

Series: The Blessing of the Lord

The Immanuel Event: Shattering the Silence

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Have you ever heard someone refer to Jesus Christ as the God-Man? Did you ever wonder how that could be? Did you ever realize that your salvation could hinge on the incarnation of Jesus Christ?

For 400 years the true prophets of the Living God were silent. God was silent, and no word came from the LORD. And then, suddenly, there was a stirring, and holy elect angels were involved.

Gabriel was on assignment from God. This one who stands in the presence of God was sent to speak to Zacharias to show him glad tidings. Zacharias would have a son who would go before the Messiah in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. That son would be known as John the Baptist.

Six months into Elizabeth's pregnancy, Gabriel was sent from God to Nazareth of Galilee to a young girl, a virgin, engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel said, "**Hail, you that are highly favored, the Lord is with you: blessed are you among women.**" What kind of greeting was that?

The angel then continued, "**Fear not, Mary: for you have found favor with God. And, behold, you shall conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.**" (Luke 1:26-33)

Mary couldn't figure out how this was to take place, seeing she was a virgin, so the angel said, "**The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, your cousin Elizabeth, she has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.**" (Luke 1:35-37)

Amazingly, Mary accepted all that Gabriel came to announce to her. She said, "**Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to your word.**" And the angel departed. (Luke 1.38)

We can only imagine Mary trying to explain herself to Joseph, because before they came together, the Bible says, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Joseph was of the mind to put Mary away privately. He didn't want to make a public example of her. He was a just man. The law required stoning to death.

God intervened as Joseph thought about it all. Then the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, **“Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto yourself Mary your wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and you shall call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”** (Matthew 1:18-21)

How is it that we call this “the Immanuel event?” The scriptures in Matthew tell us. This was all done that what was spoken of the Lord by the prophet (Isaiah) might be fulfilled.

**Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son,
And they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is,
God with us. (Matthew 1:23)**

Before anything else, we must come to understand that by means of a virginal conception the pre-existent Word (logos) became flesh. (**John 1:14**) This was the means by which God became man. God became man with us without uniting the Son of God to a second (human) person, by means of natural generation. In this miraculous way, God the Son, without ceasing to be what he was and is, the eternal Son and Word of God, took into union with his divine nature in the one divine Person of the Son our human nature. Jesus was a divine person with a divine nature who took to himself a human nature (not a human person) in a human body so as to come to be “with us” as “Immanuel.”

Now some focus on Jesus as if he were simply the son of Mary, as if Mary’s virginal conception of Jesus was the cause or source of his deity. But neither sinful nor holy human parents could produce an offspring who is God, nor could a human mother who happened to be a virgin do this either. Likewise, Mary did not produce some sort of hybrid or demigod, an offspring of union between a god (in this case the Holy Spirit) and a human woman, so as to be neither fully god nor fully man by kind of a half-god/half-man entity. No, Jesus Christ is God and as God the Son was fully and truly God prior to and apart from the virginal conception.

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
And the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.
All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was
made.**

**In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not...
And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory,
The glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-
5, 17)**

John clearly writes of Jesus Christ as the one to whom he refers, telling us explicitly that no one has seen God at any time but that the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father has declared Him. (**John 1.18**) By being conceived of a human mother, Jesus shared our humanity (**Hebrews 2.14**) and was like us in every way (**Hebrews 2.17**), yet without sin. He had no iniquity.

Natural generation would have entailed depravity (**John 3:6**), but we don’t find the whole explanation of Jesus’ sinlessness in the absence of natural begetting. David traced his sinful deed back to his sinful nature and said, “With sin did my mother conceive me.” (**Psalms 51:5**) So it seems that preservation from the stain of sin required

another supernatural factor and miracle, namely, the preservation from conception to birth from the contamination and corruption of sin.

So, when the time was fully come, i.e., in God's appointed time, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under law. (**Galatians 4:4**) The Messiah and Mediator of the covenant of grace appeared on earth when the Jewish diaspora had spread throughout the Roman Empire, when the OT had been translated into Greek, when the Pax Romana extended over most of the known world, when great roads and the Greek language linked peoples and places, and when Greek philosophical thought had shrunk into skepticism, offering little hope in human wisdom (**1 Corinthians 1:19-21**). The whole world stood in need of a Savior.

The Living God broke the silence with a baby's cry, God in flesh appearing. The cry of this baby, Jesus, shattered the silence. The cry of this baby, Jesus, announced to all creation, God with Us.

Thus the Son of God, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did take upon Him man's nature, with all its essential properties and common infirmities, yet without sin. The God-Man, Jesus the Christ, started out sinless and continued on without sin, though tempted in every way just like you and me. His death wouldn't have meant anything if He hadn't been found to be a Lamb without spot or blemish. Had He been an ordinary man, His blood would not have been acceptable as an offering to atone for sin. Had He been other than who He is, He could not have endured the wrath of God poured out nor defeated Satan, nor provided for us a way of forgiveness, a way of redemption, a way for divine justice to be satisfied, a way of reconciling sinners to the Father.

Immanuel, God with us, fully God, fully Man, was sent by the Father out of His grace, mercy, goodness, and love. The bond with Jesus Christ is a covenant bond, an unbreakable bond. From His first breath, from His first cry, Jesus announced His appearing. He was here. He is God with Us. Behold the glory. Lay hold of the grace. Go, tell it on the mountains and everywhere.

Many today want to think of Jesus as the son of Mary. They want to think of Mary as the mother of God, as if Mary produced a divine being in contrast to Eve, the mother of all living. Yet this is to pervert and diminish the truth and nullify the atonement. Jesus is God, the God-Man. He existed eternally, as He said, "Before Abraham was, I AM." And God the Son took on a human nature so we could behold the glory and lay hold of the grace offered to us in the gospel announced to us by angels:

**Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy,
Which shall be to all people.
For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
Which is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:10, 11**