

The first part of verse 6 sounds like a Hebrew parallelism. Parallelism is a very common feature of Hebrew poetry. It occurs repeatedly in Psalms and Proverbs, and elsewhere in the Old Testament. A statement is made and the same idea is repeated in slightly different language. Sometimes the repetition is almost identical with the first statement; at other times a new phase of the thought is added. In this case the idea of the coming of a wonderful child is expressed in parallel phrases, but there are two striking differences. The first part says that a child is coming; the second calls Him a son. The first says the child is to be born; the parallel says that the Son is to be given. In I Peter 1:10-12 the apostle tells us that the prophets did not understand all that they said, when the Spirit of God so led them that they could predict "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." They pondered over the words that God had given them, in order to try to learn more about their full import. I can well imagine that Isaiah wondered whether these two statements were absolutely identical or whether they were two related aspects of the same event. When the fulfillment of the prophecy occurred, the latter proved to be the case. This marvelous event has two aspects, the birth of the human child, and the gift of the divine Son.

This is the great mystery of the incarnation. Jesus Christ is one person and yet He has two natures. He is fully man. He was born a child. He is just as human as any one of us. He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15). Being one of us, He is able to represent us in the great atonement. God could not have forgiven us of our sins unless one of

know with certainty that Jesus Christ is going to return and put an end to the