had relations with Joseph, she did not have other children, I'm not sure what she's doing running around with all these young guys all around Galilee that aren't actually her kids, but anyway, she never had other children, and according to the dogma of the Roman Catholic Church, she remained a physical virgin even in giving birth to Jesus.

Now, if you know anything about female anatomy, that's not possible. That means even from their perspective, Jesus beamed out, and there were lots of folks such as Helvidius and Jovinian and the early church, Tertullian, that recognized if Jesus beamed out, he wasn't a real human being, and if you could beam out at his birth, maybe he wasn't there on the cross either, and maybe he didn't really physically rise from the dead.

It's rather important. It's extremely important, and so when we look at this and we look at that natural childbirth, and what's interesting, and here's the Islamic connection if I can make it briefly, the Islamic connection is that Hebrew and Arabic are very closely related.

When I studied Arabic, I never got overly good in Arabic because I was basically depending on my Hebrew, and you can do that. They're both Semitic languages, very similar grammar, even very similar vocabulary, different script obviously, and this term, Yulad, Yulad, that's used in Isaiah 9-6, a child reborn to us, appears in one of the most important surahs of the Quran, Surah 1-12, and Surah 1-12, Ayah 3, so it's the 112th chapter, third verse to use the English, it says, Lem Yulad wa Lem Yulad, Lem Yulad wa Lem Yulad, and it says, He begetteth not, nor is he begotten.

[39 : 05] And so the Quran, in its original language, is responding to Christianity and saying, because it's written 600 years after Christ, is responding to Christianity and saying, Allah does not beget, nor is he begotten.

So there is no father that begets, there is no son who is begotten. That is fundamental teaching of the Quran, that's why you can never have chrysalism.

You can't put the two of them together. There is a fundamental contradiction between the two, and it is seen right here. So let's say that that's what's going on here. We have the natural, the human aspect, a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us, and the government will rest on his shoulders.

And you'll notice then down below, there will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and hold it with justice and righteousness.

From then on and forevermore, the zeal of Yahweh of hosts will accomplish this. We don't have time this morning to tie this together with Psalm 2 and Psalm 110 and Isaiah 42, but there are all these Old Testament passages that speak to us about the Messiah's rulership and reign amongst the nations of the earth, and the government will rest on his shoulders.

[40 : 32] And how can it rest on just his shoulders? That was too much for David, it was too much for Solomon, but it's not going to be too much for him, and that's because of what his name is. And in Hebrew thought, a name reflects character, it reflects who someone is.

And so we have the descriptions that we all know so well. His name will be called Wonderful Counselor. Now some people would say those are two different terms, he is Wonderful and he is Counselor.

I would put the two of them together, and there is the Greek Septuagint's rendering of this is somewhat interesting, because it differs from the Hebrew in some senses, but it does have the idea of a person who brings tremendous message from God, which of course, how is Jesus described in the New Testament?

He is the Logos, he is the word of God that is made flesh. And I know you hear some people say that Logos, and that just makes the Greek professor in me just shudder.

It's the same vowel, it can't, it can be Logos, or it could be Logos, but the one thing it can't be is Logos or Logos. Can't do it that way.

[41 : 52] And so I have friends at a school up in Moscow, Idaho, that call it the Logos school, and every time I just go, do you all teach Greek up there? I mean, come on, what's going on? It doesn't make any sense.

But anyway, his name will be called Wonderful Counselor. He will be source of wisdom, and a lot of people have made the connection between the wisdom that is personified in Proverbs 8 and the fulfillment in Christ, though Christ goes far beyond just wisdom.

Then he is called El Gabor. El Gabor, mighty God. El Gabor, that's the same term used in Isaiah 10, 21, of Yahweh.

So whatever else you do with it, you know, people try to say, oh, angelic messenger, or just a mighty warrior, or something like that. Well, then why is it used of Yahweh in the next chapter?

He is called mighty God. And then I hope that when you all go to lunch this afternoon, you go home and are talking about, hopefully you still talk about the sermon once in a while, remember what's being said.

[42 : 59] This is one thing that you'll pick up, because a lot of people are a little concerned, especially when you talk with Jehovah's Witnesses or Unitarians or Mormons or Muslims or people who do not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity.

How can Jesus be the eternal father when he's not the father? It's the son who became incarnate, not the father. And so how can he be the eternal father? I think we need to have a good and solid response to that if we're going to be making reference to this text.

And so here's how I understand that. The Hebrew term is aviad. If you were to write that down in English, it would be A-V-I-A-D. Aviad. So aviad, father of eternity.

Father of eternity. Now what is father most often in the Old Testament? is a reference to God as creator, as maker, as origin and source.

These specific Trinitarian names really become established and understood primarily in the historical reality of the incarnation of the son, his death, burial, resurrection, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

[44 : 09] And so I've often said if you want to know where the Trinity is revealed in the scriptures, you just turn to the first chapter of Matthew and you hold your Bible up and there, right there, see between the pages?

There's what the Trinity is revealed. People go, what do you mean? Well, it was revealed in history. It took place in history. There was a particular time when Jesus was born in Bethlehem and there is a ministry that he undertook and there's a death, burial, and resurrection.

Then there's Pentecost and there's outpouring the Holy Spirit. And all of that happened before the first word of Matthew was written. And it happened after the last word of Malachi was written. So there it is. It is revealed historically, which means that what you have in the New Testament is written by Trinitarians.

That's why they can so easily make reference to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the way that they do. That's why they can say that may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, love of God the Father, and fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

How do you put God together with mere creatures in that way? Because they're not mere creatures. The New Testament is a Trinitarian document, and that's why we can understand it that way.

[45 : 26] So when we look at this phrase in Isaiah chapter 9, Aviad, Father of Eternity, then how would that describe Jesus in our understanding of him today?

Well, it's pretty simple. if you know Colossians chapter 1, describing Christ, for he is before all things, by him all things hold together. He is the maker of all things visible, invisible, principalities, powers, dominions, authorities, all things created by him and for him.

That's his description as the creator. He is the father of time. He is the father of creation in the sense of being the creator of these things. And that's how I would understand the phrase eternal father.

not trying to identify any of the divine persons in the Trinity, but his role because, notice, that's exactly how he's described in the last phrase, prince of peace.

Sar shalom. Sar shalom. We all know the term shalom, right? We've all heard that said. And the term shalom, as it's used in Hebrew, is not merely a cessation of hostilities.

[46 : 30] So let's say in Israel today, and obviously things are really rough in Israel today, but let's say in Israel today that there is the, is the pause still going on of trying to, it's not?

No. Okay. Well, there was a pause for a while as they were trying to get hostages out and stuff like that. Let's say nothing happened today. Let's say there was no shooting, there were no rockets, there was no Iron Dome, and now they're using the laser stuff and, you know, Star Wars is right around the corner and everything else is happening.

Let's say it was a perfectly quiet day on the front in Israel. No one would describe that as shalom, because shalom is a wellness of relationship.

Okay? So the peace that is described for us in Scripture as the result of the work of Christ is not a ceasefire, it is a wellness of relationship.

relationship. And Jesus is described as the prince of peace. Sar shalom, the one who brings true and lasting peace.

[47 : 39] So that's a picture of what he accomplishes, what he does. And that's why I think Eternal Father is likewise, what he does. He is creator.

He is the one who has made all of these things. Here's the description of Christ that we sing and we celebrate. But in closing, we need to recognize what this must mean.

Because I have said for a long, long time, you know, the world is not afraid of a manger scene.

because Jesus is a little baby in a manger. Now, by the way, just in passing, in all probability, when it says Jesus was born in a manger, we're not talking about a cow stall.

Houses back then, you brought your animals into, it was part of the house itself. And David would have had relatives in Bethlehem. So the idea that, you know, there's no room for them at the inn, yeah, at the large inn, but he would have had relatives there.

[48 : 49] And in that culture, you don't leave your relatives sitting out in the cold. So what in all probability was, this was the only place because of all the people in town, but in a relative's home where the angels, where the animals were fed and stuff, but it was part of the main room of the house itself.

They didn't have what we have with all sorts of walls and different rooms and things like that. Privacy is a fairly modern thing in human experience. And so that's probably where this is taking place, but, you know, the world sees that picture and that Jesus is not threatening to them.

Until you listen to what the angels say and what the prophecies are. And that's why Herod did what Herod did. That's why the children under two were killed by Herod.

Caesar, Rome, the state, fears this one because he is king of kings. He is lord of lords.

He is prince of peace. And that means all of them must bow to him. And that is a great danger to that system, that worldly system that tries to live in God's world world, but not submit to his ways.

[50 : 13] And so the world doesn't mind as long as we leave Jesus in the manger. But if we follow him, well, there's Aviad, there's Sar Shalom, okay?

Pele Yoetz, El Gabor, Aviad, Sar Shalom, okay? That's a transliteration. That's close. And I'll take it. Well, that's good.

So there you go. There's, see, Aviad. I told you that's how you'd transliterate it right there. So, oh, chat GPT, huh? There you go.

Okay, now I'm not sure what to think about this. Because, yeah, there we go. Now it's chat GPT instead of chate GPT. So I had resisted until last month ever using these things.

I had not done anything with chat GPT or anything like that at all. Because I just figure they're using me to train my future slaveholder, you know?

[51 : 29] And, but then the Brave browser made a certain bot, a certain AI bot part of it. You could just access it instantly like that.

And I've got to admit, you know, like one of the questions I threw at it is, how many gallons of fresh water does a 2023 Jayco Eagle HT 29.5 BHDS hold?

Because I was having problems. I pulled into, in Sedalia, there was no water or sewer in the, in the place I was staying. So I was wanting to know how many gallons might I have in my fresh tank?

And I thought, there's no way. And I just typed that in there and bam! Well, there's 29 gallons available in your fresh tank. And you're just like, okay, that's scary.

And then I've asked it theological questions, historical questions, and it's been pretty impressive so far, I have to admit. So there you go. There's, there's the Hebrew. You all, please write that down and there will be someone at the door.

[52 : 43] You do need to be able to recite this in Hebrew or you will not be allowed to leave today until you get it down. So just get started working on it now and we'll be ready to go. Anyway, so thank you very much back there.

I have no idea what I was talking about, but that's what happens when someone, yeah, Jesus in the barn. Yeah, I was wondering what I just said that was so funny. I'm sitting there going, Jesus in the manger and now they're all laughing at me and I'm like, what's going on here?

That's, that's a first. Congratulations of 40 years of ministry and that's the first time anyone's thrown that up on the screen while I was talking. So I'm not sure what Spurgeon would have done with digital projection or cell phones, either one.

I'm not sure how you would have handled that. But as I was saying in conclusion, the Jesus of the manger, as long as we do not make very clear that this was a sovereign act of God that had an end in view.

We, when I was a member of a very large Southern Baptist church, we would do very, very complicated and complex Christmas cantatas and presentations and stuff.

[53 : 52] And I remember one year we had a black woman singer. Boy, could she rock the house. Ruby was her name. And she sang a song called The Shadow of the Cross.

And we had a manger scene down front. And then we cut out a red cross and we projected it across the manger while she sang that song.

It gives me goosebumps to think about even right now. But that's the point. The point that we have to be sure we are thinking about and communicating to others is as we think about the manger today, we need to recognize that Jesus was born in the shadow of the cross.

He said it was necessary. It was necessary that he go to Jerusalem. It was necessary that he die. This was the case from the beginning. That's the prophetic testimony as well from Isaiah 53.

And he becomes Prince of Peace. How does he bring peace? Because he's accomplished peace in himself by the giving of himself. We need to proclaim the whole message of Christmas.

[55 : 03] The whole message of the Advent and what he came to do if we're truly going to be communicating the message of hope to the world around us.

So I hope as you look at Isaiah 9 and Isaiah 6-11, you wrote all those down, you'll with me rejoice in this prophetic testimony to the ministry of Christ and to the fullness of what God has done in the incarnation.

Let us rejoice and let us pray together. Father, we do thank you for this time when we can open your word and consider your truth. We ask that you would help us to remember these things, that you would help us to rejoice, and indeed, Lord, that we would proclaim a true gospel message, not only of a babe in a manger, but the fact that he was the one who was sent to give his life as an atonement for sin and then to be raised from the dead and seated at the right hand of the Father and enthroned on high, King of kings and Lord of lords.

May we proclaim the whole message. May you bless it. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Well, we celebrate the Lord's table together every Sunday, and we will do so now.

Let me read you a bit from Isaiah 53 and then pray for our partaking of the table. Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

[56 : 36] For he grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground. He had no form or majesty that we should look at him and no beauty that we should desire him.

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and as one from whom men hide their faces.

He was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace.

And with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one to his own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

[57 : 49] from 1 Corinthians chapter 11 I read For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread and when he had given thanks he broke it and said this is my body which is for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way also he took the cup after supper saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

So if you're here this morning and you've placed your faith in Jesus Christ as your righteousness letting go putting far in the past repenting of any effort to earn God's approval through your own efforts or redefining God's standards according to your own virtues but you've chosen to trust Jesus as your way of righteousness and his death as payment for your sins and his righteousness is your only hope and we'd ask that you would participate in the Lord's table with us today.

we have two stations set up this one here and normally we just have folks gather and form a line and come down here. We've added a second station back by the doors that you walked in just in case we had maybe a little bit more congestion at the table than normal.

[59 : 24] So what we'd invite you to do after I pray is for you to come and partake of the elements return to your seat and partake of those together with your family and we will conclude the service with a song after everybody's partaking.

Let me pray. Lord God we praise your holy name for making a way to bring us to peace. As Dr. White said not merely the absence of conflict.

The gospel doesn't give us a reset or somehow freedom to live our own lives separate from you. But the peace that you brought us is shalom a fullness a rightness with you adoption and Lord we exclaim with John oh what manner of love this is that we should be called children of God.

So today Lord as believers are gathered here from a variety of churches may you allow us to celebrate that which brings us together the body and blood of Jesus given for us completely apart from any claim or worth that we would present any merit.

Lord bless this time help us to take it soberly with faith but also joyfully you have made a way in Jesus name we pray amen.

[60 : 47] You can come.