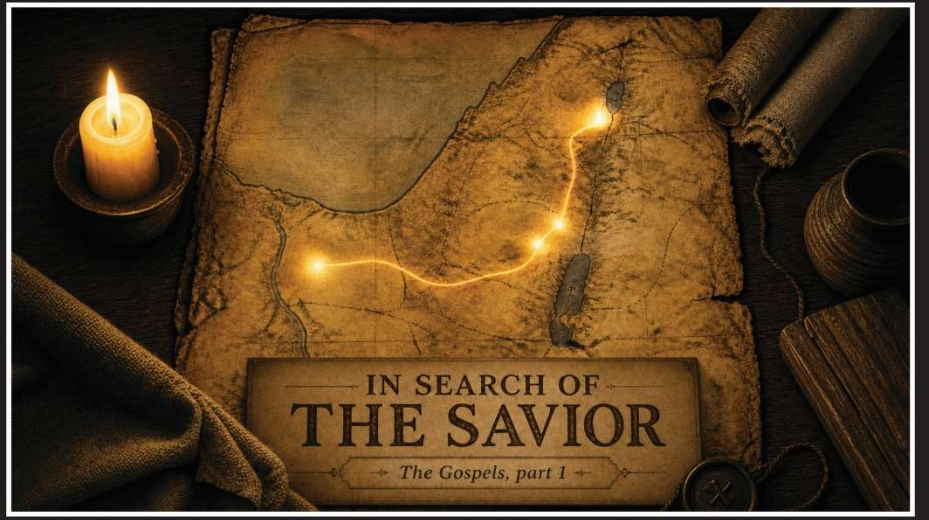




Midweek Study

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The Virgin Birth: Why It Matters

Luke 1:26-38

"For nothing will be impossible with God." Luke 1:37

Television talk-show host Larry King was once asked who he would most like to have interviewed from across all of human history. He named Jesus Christ. When he was asked, "What would you have asked Him?" Larry King replied, "I would like to ask Him if He was indeed virgin-born? Because the answer to that question would define history."

THE DEFINITION of The Virgin Birth: Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, without a human father. Part of the Apostles' Creed says, ***"Conceived by the Holy Spirit, Born of the Virgin Mary."***

1. HOW SATAN HAS **DECEIVED**

The birth of Jesus to a virgin is a miracle that many people find hard to believe.

FAULTY THEORIES ABOUT THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

- 1) **ILLEGITIMATE BIRTH** – Jews developed this (in their Talmud). Mary was pregnant by a military officer – Pantera. John 8:19, 39.
- 2) **GNOSTIC VIEW** – Claim Jesus was born with a human father (Joseph); the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus at the baptism and left him at the time of the Church Age.
- 3) **ANTI-SUPERNATURAL VIEW** – That simply can't happen. Poet and Critic, Matthew Arnold, said, "I do not believe in a virgin birth, because a virgin birth implies miracle and there is no such thing."
- 4) **PARTHENOGENESIS VIEW** – A phenomenon in nature. Certain reproduction without a sperm. Fungi and Algae do this sometimes.
- 5) **MYTHICAL LEGENDARY VIEW** – When a man is born and becomes famous, people go back and concoct a fabulous story about their birth.
- 6) **LITERARY DEVICE VIEW** – The writers simply understood Jesus to be unique and spoke of virgin birth to show Jesus as special.
- 7) **ERRORS IN THE BIBLE** – Actually, the Bible is not trustworthy, and this part on the virgin birth is not true.

Some people argue that the virgin birth is a myth taken from other religions. "In mythology there are stories such as Zeus begetting Hercules and Apollo begetting Ion and Pythagoras. As a result, some have speculated that Christians stole the virgin birth story from such myths. This speculation must be rejected on three grounds. First, some such myths came after the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 and therefore could not have been the origination of the story. Second, the myths speak of gods having sex with women, which is not what the virgin birth account entails. Third, the myths do not involve actual human beings like Mary and Jesus, but rather fictional characters similar to our modern-day superheroes in the comics." ¹

¹ Mark Driscoll & Gary Breshears, *Vintage Jesus* (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 2008), 95

2. HOW THE SAVIOR WAS CONCEIVED

A. Prophesied: Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:22–23 explicitly quotes this as fulfilled in the birth of Jesus through Mary.

- Some liberal scholars argue the Hebrew word **almah** simply means "young woman," not necessarily a virgin.
- But in every Old Testament usage, *almah* refers to a woman who is clearly unmarried.
- When Jewish scholars translated the Hebrew into Greek (the Septuagint) centuries before Jesus was born, they translated *almah* with the Greek word *parthenos*, meaning an unambiguous, biological virgin.
- These were Jewish scholars with no Christian agenda, and they understood the word to mean virgin.

B. Told by Gabriel: Luke 1:26–33

- In ancient Jewish culture, engagement (betrothal) was legally binding — it could only be broken by death or divorce. Sexual relations were not yet permitted during betrothal. If a woman was found pregnant during betrothal, the marriage could be annulled.
- **Luke 1:28–33** - Gabriel called Mary "**avored woman**" because she would be a special recipient of God's grace.

C. Mary's Response: Luke 1:34; 38

- Mary did not doubt the possibility, only the mode.
- She took the risk of faith, for she knew that God was asking her to serve Him.

D. Accomplished by the Holy Spirit: Luke 1:35

- God did not have physical relations with Mary (as Mormonism falsely teaches).
- He performed a miraculous creative act in her womb.
- The miracle was in the conception, not the birth.
- Matthew 2:1, Luke 2:7, and Galatians 4:4 all describe a normal, natural childbirth

3. HOW THE SINNER CAN RECEIVE

The same Holy Spirit who overshadowed Mary and created life in her womb can overshadow a human heart and create new spiritual life where none exists. When we become children of God, we are born *"not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."* (John 1:13) *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."* (John 1:12)

Why was Jesus born of a virgin? (based on an Adrian Rogers' quote)

- **He came as He did** (virgin born), **to be what He was** (the God-man).
- **He was what He was** (the God-man), **to do what He did** (die as a Substitute).
- **He did what He did** (die as my Substitute) **that He might change what I am!**

Jesus was born of a virgin that you and I might be born again!

APPLICATIONS FOR TODAY:

- 1) **Believe What You Cannot Fully Explain.** You believe in electricity and the Internet without fully understanding them. The virgin birth is one of the supreme mysteries of the ages. If you could explain it biologically, it would not be in the realm of the miraculous. Luke was a medical doctor who knew perfectly well how babies are made, and yet he reports the virgin birth as fact based on careful eyewitness research. Trust God's Word over your own understanding, and resist the pressure of a culture that believes only what it can explain.
- 2) **Respond to God with Surrender, Not Skepticism.** Mary's response to the most impossible announcement in human history was not debate or demands for further proof. She said, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." God asks us to trust Him in different areas of our lives, too. Follow her example and say yes to Him regardless of the cost.
- 3) **Share the Gospel With Others and Witness the Miracle of the New Birth.** The virgin birth is not simply a doctrine to believe; it is a story to tell. Jesus was born of a virgin so that you and I might be born again. Who needs to hear this and believe?