

NOW THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST WAS ON THIS WISE

TEXT: MATTHEW 1:18-25

INTRODUCTION:

1. I want to preach this evening about the wondrous birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Many people ask how can Jesus be both God and man. The doctrines of the virgin birth of Christ and His incarnation help us to understand.
3. The Gospel of Matthew introduces the doctrine of the virgin birth in chapter 1, verse 18 -- "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise..."
4. In modern English, we would say: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows," or "Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way."
5. Many so-called "Christians" deny the supernatural virgin birth of Christ. In my opinion, a man who denies the virgin birth or His deity is not a Christian. By that I mean he is not genuinely saved. He has never been born again.
6. *Newsweek* magazine just released a new Christmas edition, attacking the birth of Christ. The article was written by Bart D. Ehrman, Professor of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Featured prominently on the cover are these words: "The Myths of Jesus." There are no myths in the Bible!
7. Ehrman is well-known for his belief that the New Testament is a collection of myths, and *Newsweek* is well-known for publishing articles attacking the Christian faith.
8. Defending the supernatural virgin birth of Christ, Ian Paisley has written: "This assault on the doctrine of the Virgin Birth is, however, but one phase of a great battle to evacuate the supernatural from Christianity and to reduce it to the plane of natural religion. These naturalists in religion are out to destroy supernatural Christianity and to reduce it to the plane of natural religion. These naturalists in religion are out to destroy supernatural Christianity. They go through the Bible and tell us there is no supernatural revelation there; they go through the Birth of Christ and tell us there is no supernatural incarnation there; they go through the Person of Christ and tell us there is no supernatural deity there; they go through the sinless Life of Christ and tell us there is no supernatural purity there; they go through the Works of Christ and tell us there are no supernatural miracles there; they go through the Words of Christ and tell us there is no supernatural wisdom there; they go through the Death of Christ and

tell us there is no supernatural atonement there; they go through the Blood of Christ and tell us there is no supernatural cleansing there; and they go through the Tomb of Christ and tell us there is no supernatural resurrection there. Having jettisoned the supernatural from the Gospel Ship they have reduced her to an old hulk of man's manufacturing, a mere plaything for the storms of unbelief and the reefs of infidelity."

9. Tonight let us look at the wondrous birth of our Lord.

I. A VIRGIN BIRTH

1. Our Lord's birth was a miraculous birth because His was a virgin birth. Luke 1:26 and 27 says, "the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary."
2. This is plain enough, and yet there are scoffers who deny the virgin birth of Christ.
3. If you read carefully the genealogy in Matthew 1, you see over and over the word "begat" (1:2, 3, 4, etc.). But when you come to verse 16 you will notice that Joseph did not begat Jesus (1:16).
4. Galatians 4:4 says, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman..."
5. Our Lord had to be born of a woman because He had to be human in order to be our Saviour. But He also had to be born of a virgin in order to be our sinless Saviour.
6. He also had to be born of a virgin to fulfill Isaiah's prophecy -- "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (cf. Matthew 1:22, 23).
7. Matthew 1:24 and 25 says Joseph, "took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."
8. Only a sinless Saviour, born to a virgin, could die as our perfect substitute.

II. A PROPHESED BIRTH

1. I have already quoted Isaiah 7:14. Our Lord's virgin birth is just the first of many Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled on that first Christmas day 2,000 years ago (cf. Micah 5:2).

2. Isaiah 9:6 says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." For the Son to be "given," means He already existed before His birth in Bethlehem.
3. Later on, many other Old Testament prophecies would be fulfilled in the life of Christ, His betrayal, His crucifixion, His being buried in a rich man's tomb, His resurrection from the grave, etc.
4. Actually the first Messianic prophecy is found way back in Genesis 3:15, where we read that the LORD God said unto the serpent, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed."
5. "Her seed" is an unusual term, because the word "seed" always refers to the seed of a man, not a woman. Biologically, a woman does not produce seed.
6. In the Bible, the word "seed" always refers to the seed of a man. For example, we read in Genesis 12, "And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land."
7. "Thy seed" refers to Abraham and his son Isaac, and his son Jacob, etc. The Bible speaks of the seed of David, and the seed of Israel, etc.
8. This is the normal usage of the word. The promised seed of the woman, referred to in Genesis 3:15 was miraculously implanted in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit.
9. You may recall that when Mary was told by the angel Gabriel that she was going to give birth to the Messiah, she replied, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luke 1:34).
10. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).
11. In this way, the Lord Jesus would not inherit the sinful nature which would disqualify Him from becoming our Savior.
12. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." All except, the sinless, spotless, virgin-born Son of God.
13. Genesis 3:15 is a biological impossibility, because it is supernatural and miraculous.
14. It is interesting to note that our Lord never referred to His birth. Not even once. He always referred to Himself as being sent.
15. He said in Mark 9:37, "Whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me."

16. Jesus said in Luke 4:43, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent."
17. We see this many, many times in the Gospel of John. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38).

III. A HOLY BIRTH

1. Everything about the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ was unusual and unique – He was born to a virgin in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies that were written over 700 years before His birth.
2. Here is another unusual factor about Christ's birth that sets Him apart from all men – He was born without sin. His was a holy birth.
3. Christ was born without sin because He is God. At the incarnation, God became a man. John 1:14 says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (cf. Matt. 1:23).
4. Every other baby born into this world is born with a sinful nature. David wrote, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5).
5. And David also wrote, "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Psalm 58:3).
6. The apostle Paul wrote, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).
7. Every baby that has ever been born is born with a sinful nature. But 2,000 years ago, when those shepherds looked into the face of the baby Jesus they were looking at a child who would never sin. They were looking at "God manifest in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16).
8. "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).
9. This was a baby who was not born with a sinful nature.
10. First John 3:5 says, "And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin."
11. Hebrews 4:15 says Christ "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."
12. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."
13. First Peter 2:22 says, "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."

CONCLUSION:

1. The birth of our Lord was like no other in that He was born to die. He came into this world for one specific purpose and that was to die on the cross for our sins.
2. The Bible says, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (I Timothy 1:15).
3. The big emphasis of the New Testament is not the birth of Christ, nor is it the life of Christ. The emphasis in the New Testament is the death of Christ.
4. John the Baptist introduced Jesus by saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).
5. This was in line with all of the Old Testament types and prophecies.
6. The apostle Paul said, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:2).
7. But this aspect of Christmas is completely ignored by the world. It does not fit in with their worldly festivities. They think a jolly fat Santa Claus is better company than a despised and crucified Saviour.
8. If a person brings this up at a Christmas party, people get upset. They say, "Let's just have a good old time and forget all this talk about Jesus dying for sinners, and the blood of Christ, and judgment for sin, and salvation, and atonement, etc."
9. But sinners are not saved by a baby in a manger. They can only be saved by a Saviour who died on the cross.
10. Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King:
Peace on earth, and mercy mild: GOD AND SINNERS
RECONCILED."
11. And how can wicked, rebellious sinners be reconciled to a holy God? Only by the blood of the cross. "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself" (Colossians 1:20a).