

# HARVEST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

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**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

## CHRISTMAS – THE MIRACLE SEASON

*“Therefore, the Lord Himself shall give you a sign: Behold a **virgin** shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” (IS 7:14)*

Oh, the miracle of Christmas! The miracle of the Incarnation! The miracle of God becoming flesh and living among us (JN 1:14)! Oh, the miracle of a living relationship with the living Christ! Can we ever get over those wondrous truths and realities! Of course, the answer is NO – NEVER!

## THE MIRACLE – AND MYSTERY – OF THE CLOSED ‘MEM’

One of the most oft-quoted Bible verses during the Christmas season is Isaiah 7:14. It speaks of a miracle: “...behold, a **virgin** shall bear a son...” Christians understand that the birth of the Savior was to be supernatural in nature. In this text, the spelling of the word **virgin** contains something extraordinary.

In Hebrew grammar, the alphabetical letter ‘MEM’ is equivalent to our ‘M.’ The word **virgin** is transliterated into English as *almah*. Notice, the ‘M’ or ‘MEM’ is near the center of the word. Since the Jewish alphabet contains no vowels, the ‘MEM’ is exactly in the center.

Hebrew includes two forms of the ‘MEM.’ One is referred to as an ‘open mem,’ the other as a ‘closed mem.’ The two MEMS are written slightly different. Grammatically speaking, the ‘closed MEM’ is used at the beginning or end in spelling a word – never in the middle. Only the ‘open MEM’ is to be used in the middle of a word such as *almah*.

In the entire Old Testament, this spelling holds true. Closed MEM at the beginning or end of a word, open MEM in the middle. However, there is one – and only one – exception. It is found in IS 7:14. In the center of this word, *almah*, we find a closed MEM.

This mysterious exception drew the attention of the ancient rabbis and scholars. Why this one exception in all the words of the Scriptures? What was the theological explanation of this grammatical nuance?

Their conclusion: the Messiah would be born from a closed womb. He would be born of a virgin. His would not be a normal, natural birth, but rather a miraculous, Virgin Birth. Understand, this was first advanced by the *Jewish* doctors of the law, not Christian.

## CHRISTMAS – THE SEASON OF MIRACLES

Yes, Christmas is a miracle season. But it’s also a season of miracles. May we never forget that there’s a God in heaven Who is not subject to our natural laws. He can do the impossible; and He can do that FOR YOU!