

The Virgin Birth Of Our Lord Jesus Christ

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The Holy Scriptures definitely teach that the sacred humanity of the Saviour which He took into union with His Divine Person was the peculiar and alone work of the Holy Ghost upon the Virgin Mary. Two portions are here given out of many. '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'. And 'She (Mary) was found with child of the Holy Ghost.' (Luke 1:35; Matthew 1; 18). Several years ago I read of what one may term indirect portions which teach the same truth; some of them are herein with others I have noticed in reading the Bible, and here presented to the reader for consideration and, by God's blessing, profit.

It will be noticed, of course, that there are but two genealogies in the New Testament and both refer to the Lord Jesus 'of the seed of David according to the flesh'. (Romans 1:3). The beloved physician was fitted to express this truth in terms at once both delicate and beautiful and, under the Spirit, Luke gives what appears to be the genealogy of Christ by Mary. 'Matthew traces His genealogy down from Abraham to Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus; Luke traces it upwards from Mary by Joseph even to Adam, though she (Mary) is not mentioned, because of a rule with the Jews that the family of the mother is not called a family'. (Dr. Gill on Luke 3: 23, 38). This remark of the Doctor leads one to —

(1) Genesis 3:15 where, it is judged, a very important expression occurs which is capable of but one meaning, 'Her Seed.' Everything is, so to speak, concentrated in this expression 'Her Seed,' not man's seed — a phrase not infrequent in Scripture — but 'her Seed' a phrase occurring but once relative to Him who was to bruise the head of the devil. Remember that among the Jews there was no such thing as a woman's genealogy, inasmuch 'as the family of the mother is not called a family', and then it

becomes apparent that this word, 'her Seed' has a most wonderful meaning. Here on the first page of Holy Writ, where we have the beginning of so much told us, we have the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Christ revealed also.

(2) Psalm 69 is clearly prophetic of Christ and His sufferings, and at verse 8 the Holy Sufferer prayed thus: 'I am become a stranger unto My brethren, and an alien unto My mother's children.' With reverence we would submit for loving, prayerful consideration the absence of the word, 'My father's children,' and the mention of 'My mother's children.' The Virgin Birth will explain this text.

(3) In the holy nature of God forgiveness of sin without shedding of blood was not possible and it is equally true that the Person sacrificing for sin must be 'clean' but, 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?' Turn to Psalm 86:16, 'O turn unto Me, and have mercy upon Me; give Thy strength unto Thy Servant, and save the Son of Thine handmaid' (See also Psalm 116:16). Who is the Son of Thine handmaid'? Luke 1:38 answers: 'And Mary said, behold the handmaid of the Lord'; here we have a complete answer to the question above. The Lord could do and did the otherwise impossible (Luke 1:37), again, the Virgin Birth explains these portions.

(4) We may now go to Jeremiah for another indirect proof of this truth. 'For the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man' (31:22). Observe, (i) it is a 'creation', (ii) it is by the 'Creator', the Lord; (iii) it is a 'new' thing — for who could have thought of such a thing apart from revelation? (iv) 'A woman shall compass a Man' — the Virgin Birth cannot be more delicately and exactly expressed than in these words. 'Every word of God is pure.'

(5) There are some omissions which speak powerfully. 'Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His Name Immanuel'. (Isaiah 7:14). (This verse teaches directly, but it is used here for its indirectness also). Compare Luke 1:13 'Thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son,' that is, Elisabeth shall bear Zacharias a son, and so it came to pass; but when the Spirit speaks of Mary's Son He omits the word 'thee' for the very obvious reason that Mary does not bear a Son to Joseph (Luke 1:30-35). In other words, the doctrine of the Virgin Birth lies in this omission.

Here is another omission equally as interesting and edifying. In the genealogy as recorded in Matthew 1, the word 'begat' occurs: 'Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary.' Observe well, it does not say 'Joseph begat ...' Observe the words 'of whom', that is, Mary. After 'Jacob begat Joseph' the word is dropped by the Holy Ghost, and why? The Virgin Birth explains. Note too, in the genealogy as in Luke 3, the word 'begat' does not once occur; thus most carefully guarded is the doctrine of the Virgin Birth.

(6) Was any one ever absolutely holy before birth? Yes, but He was our Lord Jesus. 'Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee' (Luke 1:35). Hence, it follows that He who was holy before birth was born like as no other person ever was — the Virgin Birth is sound doctrine of

God.

(7) There is a small word as far as number of letters is concerned, but who shall tell its depth of meaning. Study well the one little word 'also' as seen in Luke 1:36. It is used by the angel when speaking to Mary about her cousin Elisabeth. 'And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also....' Read again verse 31, words spoken to Mary: 'And, behold, thou shall....' now put the two expressions together as thus:-

(i) To Mary: 'Thou shall....'

(ii) To Elisabeth: 'She hath also....'

Elisabeth was then bearing John the Baptist, and Mary was being at that moment 'blessed among women.' In this case we can hang the heavy weight of the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Christ on that one word, 'also'. One word of God is beyond rubies for value and preciousness.

(8) To confirm this — for confirmation follows rapidly and wonderfully — note, that when Mary visited her cousin soon after, Elisabeth 'filled with the Holy Ghost,' made no secret about this wonderful doctrine, for 'she spake with a loud voice, and said, 'And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?' (41-45). Elisabeth was a hearty believer in and a most emphatic preacher of this truth and, remember, she preached it as 'filled with the Holy Ghost ... mother of my Lord.'

(9) There is something in the quietness of Joseph as contrasted with the hearty singing recorded of Zacharias when John is born. The father of John breaks out in a wonderful song of praise to the Lord (Luke 1:67-70), but Joseph, the husband of Mary, is quiet while Mary does the singing: 'And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.' We raise no question in this thought as to Joseph's godliness and his praise to God for the Saviour, for he was a 'just man' (Matthew 1:19) but when it is remembered that the 'joy of a man-child being born was very great' (as the song of Zacharias proves), the silence of Joseph and the outburst of Mary is highly significant. Silence is golden here on the one part, while on the other 'Praise is comely'. With Joseph it was 'a time to keep silence'; with Mary it was 'a time to speak'.

(10) Luke 2:33. 'And Joseph and His mother marvelled at those sayings which were spoken of Him'. It is suggestive in not saying, 'His father and mother,' but 'Joseph and His mother.'

(11). Luke 2:48, Mary said; 'Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing'. Observe how He replies to this. 'Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?'. How beautifully and tenderly He changes Mary's 'Thy father' into 'My Father,' and ought we to pass lightly and thoughtlessly over these 'words which the Holy Ghost teacheth'? Thus does He bring their statement into conformity with the parenthetical word in Luke 3:23, 'Being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph'.

The Old Testament Scriptures were divided into three parts known as the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms. To this threefold division the Saviour refers when He declared: 'These are the words which I spake unto you,

while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me' (Luke 24:44). It is believed that each of these three divisions bear testimony to Christ as to His Virgin Birth no less than to His sufferings, death, burial, resurrection and ascension to glory. We have taken but a selection from the three parts of the Old Testament, and shown how they meet their fulfilment in Him whose Name is Jesus — the Saviour of His people from their sins.

It is dreadful in the extreme to contemplate the alternative to this truth of His Virgin Birth, but sometimes it is needful to study the alternative, if only by way of increasing in beauty and glory the truth stated.

With trembling then think: if He were the Son of Joseph? If He had no birth in the manner the Scriptures declare? If He were born as we are? Who dare declare He was born in fornication, a term horrible to associate with His holy Name, and yet that must be the alternative to the doctrine of His Virgin Birth. This is the great 'mystery of godliness', but if His birth were not unique, then it becomes 'the mystery of iniquity', and the following would be true. We have no Gospel; for we have no atonement for sin (no sacrifice could be acceptable to God from a sinful man), we have no Mediator, no Righteousness in heaven, no Throne of Grace, no answers to prayers; we are guilty of idolatry, for we have 'worshipped Him'; in short, if there be no Virgin Birth, the ministry of the Gospel should cease, places of worship should be pulled down, the Bible destroyed, and we cast away our confidence and become a race of desperate atheists, and lie down in death with no hope, no light, and no comfort for eternity. If Christ were not born of the Virgin Mary by the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost, then 'we are, of all men, most miserable'. But, thanks be unto God for being made a partaker of that faith which believes 'mysteries', which receives what God has said in His Word. Has Christ been revealed to your heart, reader? Have you ever worshipped Him with loving adoration as the Holy Spirit has been pleased to reveal to and seal this 'incarnate mystery' on your heart? Then cleave to this blessed doctrine all your days, for Christ loved and worshipped in the heart is the inner blessedness of His birth.

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