How Isaac's Unusual Birth Foreshadowed the Birth of Our Lord

The <u>first set of parallels</u> is taken from <u>Lesson #183 of the Basic Exegesis</u> series. The second will be eventually placed in Gen. 21.

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Every recorded incident in the Bible is significant. When God is involved in something taking place, it becomes even more significant.

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The Birth of Isaac	The Birth of Jesus			
This birth involved life coming from death. Abraham was sexually dead and his wife was unable to bear children; yet Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son, Isaac. Gen. 18:12	Jesus Christ was born spiritually alive although His mother had a sin nature. So, from death, came life. Mary was dead spiritually and yet she bore the Lord. Rom. 5:12, 14, 17			
This birth, coming from death, was based upon regeneration (circumcision). Gen. 17:10–17	The purpose of our Lord's birth was so that He would die for our sins, and, because of that, we could be regenerated (born again) at salvation. Rom. 5:10, 17 6:10 2Cor. 4:12			

The association of Jesus with death is emphasized because the baby Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes (long strips of cloth used to wrap dead bodies). Luke 2:7

The conception and birth are both miraculous. Abraham was sexually dead. Gen. 18:11–14 Rom. 4:17–19

His birth was miraculous. Joseph, Jesus' legal father, was not a party to the conception of Jesus Christ. He was spiritually dead and would have passed along his sin nature to Jesus. Therefore, Joseph could not participate in the conception of Jesus Christ. Isa. 7:14 Matt. 1:18–19 Luke 1:34, 37

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The birth was unexpected. Even when told she would give birth to a son, Sarah laughed. Gen. 18:12	Being born to a virgin was unexpected. This caught Joseph off-guard and he was prepared to put Mary away privately Matt. 1:19			
Isaac's birth was prophesied long before he was born, when Abram is 75 years old. Gen. 12:4, 7	Our Lord's birth was prophesied centuries earlier. Isa. 7:14			
His birth was foretold prior to conception. Gen. 12:7 13:16 15:4	Jesus' birth was foretold prior to conception. Luke 1:28–31			
Abraham's progeny would be royalty. Gen. 17:6	Jesus Christ was royalty by blood and would be royalty in actuality. Luke 1:32–33			
Through Isaac will come all of the Jews, who are the people of God. Gen. 17:7–9, 19 21:12 Rom. 9:7 Heb 11:18	Through Jesus will be the salvation of the Jews, who are the people of God. Of course, through Him is the salvation of the gentiles as well. Rom. 1:16			
God asks, in v. 14, "Is there anything too difficult for the Lord?"	The birth of our Lord will set into motion that which will save us. God has found a way, despite the barrier between God and man, to save us, without violating or compromising His character. "Is there anything too difficult for the Lord?" When the angel spoke to Mary of her becoming pregnant apart from a man, the angel states: "For with God nothing shall be impossible." (Luke 1:37).			
When it comes to the conception and birth of Isaac, God will be there, but He will be working behind the scenes. Gen. 18:10	God worked behind the scenes in the birth of Jesus, His Son. The Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary. Luke 1:35			

You may recall the terms *type* and *antitype*. The birth of Isaac is the *type*; and the birth of Jesus is the *antitype*. The circumstances of Isaac's birth seem a little weird and unusual; however, when placed side-by-side its future counterpart, it all fits together.

Type and antitype is one of the great proofs of the Bible. Throughout the Old Testament, there are dozens of types, in all different forms and situations, all of which find their completion or their reflection in the antitype (which is Jesus Christ, or something related to Jesus Christ, e.g., His birth, His crucifixion, His Millennial reign). The way that the Old and New Testaments fit together is an amazing thing. The Old Testament was clearly in existence and established as authoritative before the birth of Jesus (we have manuscripts of most of the Old Testament which predates Jesus' birth by 100–300 years). So these dozens of types had all been committed both to "paper" and to memory as well for hundreds of years before our Lord arrived on the scene. In fact, the Old Testament was composed progressively, over a period of over 1000 years (I believe that the length of time of its composition was probably 4000–4500 years), with every section of this set of progressive writings to contain both types and prophecies of the Lord to come.

There is another fact about our Lord that is nearly completely ignored. His ministry was the most limited ministry in the history of religious figures. Jesus confined Himself to teaching for a very short period of time (3–4 years of a public ministry) over a very small portion of land (he taught only northern and southern Israel), speaking to a very limited audience and He wrote absolutely nothing down. The only other religious figures with this sort of a limited ministry are those you have never heard of, because no one thought to record anything that they did or said. We know about Mohammed, Confucius, and Buddha because their ministries took place over decades, they spoke and taught huge numbers of people in very large geographical areas. Yet, Jesus still fulfilled all that was written in the Old Testament.

Written testimony of our Lord would appear to be ripe for legend and mythology, except for the fact that, what was written about Him was written nearly immediately, principally by eyewitnesses, many copies of which we have which go back to within decades of them being written (this is unknown for ancient documents outside of the Bible). Usually legend and myths are composed hundreds of years later by those have no direct, 2nd hand or even 3rd hand information about the person they are mythologizing. But we have a plethora of documents, all written within decades of His crucifixion, copied and recopied and distributed throughout the Roman world, so that, if any of it were false, there would have been thousands of eyewitnesses who would have disputed the contents of these documents in writing.

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The Birth of Isaac Foreshadows the Birth of Our Lord

Like many actual historical events of the Old Testament, the birth of Isaac foreshadows the birth of our Lord.

The Parallels Between the Birth of Isaac and the Birth of Jesus Birth of Isaac **Birth of Jesus** His birth was impossible. Abraham and His birth was impossible. He was born of Sarah were long past the age of being able a virgin. Isa. 7:14 Matt. 1:22-23 to have children. Gen. 17:17 18:10-14 Luke 1:26-31 21:7 Our Lord's birth was unique. No one was His birth was unique. No one in the Bible ever born as He was. Luke 1:36-37 was born the same way as Isaac. 21:1-2 John 3:16 (only-begotten = uniquely born). His birth was foretold. God, on many His birth was foretold on many occasions occasions, spoke to Abraham, telling him in the past. Gen. 3:15 Isa. 7:14 9:6-7 that Isaac would be born to him. Gen. 12:7 Luke 1:26-31, 35 13:15-16 15:1-5 17:1-7, 16 18:10 There was a long interval between the There was a long interval between the prophecy of birth and birth. From the first prophecy of birth and our Lord's birth. time that Abraham heard about his Isaiah's prophecies are the best known, offspring, it was 25 years before this was and he wrote and spoke about 700 years before the birth of our Lord. brought to pass. When the announcement of the impending When the announcement of the impending birth was made, Sarah was incredulous, birth was made. Mary was incredulous. and thought it impossible. Luke 1:34 and thought it impossible. Gen. 18:9–12 Isaac was named before his birth. Jesus was named before His birth. Gen. 17:19 Matt. 1:21 His birth was a result of a visit from God. His birth was a result of a visit from God. Gen. 21:1-2 Matt. 1:18 Luke 1:35 The birth of Isaac occurred at God's The birth of Jesus occurred at God's appointed time. Gen. 21:2 appointed time. Gal. 4:4

The greatest parallel of all comes in the next chapter, where God asks Abraham to sacrifice his uniquely-born son.

Some of these examples came from http://www.ovrlnd.com/Teaching/Typology.html

The doctrine will be placed in Gen. 21 at some point in the future.

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