

# The Gospel of Matthew

Title: The Virgin Birth

Text: Matthew 1:18-25

**Introduction:** History records some amazing births, Issac to a barren woman nearly one hundred years old. The mother of Samson was barren and her womb opened, the birth of Samuel to Hannah. And we also note Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. Fantasy and mythology have counterfeited the virgin birth for centuries. For example, the Romans believed Zeus impregnated Semele without contact and she conceived Dionysus, the lord of the earth. The Babylonians believed Tammuz (Ezekiel 8:14) was conceived by a sunbeam. At the conception of Buddha, the mother supposedly saw a great white elephant enter her belly.

Polls taken over the past several decades, have indicated the **affect** of **liberal theology**, which show a **continued decline** in those **who believe in the virgin birth**. When one doubts the literal virgin birth of Jesus Christ, they deny His deity. All four gospels teach Jesus is the God/man, **fully God** and **fully human**. In fact, Jesus Himself made such claims. One "religious" personality said recently, that he could *"not in print nor public deny the virgin birth of Christ, but that he could neither preach nor teach it because he cannot comprehend it."* One **cannot ignore** the **virgin birth** of **Christ**. However, many do saying it is not possible, and of course, not to the human mind.

**Unbelief** has been man's **biggest problem** since the fall. Paul asked what if someone didn't believe? He answers that in Romans 3:3-4a *"What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? <sup>4</sup>May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar."* Both in Isaiah 53:1; Romans 10:16 we see Paul quoting Isaiah *"Lord, who has believed our report?"* Believe it or not, **even within the church**, the literal virgin birth is not taught as a reality and often skewed. But **popular opinion doesn't matter** and **when men pick and chose what they want to believe and which parts of the Word of God they deem as literal**, they set themselves up above His word and arrogance takes hold.

Matthew sets up the gospel letter as devoting to establish the **divine human** and **divine God nature** of **Jesus**. The **structure of Christianity is built upon this**. The essence and the power of the gospel is that God became man, and both being fully God and fully man, He was able to **reconcile man** to **God**. People today are willing to **recognize Jesus** as a **great teacher**, a **model** of **moral high character** and even a **prophet**, **but to be the Son of God is where many stop at**.

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**POINT 1 - THE VIRGIN BIRTH.** One sentence given to the miraculous birth. Mary was a godly woman who was sensitive and submissive to God's will. She referred to herself as a "bondslave" and was asking and obedient in Luke 1:34-35 "Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God." We know even less about Joseph but that he was a righteous man (vs. 19).

The miraculous even was indescribable in human terms, and still is. Sexual purity is highly regarded in Scripture. God places high values on sexual abstinence outside of marriage and fidelity within marriage. Mary questioned the angel, "Mary said to the angel, How can this be, since I am a virgin?" (Luke 1:34) Furthermore, Joseph is never mentioned as Jesus' father, thus protecting the divine nature of Jesus.

Not only had Isaiah indicated such a birth, cf Isaiah 7:14, but even in Genesis we get a glimpse of it. Genesis 3:15 "And I will put enmity, Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed." Galatians 4:4 "When the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman." There is no mention of a human father in that verse.

**POINT 2 - THE VIRGIN BIRTH CONFRONTED.** Because of the betrothal, Joseph and Mary were already considered married. Two problems faced Joseph, being a moral man he knew she was unfaithful. Second, because of his righteous kindness, he could not bear the thought of publicly shaming her. Under the law here was the punishment, Deuteronomy 22:23-24 "If there is a girl who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man finds her in the city and lies with her, <sup>24</sup>then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city and you shall stone them to death; the girl, because she did not cry out in the city, and the man, because he has violated his neighbor's wife. Thus you shall purge the evil from among you."

Joseph's plan was to send (put) her away, *apoloio* is the Greek word used here and was common for divorce. However, there was divine intervention in his plans. This indicates the supernatural character of the whole event. The ultimate testimony of the virgin birth was brought forth by this angel to show the miraculous saving event God has planned.

**POINT 3 - THE VIRGIN BIRTH CLARIFIED (VS. 21).** To further clarify this, the angel tells him she will bear a Son. Joseph was told His name. Jesus is form of the Hebrew word Joshua, Jeshua, or Jehoshua. The basic meaning is "Jehovah will save." Thus by His own work he would save his people from their sins.

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**POINT 4 - THE VIRGIN BIRTH CONNECTED (Vs. 22-23).** Matthew repeatedly expresses this was predicted by the Old Testament revelations. Matthew uses the term "might be fulfilled" 8x to encore the Old Testament predictions. Isaiah 7:14 was prophesied in the midst of the wicked king Ahaz and his rule. The translated word meaning "God with us" is powerful. And a virgin shall be with child is equally as powerful.

**POINT 5 - THE VIRGIN BIRTH CONSUMMATED (Vs. 24-25).** As Joseph arose from his sleep and this unique communication of God was used on other occasions to reveal Scripture. And it should be noted that all six New Testament occurrences of "onar" which means to dream, are in Matthew and concern the Lord Jesus.

We know nothing of Joseph's reaction except that he obeyed. He would marry her still, and not only that but would be a "foster" father to the Son of God. He was a righteous man, a protector and faithful.

**CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:** Mary and Joseph did not ask for this. Many times we are being obedient and faithful to the Lord, He uses us to do tough things and endure difficult paths in order to accomplish His will. God also intervenes in our plans to accomplish His will. Just as He did with Joseph, he was going to put her away, but God. Finally, this plan is a redemptive plan. No matter your condition, your sin, your depravity, it is God who sent a Savior through the divine virgin birth to be a sacrifice and atonement for you.