

Did Jesus really have a virgin birth?

In these last days many people are doubting the fundamental principles of the Christian faith and saying things like “You do not have to believe in the virgin birth to be a Christian.” Actually you do, for the simple reason that if Jesus did not have a virgin birth then He would have inherited a sin nature from whoever became His father, and therefore would be immediately disqualified from being the lamb without blemish which God required.

What then is the evidence for a virgin birth? We can begin to look at this by going back to a prophecy in the book of Isaiah chapter 7 verse 14 which reads: “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.” This ties in perfectly with the story of how Mary was visited by an Angel before this wonderful event occurred.

Matthew chapter 1 verses 18 to 25 tells us: “This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”). When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.”

The name Jesus in a different language means Immanuel so there can be no doubt about who the child being referred to here is. Mary, quite understandably could not understand how this would happen, being a virgin, so the angel explained to her as we can read from Luke chapter 1 verse 35 reads: “The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you, so the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”

The father of Jesus was therefore not an earthly father, or He would have inherited a sin nature and would not be able to be our Passover Lamb. But Jesus was born in a very real sense just like Adam was, the first created man. God fashioned him from the dust of the earth, and God was able to produce the child in a virgin’s womb, therefore both Adam and Jesus originally did not have a sin nature.

If you want an example of a sin nature – a rebellious nature against authority then just look at a young child in its infant years growing up. You might say to the child “Come now put your toys away we’re going to have dinner.” The child would then reply “shant.” and there you see an example of the sin nature mankind has passed down to every one of their offspring since Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden.

If anyone were to be able to rescue us from our predicament, being separated from God by our sin yet unable to overcome our sin, it would have to be somebody who was without sin yet was every bit as human as you or me. There has only been one person who has the qualification for that role and that is Jesus, because nobody else went through the whole of their life without sin.

Another reason we need to believe in the virgin birth of Jesus is because in Mythology there had been other alleged virgin births, but every one of these was female, due to the absence of the male chromosome. Jesus is male, and this is another sign of His Messiahship which sets Him apart from anyone else in History. God gave us several signs in order that it should be impossible for us to fail to identify Him correctly when He came.

The scribes and Pharisees knew all the scriptures of the coming Messiah off by heart, but they missed Him because they were expecting someone to come as a political Messiah and rescue the people of Israel out of the hands of Roman Occupation, something in some way similar to what God did with the Hebrew slaves when He brought more than a million people out of Egypt to make them His own people and give them a land of their own.

They did not realise that God was sending a far greater Messiah than they were expecting, one who could bring them out of the bondage of sin and disobedience and back into fellowship with God if that is what the people wanted. All the signs of the coming Messiah were fulfilled in Jesus and yet the people of His day still failed to recognise Him for who He is and brought upon themselves a great deal of trouble.

Even the kings of the east who had travelled literally for months to find out where the new king was to be born recognised Jesus as the promised Messiah, we can see this from the gifts that they presented Him with. Each of the three gifts that they gave were appropriate for the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Further words of scripture were fulfilled when Joseph and Mary went to Egypt to escape the wickedness of King Herod.

Some people who try to be clever with words will tell us that the word virgin in the book of Isaiah is the same word that can be translated “young woman” true, but it can also be translated virgin, which the Hebrew and Greek scholars say is the correct meaning as other passages in scripture bear witness. To anyone who understands how to translate Hebrew into New Testament Greek will know that the only appropriate word here is as translated.

A further reason for believing in the virgin birth is to look at the laws which God had given His own people the Hebrews when they came out of Egypt by God’s might and power. The law said that if you violated (had sex with) a virgin to whom you were not married then the

least that would happen to you is that you would be severely flogged and have to take the woman as your wife forever, clearly in the eyes of God to do such a thing would be a sin, therefore we know that this is not what God did. He had an even better way than anyone had thought of or would ever be able to duplicate.

Today with the so-called advancements in technology, medicine and genetic engineering we can implant an a human egg which is being fertilised into a woman and she can after the appropriate time give birth to that child implanted into her womb, but this would be done through the cleverness of man, and male sperm would still be used to fertilise the egg inside here, which means that the baby would still have a sin nature.

In one of the Carols sung at the time when many of us celebrate Christmas we sing the words – “Lo he abhors not the virgin’s womb.” What God did in Mary cannot be duplicated by man, what was done to her could only ever be done to anyone by God, and since the child born to her has fulfilled all the necessary requirements these things can never be repeated or duplicated by mankind.

Jesus warned the people of His day about the consequences of rejecting Him when He said to them in John chapter 5 verses 31 to 43 read as follows: “If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. There is another who testifies in my favour, and I know that his testimony about me is true. “You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth. Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved.

John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light. “I have testimony weightier than that of John. The works that the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I am doing—testify that the Father has sent me. The Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent.

You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life. “I do not accept glory from human beings, but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.

If the child born to Mary was born through human conception then there is no salvation yet for man, if Jesus did not die on the cross then nobody has yet been able to stand in the gap and be a successful mediator between God and Man. If Jesus did not rise from the dead then He could not have been our Great High Priest.

Now that you have seen the evidence of these three things and have considered them for yourself, believe them and you have a wonderful future to look forward to. If you do not believe all of these three things, if you only believe two of them or only one of them then the work of Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross can do nothing for you, but the evidence

clearly outweighs the doubts, so draw near to your Messiah, get to know Him now and throughout eternity.

Many people today are taught that they do not need a Messiah to get to heaven, if they could only not be particularly bad or evil and were kind, loving towards others and helpful then surely God would not allow them to be punished for all eternity? But just look at what Jesus said to the crowds when He spoke about this very subject in Matthew chapter 7 verses 21 to 23.

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you, away from me, you evildoers!’”

Jesus is not denying the good works of these people but is showing them that they missed the most important thing of all, and that is to have true fellowship with Him day by day, and to walk in faith the rest of your days. Clearly it is not our good works that can save us as this scripture shows, but only our faith in and walk with our Saviour The Lord Jesus Christ. We must trust in Him and Him alone, so that the work Jesus did on the cross will take full effect in our lives today.