

The Virgin Born Son

Listen to the Word of God as I read to you the story of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what a true Christmas is all about.

“When the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.” (Gal.4:4-5).

Reading from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 1, verse 18, and following:

“This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. But Joseph her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace. He had in mind to divorce her quietly.

“But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name, “Jesus,” because he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him “Immanuel,” which means “God with us.”

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son, and he gave him the name “Jesus” (Matt. 1:18;2:5, NIV).

*Not of flesh and blood the Son,
Offspring of the Holy One,
Born of Mary, we are blest,
God in flesh is manifest.*

*Wondrous birth, O wondrous child
Of the virgin undefiled,
Thought by all the world disowned,
Still to be in heaven enthroned. (Ambrose of Milan)*

Have you ever had questions about the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ? By “virgin birth” we mean that the conception of Jesus was without parallel – a supernatural, special creation of God. The Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary and planted the divine life of the Son of God in her womb. Jesus was born without the aid of a human father. There was no transmission of male semen in the conception of Jesus. As the angel Gabriel told Mary in answer to her question- “How will this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?”³⁵ And the angel answered *and* said to her,

*“The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.
Therefore also the one to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. Luke 1:34-35*

Some people have always had trouble with this fact, however, usually this is because they are sinners who have trouble believing in any miracles. They do not accept the great, all-powerful God of the Bible.

Let me introduce you to the first doubter of the virgin conception of Jesus. He doubted the story perhaps more anybody ever has. In addition, he had the most to lose. His name is Joseph, and he was the legal husband of Mary although their marriage had not yet been consummated. Mary and Joseph were pledged to each other and in Hebrew culture that was as binding as marriage.

The Bible says that before Joseph knew Mary as his wife, she “found to be with child” by the Holy Spirit. Now Joseph knew he was not responsible for this distressing state of affairs. He thought Mary had been unfaithful to him. Joseph did not believe Mary was a virgin.

Knowing that Mary’s child was not his own natural son, and being mild-mannered and a righteous man, Joseph decided not to hold Mary up to public condemnation, but decided to put her away privately. It was a painful decision for Joseph because he deeply loved Mary. But what else could he do? He was sure Mary had fallen into serious sin and had committed adultery, and so Joseph, after

much deliberation, determined to sever their relationship and terminate their engagement.

But something happened to Joseph to convince him that Mary was pure and that he should not be afraid to take her as his wife. The Bible says an angel came and explained to Joseph's satisfaction the miracle of Christ's unique conception. Matthew 1:24 tells us Joseph took Mary as his wife and her child became known as his child. He was Joseph's son – his adopted son.

And so, on the night of Jesus' birth, that first Christmas night, as we now call it. Joseph was there as Mary's understanding husband as she gave natural birth to her unique child. Jesus was born of a woman without man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He was born in exactly the same way we were born. The same pains accompanied His birth. The same gestation period preceded his birth as with your birth and mine. But it was a virgin conception entirely without parallel. It was a miracle of God and was necessary to ensure the sinlessness of the one born as the Savior.

This is how the birth of Jesus came about. And when he was born Joseph named him "Jesus" as the angel had directed – "because he would save his people from their sin."

A lot of people do not believe in the Virgin Birth. But what are the alternatives? How else do you explain the presence of a sinless being in a sinful world? Without the Virgin Conception we are left with little explanation of the uniqueness of Jesus' character.

The Virgin Birth is part of the Bible message. If you deny it, you might as well deny all Bible truth. If it's not true, then we have no Savior. The rest of the stories of His life would be unreliable and if Mary were not a virgin, then she was not a chosen vessel of the Lord, but an unfaithful wife because Joseph said the child was not his. The Virgin conception of Jesus is at the core of the Gospel message. It is revealed so that you and I can know who Jesus was and is and flee to Him for salvation.

What does Jesus' miraculous conception mean for us?

First of all, it highlights His sinlessness and purity. Jesus escaped the curse of original sin that falls upon every child born into the world. Sin is transmitted to human offspring because of the essential solidarity of the human race. When Adam sinned, he did so as the representative head of our race. But Jesus is not just another member of Adam's race. He was God's own new creation. As such, He escaped the curse of our sinful nature. He was pure and holy and sinless. Thus, he could die as the spotless Lamb of God for our sins. Those who deny the Virgin Birth lose the spotless Lamb of God.

Second, the fact that Jesus was virgin-born establishes the reality of His divinity. Jesus was no ordinary man. He possessed an ordinary human nature which He received from Mary. His body was like ours. He had a real human nature. But that's not all. Jesus of Nazareth was, in fact, a person who consisted of a union between the Divine Son of God, the Eternal Word, and a human nature. He was the God-Man: God with us, Immanuel, Son of God and Son of Man. The baby born on Christmas is the most miraculous and wondrous baby ever to appear in this world – the only begotten Son of God made Man. "O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!"

Clearly, according to the Scriptures, the Virgin Birth was the instrument God used to bring about the incarnation. This is so essential to salvation. God was manifest in the flesh and born of a virgin in order to redeem sinful men through the sacrifice he offered some 33 years later on the cross at Calvary.

Thirdly, the Virgin Birth of the Savior relates that salvation is totally of the Lord. When the situation was ready for God's mighty work of salvation, He Himself took the initiative and acted without the help, without the instrumentality of fallen man. God stepped into the sphere of human failure and He Himself took man's place. How did he do so? God, the mighty Lord, took the initiative and the appointed Savior was conceived by God the Holy Spirit. It was a sovereign act of God. God started again and began a new humanity headed up by Jesus Christ.

The mystery of the Virgin Conception proclaims to us that in the divine provision of salvation, man as man is completely set aside. Salvation is of God and is all of grace. Only God's sovereign grace, by which He entered our sinful world and become one of us, could ever work a work so pure and holy that we could be saved.

*Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
Hail, Incarnate Deity,
Pleased as Man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel!*

Jesus entered the portals of time and space history on a place that can be located on a map, Bethlehem. He came into this world through the miraculous conception of a virgin, Mary. This tells us of His sinlessness, His Deity, and His sovereign grace.

Do you believe in the Virgin Birth? If you reject the Virgin Birth of Christ you lose a sinless Savior and worse, you lose your God. For the God of Christianity has revealed Himself in this Jesus, and in losing Him, you lose your only hope of salvation. Is this the time for you to look upon the virgin-born son of Mary and to confess with Thomas, *“My Lord and my God!”*

Prayer:

Virgin-born Son of God, Jesus, grant to us a deep faith in yourself. May we come to understand the greatness of your salvation. As you came into humanity as a babe and grew to be a man, so grow in our hearts that by your grace we may give to others the message of the great Christmas gift of your salvation. Amen.

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December 13, 2021