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Isaiah's Immanuel

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ISAIAH'S IMMANUEL

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Many attempts have been made to identify and demonstrate the significance of the figure "Immanuel" in the writings of Isaiah. His name appears in 7:14; 8:8; 8:10. It is interesting that children play an important role in these chapters which deal with the virgin's son, the birth of Maher-shalal-hash-baz and the child who will rule on David's throne.

Early interpreters preferred a "messianic" fulfillment, but the bulk of critical com-menators in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries denied the "messianic" interpretation of the Immanuel passage. Soon, conservative writers began to take a dual-fulfillment viewpoint in an attempt to reconcile the arguments of both.[1] Today, the general opinion is still quite mixed. Only Edward J. Young has written a major commentary in support of the strictly "messianic" in the past half-century.[2]

The "Book of Immanuel" covers 7:1-12:6.[3] Two questions are prominent in the interpretation of this passage: 1) Who is Immanuel? 2) Did Isaiah consider him to be already present in the land? Undoubtedly the most detail on him is given in chapter seven. Therefore, it is obvious that a proper interpretation necessitates a careful study of the 7:14 section.

BACKGROUND

According to the information supplied by Isaiah in 7:1-9, Syria and the Northern Kingdom (Ephraim) had formed an alliance against Judah because of her refusal to join them in standing against powerful Assyria. Their obvious intention was to replace Ahaz with their own "puppeting" who would co-operate with their ambitions. Fearing the invasion of his neighbors, Ahaz was inclined ~o call on the a id of the Assyrian conqueror, Tiglath-pileser. According to 2 Kings 15:37, Syria and Ephraim had already attacked Judah in the days of Jotham: From 2 Kings 16:5, we learn that they came against Jerusalem without success, yet (according to 2 Chron. 28:5) Ahaz was captured and one hundred twenty thousand of Judah were slain. In relating the two accounts, it seems that the Kings passage tells the beginning and end of the siege; while Chronicles fills in the intervening events. 2 Kings 16, therefore, appears to be parallel to Isaiah.

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Rezin, King of Syria, appears to be the instigator, since the verb is singular and the conjunction before Pekah indicates that: "Rezin carne up, together with Pekah" against Jerusalem (the principal object of their advance).[4] Having captured Ahaz, Rezin seems to have given him over to Pekah and the spoil which had been taken from Judah was delivered to Samaria. The year 734 B. C. has generally been accepted as the date for the prophecy given in Isaiah seven.[5]

At Samaria, however, the prophet Oded and certain Ephraimitic chiefs advised the return of the captives and apparently Ahaz was also sent back to Jerusalem. This did not, however, seem to deter the mentions of Rezin and Pekah since they regrouped for further attack. What had panicked Ahaz was the announcement that the Syrian army had not returned home, was "resting" (*naḥah*) upon Ephraim, and evidently this "friendly halt" in Israelite territory only signified evil consequences to Ahaz.[6] To him, appeal to Assyria seemed to be the on1y isolation. It was at this time that Isaiah carne to dissuade Ahaz from taking a wrong course of action by relying upon Assyria rather than the Lord. To do so he sought to bring a word of comfort and victory to the fearful monarch who thought all was hopeless.

The fact that Isaiah found Ahaz by the upper pool is evidence that the king was expecting to be attacked and was attempting to ensure the water supply.[7] We see Isaiah corning, to meet the young king at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field which is west of the city. Accompanying his father is Shear-Yashub (a remnant shall return"). The significance of his presence has been overlooked by many. In chapter eight we are told that Isaiah's sons are for signs. Therefore, it would not be improper to find meaning in the boy's name, which is indicative of hope. It is a striking name m which the emphasis falls upon the "remnant" rather than the "returning," indicating God's actual dealings with His people.[8]

Isaiah tells Ahaz that the two firebrands from the north (Rezin of Syria and Pekah Ephraim) are only "smoldering sticks." Though they have devised evil against the throne of David by setting up the son of Tabeel,[9] they shall not succeed, for God has other purposes for that throne. In 2 Samuel 7:14-17, God had promised a permanent dynasty to the throne of David. It was to be reserved for the corning of the "Anointed One." The prophet then calls for faith and courage from Ahaz to receive what he is about to say.

The most helpful and clear picture of the introduction and warning is given in a chart by Raven.[10]

	SYRIA	EPHRAIM	JUDAH
AFFIR-MATI ON	The Head of Syria is Damascus and the Head of Damascus is Rezin.	The Head of Ephraim is Samaria and the Head of Samaria is the Son of Remaliah.	
PREDIC-TION		Within three score and five years shall Ephraim be broken that it be not a people.	If ye believe not surely ye shall not remain.

The poetic structure makes it clear that Ephraim is to fall and within sixty-five years lose all national distinction, and that Judah will also fall if she does not heed God's warning.[11] Here we have the picture. Judah has begun to weaken, but Ahaz refuses to submit to his northern invaders. But rather than turn to God, he would seek the support of the Assyrian Empire. It should be remembered that Ahaz was the one who introduced the pagan Assyrian altar to the temple worship in Jerusalem. He was a man who had been deliberately disobedient to God. Only such a man could reject the promise of help from God that was about to be extended to him.

"THEREFORE"

Having renounced Ahaz for trying his and God's patience by refusing the sign that had been offered him to assure of God's blessing, Isaiah connects his statements in verse 13 to verse 14 with the Hebrew particle *laken* ("therefore "). Its emphasis may be clarified by such phrases as: "since this is so," "for these reasons," "according to such conditions."[12] This connective word often was used by the prophets to introduce a divine command or declaration. Most commentators have not bothered to deal much with this word. Young and Budde, however, stress its relationship to verse 13. They feel it serves to introduce a "sign of a different character from that which had previously been offered."[13] Ahaz could have chosen any sign to attest God's message of hope as delivered by the prophet, but he refused and, "therefore," God will choose His own sign.

The context into which verse 14 fits is unified by the transitory word, "therefore." The worried king will not trust in God, so the prophet announces that God will give a sign to the nation of Judah that will command their trust in Him. Since the line of David is at stake and later the nation will be removed, the people needed some confidence to trust in God's maintaining the throne of David for "all generations." It is the sign of Immanuel that commands their confidence in God. Isaiah had taken a message of hope to the king, but in return he will give him a sign of eventual doom (to Judah) and of ultimate hope (to the throne of David).

"SIGN"

In Scripture the word *'ot* refers to something addressed to the senses to attest the existence of divine power. Often extraordinary events were given as a sign to assure faith or to demonstrate authority. Many opinions have been expressed as to the significance of the "sign" in this passage.[14] The term seems not necessarily to demand a miracle in every instance, but rather is a pledge of the truth of something.[15] The main purpose in God's giving the sign to Ahaz was to establish the vindication of Isaiah's divine commission.

It should be noted that the "sign" was given by the Lord *('adonai)*. The covenant name *yhwh* is not used here. Usually, Isaiah uses *'adonai* to emphasize the Lord's omnipotence.[16] It is He alone who can give such a sign as will follow.

It is also important to notice that the sign is directed to "you" (plural) and is not evi-dently directed to Ahaz who rejected the first offer.[17] In v. 13, Isaiah had said: Hear ye now, O house of David" and it is apparent that the plural "you" in v. 14, is to be connected to its antecedent "ye" in v. 13. Since the context tells us that the dynasty of David is what is at stake in the impending invasion, It would seem proper to interpret the plural "you" as the "house of David " which is the recipient of the sign.[18]

This being true, then, all objections to the relevancy of a messianic prediction to Ahaz's contemporary situation are nullified. The prophet did not direct the sign merely to Ahaz and therefore, a strictly messianic interpretation of the sign is not out of the question. This matter of the relevancy of the sign has been the main argument of those criticizing the messianic interpretation of the passage. Such an argument does not necessarily prove the non-messianic dual-fulfillment viewpoint at all.[19] The major question raised by the context is that of the preservation of the threatened throne of David, and the forthcoming sign must answer that question.

"BEHOLD"

The word *hineh* ("behold") is used to arrest the attention. Here, Isaiah uses it to introduce Immanuel. This form of announcement is similar to Genesis 16:11 where Hagar is addressed, and to Judges 13:5, 7 which is an annunciation to the wife of Manoah. In all three cases an unusually important event is signified. The world "behold" is merely an interjection, but when used with a participle *hineh* does introduce either a present or future action.[20] The main question is whether *harah* in this verse is a participle. Young points out that the regular feminine participle would be *horah* and concludes that *harah* is a verbal adjective.[21] Therefore not much weight should be given to the usage of hineh as expressing any tense.[22] The real importance of the use of this term seems to be its ~ing attention to the significance of what is to follow: the virgin and her son.

'almah

Undoubtedly few words have received more extensive treatment than the form Isaiah used in this passage to represent the girl who was to bear Immanuel. Since the nineteenth century a great verbal battle has raged over which translation of this word is the proper one: "virgin " or "maiden." The Hebrew definite article *h* is used in connection with *'almah*. The usual English translation of the article, is "the" Lindblom says: "the most natural explanation is that a definite woman is in view.[23] Hengstenberg felt that the relation of *hineh* to the article in *ha lalmah* is best explained by the present tense of the context, so that, the girl is present to the inward perception of the prophet.[24] It is unlikely that the prophet meant merely any woman when he specified "the" *'almah*.[25]

Young has followed Alexander in maintaining that Isaiah does not necessarily use the article to denote some well-known virgin, but rather in the generic sense, some particular yet unknown, person.[26] Whoever this girl is, Isaiah must be aware enough of her distinctive ness to specify "the" *'almah*; therefore, when one attempts to identify Immanuel, he should

remember that he too is some definite person and not merely a vague abstraction. 'Almah and Immanuel are both seen by Isaiah as being real individuals.

The meaning of '*almah* has been much debated, but all agree that it at least means a girl or young woman above the age of childhood who has arrived at sexual maturity. The more commonly used word for "virgin" in the Old Testament is *bethulah*. Many have contended that if Isaiah had meant to say "virgin" he would have used bethulah, and since he did not we should reject the interpretation of '*almah* as "virgin."[27] Gray states that "it asserts neither virginity nor the lack of it."[28]

However, Dewart long ago rightly advised that the use of a word, not its etymology, determines its meaning.[29] Though it is true that '*almah* is not the common word for virgin, its employment always denotes a virgin. The word *'almah* occurs in Scripture five times in the plural and four times in the singular. In Song of Solomon 1:3 and 6:8 the '*alamoth* are distinguished from "queens" and "concubines" as the virgins of the harem. In Psalm 68:26; 46:1 and I Chronicles 15:20 the use of '*alamoth* as "singers" and "players" does not specify that they are virgins, but neither does it imply that they are not. In Genesis 24:43 we are told that Rebekah is an '*almah* and that she has not had sexual relations with any man. She is also called a *bethulah*. It is apparent, then, that the word '*almah* may suitably describe a girl who is a virgin. In Exodus 2:8, Miriam is also described as an '*almah* who is living at home.

The only passage really in question is Proverbs 30:19, where some try to relate adulterous connotations to the '*almah* mentioned there. The writer of the proverb expresses four things that are "too wonderful" for him: the way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a '*almah*. In verse 20 he then contrasts the evil woman to the virtuous maiden. Unfortunately, Young interpreted this reference as to an evil girl, who is, nevertheless, not married.[30] But the passage here indicates nothing evil about the "way of a man with a maid." The writer parallels it to the natural events of a bird in flight, a snake on a rock and a ship at sea. These things amaze him as does the way of a man with a maid. The meaning here is obviously that of the natural attraction and affection of men for girls. The expression is not one of lust, but of the mystery of wonderful human affection. As a bird takes to the air and a snake to the rocks and a ship to the sea, so does a man to a '*almah*. The juxtaposition of the next verses by the compiler provides a contrast between the natural blessing of the virtuous maiden and the evil of the adulterous woman. Therefore, the picture here should be interpreted as that of a virgin maid.

Biblical usage of 'almah is clearly never that of a married woman, but always of an married one. In non-Biblical usage a parallel may be drawn from the marriage between Nikkahl and Yarih in the Ras Shamra tablets.[31] Nikkal is designated once by the exact etymological counterpart of *'almah* (*glmt*) and once by the cognate of *bethulah* (*btlt*). Therefore, it appears that the two terms are used synonymously in the Ras Shamra literature. Though *glmt* not the common word for "virgin" in Ugaritic either, it is never used of a married woman and seems well suited for application to a woman who is not yet married. Also, in the "Legend of Keret" the marriage of Keret to Hry shows that the term *glmt* is applied to Hry before the

wedding, but is never used to describe her afterwards. Thus, pre-Isaianic, and even pre-Mosaic usage show that the use of 'almah instead of bethulah in Isaiah 7:14 does not prove that the woman was not a virgin, but on the contrary it seems to prove that she was indeed one.[32]

Consider" also that the ordinary word for "virgin" (bethulah) does not itself guarantee by its usage that its referent is in fact always a virgin. In Deuteronomy 22:19 and Joel 1:8 bethulah refers to a married woman. Therefore, the term bethulah does not itself give absolute certainty that the maiden is always a virgin.33 If Isaiah wished to use a word that would exactly express his intention, the use of 'almah would better signify absolute virginity than would the more common term bethulah. It is quite obvious that if Isaiah intended to conveys a prediction of the virgin-birth he chose the right word, not an improper one. There is no "basis for asserting that he should have used another word in place of 'almah, for usage indicates that 'almah was the most correct term to use to signify an unmarried virgin.[34]

<center>TIME OF ACTION IN V. 14</center>

It is quite important to determine whether the verbal elements of this passage indicate a future or present time. The standard translation has been: "shall conceive and bear a son" (KJV). Dillmann tried to hold out for acceptance of the usage as future and, indeed, it was felt by most earlier interpreters of the "messianic" view of the passage that their position rested upon the future tense.[33] However, it has been demonstrated by many that the tense is present, and this has only further strengthened the "messianic" interpretation of the passage and not weakened it.

The contextual usage of harah makes it difficult to interpret this phrase in the future tense. The future would only be valid if the participle were used with hineh. However, the ordinary participial form would be horah. The form harah is neither a verb nor a participle, but a feminine adjective connected with an active participle ("bearing") and denotes that the scene is present to the prophet's view.[36] This usage is similar then to the annunciation of the Angel of the Lord to Hagar in the wilderness: "Behold! thou art pregnant and wilt bear a son." (Gen. 16:12).[37] Thus, Isaiah's formula for announcing this birth is not uncommon to Scripture.

It is quite obvious that the verbal time indicated here should be taken as a present tense, and so most since Lowth have agreed.[38] The concept of the time element involved is very important to the interpretation of the passage. If the word 'almah means "virgin" and if this 'almah is already pregnant and about to bear a son, then, the girl is still a virgin, even though she is a mother. Consider the contradiction if this passage is not referring to the only virgin birth in history--that of Jesus Christ. The virgin is pregnant! How can she still be a virgin and be pregnant at the same time? The implication is that this child is to be miraculously born without a father and despite the pregnancy, the mother is still considered to be a virgin. The word 'almah ("virgin") implies a present state of virginity just as the word harah implies a present state of pregnancy. If the verbal action were in the future tense there would be no guarantee that the virgin who would (in the future) bear a son, would still be a virgin, and not a wife.[39] But if a "virgin" "is with child" and is obviously both a virgin and a mother, we cannot escape the conclusion that this is a picture of the virgin birth.[40]

If the ʿalmah is to be seen as marrying, losing her virginity, then conceiving and bearing a son, we should have expected ʿishah if the marriage were contemplated before conception.[41] The adjective points to the state of the ʿalmah's pregnancy as if it had already begun, so that Gundry concludes: "we must understand that she conceives and bears in her status as ʿalmah."[42]

With the above considerations, the question of the identity of the "virgin" is settled, for only Mary the mother of Jesus can meet the qualifications to fulfill this prophecy. The virgin is not the prophet's wife,[43] the wife of Ahaz,[44] the wife of Hezekiah,[45] nor some unknown by-stander.[46] She is the only Virgin-Mother history or Scripture has ever recorded. Only direct "Messianic" interpretation of Isaiah 7:14 does justice to the content of the passage. What need is there for seeing a dual-fulfillment and who from Scripture can qualify for it? Let interpreters no longer wallow in the quagmire of immediacy, but see the true intention of this passage.

IMMANUEL

The main thrust of Isaiah's statement is undoubtedly the name of the child: ʿimanuʾel ("God with us"). According to the consistent usage in Isaiah, such names indicate what the person is or what he represents, rather than merely being his proper name.[47] Therefore, the name, in its proper designation, was not arbitrary but characteristic of the individual.[48] If we identify "Immanuel" messianically, as the foregoing evidence indicates we should, then, the name may be taken to mean that God will personally be among men in the person of Immanuel.

The child Immanuel has been interpreted many ways: as Ahaz's son, Hezekiah;[49] as a mythical hero;[50] the prophet's son (either Mahar-shalal-hash-baz or a third son);[51] the mere abstraction of God's blessing upon Israel.[52] Stenning even tried to read-out ʿimanuʾel from the text by offering the variant yisraʾel.[53] However, the Dead Sea Scroll of Isaiah (1QIsa) clearly supports the reading: "Immanuel" and wipes out Stenning's so-called evidence.

The power and person of Immanuel as he is seen in the Prince of the four names in chapter nine demand someone far beyond human imperfection. Because of the close association of Immanuel with the land in chapter eight and the description of his bringing peace to the land we see one of divine ability.

The purpose of Immanuel as a sign seems to be as a guarantee of the perpetuity of the endangered throne of David. In some way his birth will indicate deliverance and hope for the Davidic line. Ahaz was given the promise that Syria and Ephraim would not overcome his land. Ahaz was told by Isaiah that before the child could grow to discern right from wrong (2-3 years?) the land of Judah would be rid of these two northern invaders. If the prophecy points to the supernatural birth of the Messiah from within David's family line, then the question of hope for the Davidic throne is answered and the perpetuity of the family line is guaranteed.[54]

The problem in the strictly "messianic" interpretation is how this child's early years an be related to Christ who was born centuries later. Young replies that the birth and growth,

though in prediction, are a picture of the brief time until destruction will come upon Judah's enemies.[55] How is this possible? Remember that Isaiah saw the vision of the ʿalmah as though she already existed, pregnant and bearing the child and spoke in the present tense though the event was yet in the future.[56] Isaiah speaks so confidently of the certainty of his prediction that he speaks of the child as if he already exists and carries over the "present condition" of the vision to the contemporary situation. The infancy of the child serves to symbolize the fact that Judah's desolation for the present will be short-lived, but ultimately will be far greater because of Ahaz's sin.[57] Therefore, the prophecy does have significance and relevance, to he is to avoid the attempted alliance with Assyria or a worse result will come upon him.

The feature of Old Testament prophecy is that it often compresses chronology in viewpoint of events by connecting events in picture that are actually separated in history. The conditions more immediately relating to Isaiah's day prevailed in the land until Immanuel's day. Isaiah sees with eyes of faith the future birth of Immanuel as a present reality. Though the name "God with us" does not alone prove the deity of Immanuel the wider context of chapters nine and eleven make this fact clear. Culver warns: "Too often expositors have sought to explain one portion of the prophecy without the other."[58] However, when one considers the full context the picture of Immanuel is much more definite and complete and provides a better indication of how the New Testament interprets the single passage in Isaiah 7:14.

The Child in chapter nine is the coming ruler of Judah. This "gift-child" is the same as the Immanuel child as the context shows. The child s four titles provide a thorough picture of him. The Massoretic accentuation supports the concept of these titles being four, each consisting of two members:[59] PELE yoetz EL gibbor abi AD sar SHALOM.

These titles are actual descriptions of the ruler rather than titulary epithets.[60] He is a wonderful counsellor, the mighty God, the father of eternity and the Prince of Peace. The term ʿel gibor is most significant since it indicates deity. Gibor means "hero" and in Canaanite literature is used interchangeably between men and gods. But in this passage its use is specified by ʿel so that it means either "a. God of a hero" (appositional genitive)or "a heroic God" (adjective). In either case the description indicates divinity. This child, Immanuel, then to be the "Mighty God" Himself and, therefore, literally "God with us."

Consider also the reference to the "shoot from the stump" in chapter eleven. Immanuel has been foretold coming as the virgin's son to rule over Israel and insure the throne of David. But now, in this passage we are given the proper sequence of events. His actual coming is to be delayed. The tree of David shall be cut down as the result of Ahaz's unbelief, but a. shoot will spring forth from the rootstock of Jesse and flourish again. The perpetuity of the Davidic throne that so threatened the worried Ahaz was in God's sovereign control. He alone could preserve it. But so hopeless was the condition of Israel's rulers that He would begin anew. The prophet sees the mighty Davidic dynasty as only a felled tree with only its geza' ("rootstock," "stump") remaining. But from that stump a twig will sprout and from the roots a branch will flourish

again. That flourishing will accomplish the true purpose of God for David's throne: it will bring righteousness and faithfulness and the destruction of the wicked (v. 4, 5).[61] Judah need not fear, for the time will come when God's King will sit on the throne. All indications of the full context of the "Book of Immanuel" (ch. 7 -12) are that we are pointed to the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Finally, a word is in order about Matthew's quotation of Isaiah 7:14 as relating to the birth of Jesus to the virgin Mary. On the basis of the foregoing study it hardly seems necessary even to consider those critics who have denied any validity to Matthew's interpretation.[62] One cannot deny the force of Matthew's statement in 1:23 in which he states that Isaiah predicted the virgin birth of Christ.

In concluding his study of Matthew's use of the Old Testament, Gundry says of this passage that in view of the meaning of 'almah, the connection of the prediction to the line of David, and the frequency of individual messianic prophecies throughout Isaiah, the "messianic" interpretation is much preferred for it reveals the Messiah about to be born (7:14); Messiah born (9:5); Messiah reigning (11:1-5).[63]

Luke 24:24-27 and 44-47 tell us that Christ Himself taught His disciples the Old Testament prophecies concerning Himself. Where did Matthew get the idea that Isaiah 7:14 applied to Christ? Is it not likely that he got it from Christ Himself? Therefore, let the matter of the interpretation of Isaiah's Immanuel be settled. He is not merely a sign of his own times, but He is the Sign of the Ages--Jesus Christ, "God with us."

DOCUMENTATION

1. For a discussion of the development of these trends see E. Hindson, "Development of Interpretation of Isaiah 7:14," *Grace Journal*, 10 (Spring, 1969), pp. 19-25.
2. The most recent commentary on Isaiah declines to take a definite position. Cf. H. Leupold, *Exposition of Isaiah*, Vol. I. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968), pp.153-60. Young's influence, however , may already be seen in the comments of two writers on the prophets who follow his lead in interpreting Isaiah 7:14. These, however, are not commentaries as such. Cf. S. Schultz, *The Prophets Speak* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), pp. 107, 108; H. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), pp. 203-209.
3. Some have argued that it stops at 9:7, but the wider section has been effectively substantiated by J. Lindblom, *A Study on the Immanuel Section in Isaiah* (Lund: Gleerup, 1958), pp. 3-5.
4. For a discussion of the minor variations in typical Semitic writing and comparative narration see G. D. Young, *Qudtestamentische Studien*, Deel VIII, 1950, pp. 291-99.
5. Cf. E.Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1951), pp. 120 ff., for a discussion of the chronology of the period. Also, Glazebrook,

Studies in the Book of Isaiah (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), p. 42, accepts the 735-34 date, saying that the historical context allows us to fix the date with "unusual accuracy."

6. Cf. R.S.V., 'in league with." The phrase cannot mean "lighting upon" (as an attack) in this situation. Cf. E. Kraeling, "The Immanuel Prophecy," *Journal of Biblical Literature,* 50 (1931), p. 277 n.

7. This helpful note is pointed out by W. Wordworth, *En-Roeh: the Prophecies of Isaiah the Seer.* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1939), p. 73.

8. Cf. E. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, Vol. I, N. I. C. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), p. 271 n. He takes Jennings to task for "spiritualizing away" these descriptions. p. 271 n. "good is God." For an equivalent usage see I Kings 15:18 (tab-rimmon, "good is Rimmon ").

10. J. Raven, *Emmanuel* (London: Longmans, Reader and Dyer, 1872), p. 10. This rare volume is very helpful in discussing the Isaiah seven passage.

11. Many commentators have emphasized the significance of this challenge by providing their own translation: G. S. Smith, "If ye have not faith, ye cannot have staith Luther, "Glaubet ihr nicht, so bleibet ihr nicht"; J. McFadyen, "No Faith, no fixity." Quoted in A. R. Gordon, *The Faith of Isaiah* (London: James Clark & Co, 1919), p. 62 n. Such attempts have prompted this writer to try his own hand: "If you will not confide, then you will not abide!"

12. Cf. Brown, Driver and Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: University Press, 1907), p. 486.

13. Cf. E. Young, Studies in Isaiah (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), p. 156.

114. Fausset says it implies a "miraculous token." Cf. Jamiesson, Fausset and Brown, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n. d.), p. 437. Kraeling op. cit., believes that "something unusual" is to be looked for here. J. A. Alexander *The Earlier Prophecies of Isaiah* (New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1846), pp. 111-112, ever has shown that the term "sign" does not necessarily demand a miracle in every; instance, but that the context of this passage indicates one.

15. However, it may be a miracle (cf. Isa. 38:8; Judg. 6:37; Ex. 4:8), or a prediction (cf. Ex. 3:12; 2 Kings 19:29) or even a symbolic name or action (cf. Isa. 38:18; Ezek. 4:8).

16. Cf. Young, *Studies*, p.157. He speculates that the substitution of this word for Yahweh was deliberate on the prophet's part.

17. Calvin seems to have been the first to point this out. Cf. J. Calvin, *Commentarii in Isaiam prophetam* (Geneva: 1570).

18. Young, *Studies*, p. 158, regards the address as being to all the nation, but Alexander; op. cit., provides a much more convincing argument for the house of David which was implicated by Ahaz's unbelief.

19. For further consideration of the significance of the "sign" see below in this article.

20. F. Delitzsch, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament: Isaiah, Vol. I (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), p. 216, regards it as always introducing a future occurrence in Isaiah. Yet in Isa. 6:7 this does not seem to be the case.

21. Cf. Young, *Studies*, p. 161. He goes on to state that a verbal adjective should be taken as express present conditions.

22. Young discusses this term at length in Studies (1954), pp.161-63,but reduces the significance of it in his more recent, commentary, *The Book of Isaiah* (1965), pp. 284-86.

23. Qp. cit., p. 19.

24. E. Hengstenberg , *Christology of the Old Testament and a Commentary on Messianic Predictions*, Vol. II (Grand Rapids: Kregal, 1956), p. 44.

25. Cf. however, J. Mauchline, *Isaiah 1-39* (New York: Macmillan, 1962), p. 99, who says, without supporting proof, that Isaiah merely refers to "some woman." Others have attempted to avoid the definiteness of this phrase by proposing that Isaiah referred to the virgin of a popular and contemporary myth. Cf. G. Gray, *The Book of Isaiah*, Vol. I, I. C. C. (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1912), p. 125, who quotes Gressmann as saying that there was a popular prophecy of a young child who would deliver Judah and that Isaiah refers to this child. However, the proof for this is totally lacking and even advocates of this view cannot agree upon which myth Isaiah followed.

26. Cf. Young, Studies, p. 164, and Alexander, op. cit., p. 219.

27. For an example, see the Interpreter's Bible, Vol. V (New York: Abingdon, 1956), p. 218. It is interesting to note that the exegetical section denies a miraculous virgin birth, while the expositional section affirms it on the same page! Perhaps Kilpatrick forgot to heed Scott's warning that an "inaccurate translation" of the LXX by the New Testament must not "prejudice" our interpretation. It might be well for the editors to get together on their hermeneutics!

28. Gray, op. cit., pp. 126, 27.

29. Cf. E. Dewart, Jesus the Messiah in Prophecy and Fulfillment (Cincinrta:ti: Cranston & Stowe, 1891), p. 123. Therefore, T. Cheyne, The Prophecies of Isaiah, Vol. I (New York: Whittaker, 1888), even saw in his day that we ought not force a parallel between *'almah* and *elem* ("to hide") which is not an actual derivation. He notes that the Arabic cognate *habat* ("girl ") is not related to *habaa* ("to hide in a tent").

30. Young, *Studies*, pp.176-77.

31. For a detailed survey of extra -Biblical occurrences of "almah and its equivalents cf. C. Gordon, Ugaritic Handbook, III, p. 220.

32. This conclusion is also reached by C. Gordon, "Almah in Isaiah 7:14," *Journal of Bible and Religion*, XXI (1953), p. 106. He writes: "The commonly held view that 'virgin' is Christian, whereas 'young woman' is Jewish is not quite true. The fact is that the Septuagint, which is the Jewish translation made in pre-Christian Alexandria, takes '*almah* to mean 'virgin' here. Accordingly, the New Testament follows Jewish interpretation in Isaiah 7:14.

33. Cf. G. Knight, *A Christian Theology of the Old Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1964), p. 309.

34. One cannot help but wonder what the deniers of the virgin-birth prediction would say: if Isaiah had used the term *bethulah*. Would their theological presuppositions cause them to turn to Joel 1:8 and say that *bethulah* cannot mean virgin and thus Isaiah is not predicting a virgin birth?

35. Cf. A. Dillmann, *Das Prophet Jesaia* (Leipig: 1890), p. 70.

36. For a detailed discussion of the use of *harah* see Alexander, op.cit., p. 121 and Young, *Studies*, pp. 161, 62. Young concludes that "the adjective should be taken as expressing present condition, unless there are compelling reasons to the contrary. Such reasons are not present in Isaiah 7:14. . . ."

37. J. Skinner, The Book of the Prophet Isaiah I-XXIX (Cambridge: University Press, 1900): p. 56, similarly translates this passage: is with child (present) and shall bear (future).

38. Cf. R. Lowth, *Isaiah* (Boston: Buckingham, 1815), p. 70. He translated this passage "Behold, th virgin conceiveth, and beareth a son. ..." H.Cowles, *Isaiah: with notes* (New York. Appleton & Co., 1869), p. 52, also agreed that: the Hebrew words rendered 'shall conceive' and 'shall bear' are in the present tense, meaning is with child and is bringing forth. . . the first is strictly a verbal adjective denoting a state of pregnancy,"

39. This is how G. Archer, "Isaiah," *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1962), pp. 617,18, tries to accept the meaning of '*almah* as "virgin" but sees a dual-fulfillment of the passage in that Isaiah has lost his first wife and now will take a virgin to wife who will (in the future, as his wife) bear him a son. Of course, there no evidence that Isaiah lost his first wife and later remarried.

40. This conclusion is mildly adopted by Young, *Studies*, p. 163, but should be more strongly pressed as the key argument in this discussion as it has by E. Hindson, *Isaiah. Immanuel: Sign of His Times or the Sign of the Ages?* Master's Thesis presented to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois ;967, pp. 48-51 and by R. .H. Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel (Leiden: E. J. Brill 1967), pp. 226, 21. This latter work is an excellent a nd overwhelmingly scholarly monograph that should be given thorough consideration by the reader.

41. Cf. Gundry, p. 226, and O. Procksch, *Jesaia I* (Leipzig, 1930), p. 143.

42. Ibid.

43. So Archer, on. cit., p. 618.

44. So Gray, Op. cit., p. 126.

45. Knight, Op. cit., pp. 309, 10, gets credit for this unusual view. He sees Hezekiah's son as Immanuel. But Manasseh was anything but "God with us."

46. Cf. S. Mowinckel, *He That Cometh* (New York: Abingdon, 1954), p. 111. He is so strong on this point that he makes a direct Christological interpretation "out of the question. Why? He adds, "because the sign is intended to make Ahaz believe absolutely in Yahweh surrender himself to. Him in complete trust and obedience, and in virtue of his choice decide to adopt the right attitude in the contemporary situation. ... " If this were the case, why did not the sign produce this result? Where is any evidence of Ahaz's "faith, "surrender," "complete trust," or "obedience"? The evidence negates the argument.", Ahaz rejected the sign and sought Assyria's help regardless!

47. Cf. C. Gordon, *Introduction to Old Testament Times* (Ventor, New Jersey: Ventor Press 1953), p. 210.

48. Cf. the excellent discussion on the Hebrew use of proper names by C. von Orelli, *The Prophecies of Isaiah* (Edinburgh: T.. & T. Clark, 1895), p. 53.

49. SO J. Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), pp. 56, 57. To take this position, though, he must disregard the chronological data showing Hezekiah to be already born when the prophecy was delivered.

50. So R. Kittel, *Die hellenistische Mysterienrellgion und das Alte Testament* (Stuttgart: 1924), pp. 1-80. He tries to connect the child eating "curds and honey" in v. 15 with: Egyptian mythology that eventually found its way into the Canaanite and Greek "mystery religions. "

51. Ct. Archer, Op. cit., p. 618.

52. Ct. Gray, Op. cit., p. 124.

53. Ct. Stenning , *The Targum of Isaiah* (London: Oxford: University Press, 1949), p. 25.

54. Cf. G. Jelf, *Messiah Cometh* (London: Innes & Co., 1899), p. 120. He states: "the prophecy evidently points to a supernatural birth within David's family. ..."

55. Young, *Studies*, pp. 196-98. He writes: "the language of the prophecy is filled with mystery and even obscurity. ..but is language of profound and beautiful symbolism. "

56. Cf. K. Yates, *Essentials of Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954), pp. 134, 35, for a discussion of the "Perfect of Prophecy" used by the prophet to portray confidence in the certainty of the fulfillment of his prediction.

57. This interpretation recognizes the reference to "butter and honey" (v. 15) as indicating impoverishment. Gray, op. cit., p. 124, sees it as referring to prosperity; Machline, op. cit., p. 99, tries to relate it to Egyptian or Babylonian mythology. However, W. E. Vine, *Isaiah: Prophecies, Promises, Warning* (London: Oliphants, 1953), pp. 35, 36, has pointed to the context noting that instead of a prosperous farm there is only "a young cow and two sheep," and instead of a flourishing vineyard, only "briers and thorns." Alexander, *op. cit*., p. 114, also agrees that the picture here is one of desolation.

58. R. Culver, "Were the Old Testament Prophecies Really Prophetic?" in *Can I Trust My.Bible?* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1963), p. 104. See his excellent discussion of the Immanuel prophecy.

59. The *telisha* in *pl'* is the smallest of all disjunctive accents; the *geresh* in *smu* is stronger than both of them; but the *zakeph* in *gibor* is the greatest divider in the sentence. For the best detailed discussion of the use of accents in this passage see Delitzsch, *Op. cit*., p. 250.

60. Thus the Hebrew concept of kingship is not based on the Egyptian influence of titulary titles of the pharaohs as is maintained by A. Alt, *Kleine Schriften*, ll, pp. 219f. For a scholarly and convincing criticism see K. Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament*(Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1966), pp. 106-11. He shows that the Hebrew titles are actually more parallel in usage to the Ugaritic epithets of Niqmepa, who is described as: "Lord of justice," "master of the (royal) house," "protector," and "builder."

61. Notice the close parallel between ch. 9 and ch. 11. The Lord will give this ruler wisdom, perception, counsel, might, knowledge, etc. He has the same qualities as the "gift-child."

62. For example cf. *Interpreter's Bible*, V, p. 218, where the writer states: "that he (Matthew) used these (0. T. quotes) without particular regard to their meaning in their original context is clear. . . the New Testament's use of Isa. 7:14 is based on an inaccurate translation of the Hebrew text."

63. Gundry, *Op. cit*., p.227. His work is an excellent defense of the validity of Matthew's use of O. T. quotations in a Messianic context.

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