

3. THE VIRGIN BIRTH FOR ALL IT'S WORTH!

www.thebiblejesus.com

A READER OBJECTS!

One of my readers objected to my last article on **THE GREAT DEBATE**. Having written in that article that in order to qualify as God's Messiah, Jesus must be the direct physical descendant from David's royal line — a true human being in every sense of the word — my reader wondered why I should continue to teach the doctrine of the Virgin Birth (VB). He wrote:-

Do you not even understand the very workings of nature? According to the Scriptures, and indeed nature itself, a virgin conceives, a virgin does not bear a child, that is no mystery, but a nonsense, to say "that a virgin bears a child ... "

I will directly answer this contention shortly, but first note that, whilst my article never directly mentioned the doctrine of the VB, it is fair to say it has long been a bone stuck in the necks of atheists, agnostics, Jewish scholars — and, it must be said — even amongst sections of evangelical Christians and Biblical Unitarians (like my reader) who acknowledge the primary authority of the Bible.

The choke-points to accepting the VB usually travel along the well-worn lines of a denial of the miraculous in general or, the contention that later naughty scribes "doctored" the Nativity narratives in **Matthew & Luke** to make them fit in with later accrued church traditions from the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Centuries, thus making them unreliable historical accounts of the VB.

There has also been the age-long semantic debate as to whether the Hebrew word for 'maiden' (a young woman of marriageable age) in **Isaiah 7:14** may legitimately be narrowed down to 'virgin' by the time we get to the NT. There is also the old 'chestnut' that Mary couldn't pass on Jewish tribal identity.

And of course there's always just shoddy exegesis — usually based on *a priori* assumptions such as the mistaken urban myth that the rest of the NT writers seem to know nothing about the matter of Jesus' miraculous conception by God's creative power in Mary.

THE SIGN OF THE PREGNANT VIRGIN WHO GIVES BIRTH!

When **Matthew** quoted **Isaiah 7:14** he used the Greek future tenses ("**shall conceive**" and "**shall bear**") as used in the Greek LXX. However, the Hebrew text conveys an additional nuance. **J.A. Alexander** insightfully notes that **Isaiah 7:14** legitimately reads, "**Behold the pregnant virgin is bearing a son and she calls his**

name Immanuel." (¹) Thus ... the sign God gives is that the virgin is still a virgin — not only at the time she falls pregnant — but also when she brings forth her son. A ***pregnant virgin gives birth*** NOT as nature would have it but as the Scriptures say!

How can this be, for a virgin ceases to be a virgin after her first sexual encounter with her man. Quite possibly she could be a virgin at the time she becomes pregnant, but she could never be called a virgin during the length of her pregnancy!

If you care to read the narrative surrounding Isaiah's prophecy, you will know that it was God Himself who proposed this sign. Isaiah had challenged **King Ahaz** to ask for a sign (that God would save the nation) "**as deep as Sheol or high as Heaven**", but the king did not want the sign. He protested, "**I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD**" (Isaiah 7: 11-12).

It certainly is not stretching it to say that a sign proposed by God Himself should indeed be supernatural in design and worthy of His character ... **deep as Sheol or high as Heaven** ... a miracle worthy of Divine proportions! I think that in spite of the very best of motives and intentions those who deny the VB actually end up detracting from the supernatural aspect of God's prophetic word they so honourably wish to preserve.

Only the VB of Jesus by Mary could satisfy the technical meaning of this verse in the Hebrew Bible, yet alone the Greek of the NT! Mary was a virgin when she became pregnant, and yet **her virginity was unbroken even after falling pregnant**. She remained a virgin throughout her pregnancy, and even after Jesus was born she was still a virgin — until Joseph subsequently consummated their marriage as per **Matthew 1:25**. (This is not what the Roman Catholic Church believes when they say Mary remained a perpetual virgin until the day she died.)

So, to those who object that unless the concept of the VB is found in the Hebrew Bible it must be rejected as a later pagan accretion, may I humbly suggest they submit to their own Hebrew Scriptures and accept that Jesus was virginally begotten and virginally birthed ... "**Behold the pregnant virgin is bearing a son and she calls his name Immanuel!**"

If you struggle with the whole concept of the VB of Jesus, you are not alone. Many throughout the years since the first Christians confessed it have similarly struggled with this miracle. But if we take the Hebrew Bible and the apostolic New Testament witness as our authority, and if we accept their testimony that there is a Supernatural God in Heaven who demonstrates His glory and wisdom in human history, then we may, I believe, accept His word on this: Jesus was begotten/generated/fathered by God's creative power in the virgin Mary (**Luke 1:35**).

¹ The Hebrew **harah** ("**shall conceive**") is not a verb or participle, but a feminine adjective signifying "**pregnant**". It is here connected with an active participle ("**bear**") to denote that the object is described as present to the prophet's view ... the sign from God will be **the pregnant virgin bearing a son**. [Alexander, J. A. *Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1953, p.172]

This is precisely why the **angel Gabriel** announces that Jesus is to be the Son of God, which is to say, the Divinely accredited human Messianic Lord.

I will now explore additional theological implications to those already addressed in previous posts as to why the VB of our Saviour Jesus is **foundational** to the Bible's view of our redemption ... **the Virgin Birth for all it's worth! (²)**

First up, here is a reminder of what I have previously written regarding ...

THE THEOLOGICAL NECESSITY FOR THE VIRGIN BIRTH.

The apostle Paul taught that every human born into this world inherits the consequences of Adam's sin, which is death (e.g. see **Romans 5:12; I Corinthians 15:22.**) Paul regarded the natural union of a man and a woman to be a death-sentence for every human baby born into this world: **"In Adam all die."** We confirm this fact by our own willful choices to sin and disobedience.

Paul's answer to this Adamic death-sentence upon every single human being is that God has begun a new humanity, a new creation, in Christ Jesus.

If Jesus had been conceived and born the usual natural way he too would have inherited Adam's mortality. This is why Paul is very careful to say Jesus came **"in the likeness of sinful flesh"** (**Rom. 8:3**).

From the moment of his miraculous conception Jesus was free from the drag, the bias, the ballast, of Adam's legacy of death operating in him. Of course Jesus must constantly walk by faith and obedience to his Father if he was to maintain that condition of innocence and so to avoid Adam's sentence of mortality.

The VB of Jesus was therefore essential if he was to avoid entering this world as a man already under the reign of death! Fact of the matter is this: If Jesus had been born of natural processes, generated by a human father, he could not be our Saviour for he would have been "in Adam" like the rest of us and unfit to be the Head of God's new humanity.

So where did Paul get this teaching that the natural man is born with an already defeated and cursed nature in desperate need of supernatural salvation? Why, his lord and master Jesus of course! Had not Jesus himself taught, **"that which is of the flesh is flesh"**? Had not Jesus said, **"Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again'"** (**John 3: 1-15**)? According to Jesus every single human born on this planet must be born a second time, born from above, if we are to see God and enter His Kingdom. But there was and is only one exception to this rule ... guess who?

Jesus made it quite clear then, that ordinary birth can never achieve the kind of relationship with God that a man must have in order to 'be saved' and to inherit 'eternal life', which is the life of the Age to come.

Why then, did Jesus himself not need to "be born again"? In contrast to every

² Click here [JEWISH DISAPPOINTMENT WITH YESHUA!](#) to get up to speed with my previous articles on the VB.

human born “of the flesh” from Adam onwards, Jesus describes himself as the first one whose origin is “from above”, born of ‘the Spirit’ of God, thus born without inheriting Adam’s death.

Those who deny the imperative for a supernatural generation of Jesus in the womb of his mother Mary are (whether they realize it or not) denying the possibility for a supernatural regeneration in their own lives by the power of God through Christ Jesus, for on this count, Jesus would have been as condemned by Adam’s death-curse as the rest of us.

The following section supplies additional theological reasons for the necessity of the VB. This is graciously supplied by another one of my readers ... (³)

WAS CHRIST REALLY BORN OF A VIRGIN?

1. The answer to this question hinges on whether Christ was truly qualified to be the sacrifice that fulfilled the antitype of the Mosaic Law’s sacrificial requirements.

The Law stipulated that sacrificial animals had to be *without spot or blemish*, and must never have borne a yoke. This is seen in **Numbers 19:2**:

(KJV) This is the ordinance of the Law which the LORD hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer *without spot or blemish*, wherein is no blemish and upon which never came yoke.

(ASV)... that they bring thee a red heifer, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke.

(RV) ...that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke.

This red heifer sacrifice is commonly understood to be a *type* of Christ.

From this, we understand that Christ, likewise, had to be without spot or blemish and free from any trace of bearing the yoke of human sin or works.

Now consider this: for Christ to fulfill this role, He could in no way be tainted or touched by sin—in any way whatsoever. To explore this further, let’s go back to **Genesis 3** to consider how sin entered the world. Adam deliberately and consciously disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit (**Genesis 3:6**). Eve, on the other hand, was deceived (**Genesis 3:13**; **1 Timothy 2:14**).

God held **Adam** primarily responsible and spelled out the consequences of his actions (**Genesis 3:17–19**), **consequences that included death**. This outcome

³ This section beautifully expands Jesus’ words when he asserted; *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit* (**Jn 3:6**). The author of this entire section **WAS CHRIST REALLY BORN OF A VIRGIN?** is presented here in full with **Fred’s** gracious permission. He has also given permission to use his name and his email address should the reader wish to correspond with him directly. His address is seekerto@gmail.com A huge thank you **Fred**!

passed to all his descendants. Yet, **Genesis 3:15** gives us hope: it speaks not of Adam's seed, but of **the seed of the woman**—an important distinction. The one who would ultimately crush the serpent's head would not come through Adam's line, but through Eve.

Fast forward to the time of Christ's birth. **Matthew (1:18–23)** and **Luke (3:23–38)** provide detailed accounts. For the sake of this argument, we set aside critical disputes and accept these as the inspired Word of God (**2 Timothy 3:16**). These genealogical and birth accounts form the basis of the claim that Christ was born of a virgin, according to the prophecy in **Isaiah 7:14**.

2. But is the virgin birth necessary? The answer is yes, if we understand the Mosaic Law as a type and Christ as its antitype [i.e. fulfillment]. The Significance of the Virgin Birth answers how Christ could be without spot or blemish if He inherited the sinful outcome passed on by Adam.

Scripture refers to Christ as the second Adam — **"the last Adam"** (**1 Corinthians 15:45**). This suggests that Christ needed to enter the world as Adam once did: free of sin, unburdened by the inherited curse, and able to choose obedience. If Christ had been a direct descendant of Adam, He would have inherited Adam's condition.

As Paul argued in **Hebrews 7:9**, Levi paid tithes through Abraham—highlighting a Jewish concept that descendants are implicated in the acts of their ancestors. By this reasoning, Christ would have sinned in Adam, at least in the Hebrew mindset. This is supported by **Romans 5:12**: **"all sinned"** [i.e. in Adam]."

Although Paul states that all have sinned, this arguably excludes infants—who have not consciously sinned but still die due to inherited mortality. Unless one holds to Calvinism, which teaches original guilt and total depravity from birth, we might distinguish between *inherited mortality* and *moral guilt*.

So then, death, not sin, is what is passed on from Adam. If that is the case, then Christ—who was sinless—did not come into the world under the so-called "Adamic curse." He was not destined to die a natural death due to inherited sin.

In fact, one could dare to suggest that if Christ had not been killed — **murdered** — He would not have died at all. He was obedient even unto death (**Philippians 2:8**), and death had no rightful claim on Him. **Acts 2:24** implies that death could not hold Him because He was not under its domain.

So How Was This Possible? How could Christ be born and yet be **separated** from the implications of Adam's sin? The answer lies in divine intervention. God the Father had to be directly involved in Christ's conception to break the link with Adam's line. But wait — wasn't Eve also affected by the consequences of sin? Wouldn't she pass on mortality to her offspring?

From a modern scientific perspective, this may seem problematic. However, in the ancient Hebrew mindset, it was different. An article by [Professor Andrew Lincoln](#) of the [Biblical Archaeology Society](#) explains:

“In ancient thought ... the male seed provides the formative principle for life, while the woman supplies the material substance. Thus, the man’s role was considered the active cause, and the woman the passive vessel. If no human male was involved, then no sinful inheritance was transmitted — yet the child remained fully human because the mother supplied the human substance.”

In other words, Jesus could be seen as fully human—Mary gave Him His human body, while God supplied the animating life principle.

If we accept this framework, we understand that **the virgin birth was not a decorative miracle**—it was essential for Christ to be **unconnected** to Adam’s guilt and death.

Conclusion

1. Christ had to meet the Mosaic Law’s requirements for sacrifice—without spot or blemish, and free from Adam’s yoke.
2. As the second Adam, Christ needed to face the same moral choice Adam did, unimpeded by inherited sin.
3. If Christ were Adam’s direct descendant, He would have inherited Adam’s guilt or death condition and thus be disqualified.
4. The only way to ensure that Christ was disconnected from Adam’s inheritance was for God to intervene via a virgin birth.
5. We must be cautious not to let modern scientific assumptions override the theological framework presented in Scripture.
6. Why should it be considered impossible for God to fulfill His promise from Genesis 3:15 through a miraculous birth?
7. If Christ could multiply loaves, heal the blind, walk on water, and rise from the dead, why doubt that He could be born of a virgin? As the angel said to Mary: “With God nothing shall be impossible” (Luke 1:37).
8. The only way to refute this understanding is to demonstrate that Christ could still be a legitimate sacrifice without being born of a virgin and without inheriting Adam’s consequences. This appears scripturally untenable.

I can only respond to this by giving a hearty ‘Amen’! However ...

I wrote to my interlocutor that the only way around his objection to me teaching the VB of Jesus is to argue the birth narratives of **Matthew & Luke** are not original and have been subsequently edited.

Vincent Taylor, B.D. (London) in **Historical Evidence For The Virgin Birth**, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1920) has written a most scholarly and thorough rebuttal of this objection. His work is a real *tour de force* but to save you the huge effort of reading it as I have done (but be my guest if you wish to check it out for yourself!) his conclusion (on p.147) is:-

... our most important result is that we can prove from the New Testament itself that belief in the Virgin Birth existed in influential Christian communities at the time when the First and Third Gospels were written. We have no further need, therefore, to consider theories which assign the belief to a later age, and which, by various interpolation-hypotheses, deprive the doctrine of New Testament support ... (then on p.148) ...

We have therefore, to recognize that, whether we accept or reject the Virgin Birth, we must do this in full acknowledgement of the fact that among early witnesses to the belief are two outstanding New Testament Writings (he means, of course, the Gospels of Matthew and Luke). We can unashamedly rely on the NT record of the VB!

WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE VIRGIN BIRTH MATTERS

Clearly the doctrine of the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus from Mary by God's creative miracle has proven to be a minefield of debate:

Trinitarians believe it, but sadly, in a distorted fashion, for they teach the eternally pre-existing 'God the Son' transmuted through Mary, "taking on flesh" on his way down to earth! For trinitarians, the begetting of Jesus as the Son of God was not his personal beginning (as **the archangel Gabriel** testified in **Luke 1:35**) for in truth they teach that Jesus' alter-ego was always 'God-Self'.

The theological implications for this distorted view of the VB are huge. It opens up irreconcilable conundrums about the contrived "two-natured" Jesus — such as whether Jesus was really tempted to sin and how he ultimately remained sinless — he simply could not fail for he was "God in flesh"! And it opens up unnecessary related issues such as did Jesus really die, since God, by definition, is Immortal, and cannot die. Therefore, according to this interpretation of the VB only the "man nature" of Jesus died ... he died but not all of him died, thus leaving us with no perfect atoning sacrifice for our sins!

Sadly, some **Biblical Unitarians** like my objector, deny the miracle of the VB because for them, it eliminates the full and true humanity of Jesus. They contend that if Jesus did not have a human father then he could not be a true human being,

yet alone the promised Messiah from the line of David's ancestral tribe. I have noticed that those who hold this view, almost without exception, argue that the Nativity accounts in **Matthew & Luke** are not from the original pens of those Gospel writers.

However, I appeal to all my readers to prayerfully consider the position that Jesus was a true human being, tempted in all points as we are, yet remaining fully dependent upon, and completely obedient to, his Father God, and who ultimately laid down his life willingly as our perfect atoning sacrifice. Most importantly, our Lord is thus qualified to be the head of the New Humanity.

Why does a miraculous creation by God's holy Spirit in the virgin Mary preclude Jesus from being a real human being? Luke's genealogy makes the point that every ancestor of Messiah is traced all the way back to the original First Adam who is called **"the son of God"** (Lk. 3:38).

In the case of Adam a supernatural creation is obviously no bar to him being genuinely human. God breathed into the lifeless clay and the first Man came into existence. So, if the First Adam came directly by a special and supernatural creation by God, on what basis is Jesus the **"second Adam"** precluded from being genuinely human because he also came into existence by Divine fiat? If it took God's miraculous creation to bring the first Man into being, on what logical basis is a miracle-born Jesus precluded from also being a genuine man and indeed, the Son of God (cp. **Luke 1:35**)?

As the **last Adam**, Jesus was taken from the biology of Mary and God miraculously created her child. Both Adams were brought into being using natural materials already present: In the case of Adam, the lifeless clay was infused by the breath (Spirit) of God; and in the case of Jesus, the rich genetically and genealogically inherited ova of Mary was overshadowed by the Spirit (Breath) of God. *Ipso facto* a supernatural beginning does not disqualify either of these two men from being truly and fully human, surely?

Adam is the type. Messiah is the ante-type. Like the first Adam, Jesus had a unique, holy, origin. This fact is woven into the Christology of the entire Scriptures.

And it proves that God has wonderfully overseen and faithfully worked in human history to secure our eternal salvation through the perfect, sinless, and fully obedient man, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour!

The Virgin Birth testifies that Jesus is a true human being whose moral perfection came from his willing and complete obedience to and dependence upon his God and our God, his Father and our Father — and not from a Divine Being in disguise!

As such, he has left us with the perfect example of what it means to trust and love Yahweh God our heavenly Father ... now that we too have been born from above!

Now all these things are from God, Who reconciled us to Himself through Messiah [for] God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5: 18).