

The Incarnation of Jesus Christ

Introduction:

The last century has seen a determined assault upon the doctrine of the “Virgin Birth” of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In many branches of Christendom this doctrine is regarded as “non-essential” to the Christian faith, and is sometimes held to be just a fable.

Nothing could be further from the truth — the Virgin Birth of Christ is an absolutely essential doctrine!

1. If Jesus Christ were not virgin born — He is only a man, not God!
2. If Jesus Christ were not virgin born — He could not be our Savior!
3. If Jesus Christ were not virgin born — the Books of Isaiah, Matthew, Luke, and John are all lies!

The fact is, the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Christ is an essential doctrine — one of the fundamentals of our faith.

I. The Reasons for the Incarnation of Jesus Christ

According to Revelation 13:8, the Incarnation was a pre-determined event in human history. There are many Biblical reasons why Christ came into this world:

- A. To Confirm the Promises of God
Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Micah 5:2; Romans 15:8-9
- B. To Save Sinners.
Luke 19:10; I Timothy 1:15
- C. To Reveal God the Father.
John 1:18; 14:9
- D. To Become a Faithful High Priest.
Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:15-16; 5:1-5
- E. To Put Away Sin.
Mark 10:45; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 9:26-28; I John 3:5
- F. To Destroy the Works of Satan.
John 12:31; Hebrews 2:14-15; I John 3:8; Revelation 20:10
- G. To Give Us an Example of a Holy Life.
Matthew 11:29; I Peter 2:21; I John 2:6

II. The Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ According to the Scriptures

Five Scriptures teach the reality of the Virgin Birth of Christ.

A. The First Announcement

The first announcement of Christ is found in the prophecy of Genesis 3:15. The words of this verse were initially addressed to the woman, Eve, and distinctly emphasizes the “seed of the woman.”

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This is significant because the Savior was to be born without a human father.

B. The “Immanuel Prophecy.” Isaiah 7:14

This verse expressly declares that it would be a virgin who would conceive and bring forth a child.

The name “Immanuel” means “with us is God!”

C. The Account of the Birth of Christ in the Gospels

1. Matthew 1:16-25

This passage gives a direct account of the Virgin Birth of Christ. Note some important facts:

- a) “Of whom was born Jesus...” — vs. 16
Compare with the preceding genealogy, the altered expression here is most important. Jesus was not begotten through “natural generation” with a human father.

See also Luke 3:23

- b) “Before they came together...” — vs. 18
Mary was with child before marriage. Not only that, but from Joseph’s initial reaction both he and Mary were chaste, God-fearing people — amongst who fornication was out of the question.

- c) “Conceived...of the Holy Ghost...” — vs. 20
Here, the conception of Jesus Christ in the womb of Mary is declared to be supernatural.

- d) “Joseph knew her not...” — vs. 25

2. Luke 1:26-35

- a) Mary is Declared to Have Been a Virgin. — vs. 27
- b) Mary Herself Said She Was undefiled. — vs. 34
- c) Mary Was Informed that She Would Undergo A Supernatural Conception. — vs. 35

D. The Biblical Declaration of Christ’s Eternality.

Matthew 2:6 refers to Micah 5:2 which declares the Messiah to be eternal.

John 8:58, along with a number of other Scriptures teach that Christ is the eternal God — a fact which in itself requires some kind of supernatural birth. For the Creator of the Universe to appear in human flesh required a birth like no other birth.

E. The Teachings of the Pauline Epistles.

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Those who reject the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ often point to the apostle Paul's apparent silence on the subject as some kind of proof that the doctrine is a fabrication.

However, Galatians 4:4 clearly states the Christ was born of a Woman — a clear reference to Genesis 3:15.

The apostle Paul could not have believed in the deity, pre-existence, sinlessness, and headship of Christ as he surely did without first being convinced that His coming into the world was no ordinary event of nature.

III. The Incarnation of Jesus Christ Explained

A study of Philippians 2:5-8 explains exactly what was involved in the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Incarnation was the voluntary act of the Son whereupon He placed Himself under the bounds of humanity.

A. Christ was in "The Form of God." — vs. 6

The word "form" does not mean 'shape' or 'object.' It refers to the outward expression which stems from His innermost nature.

Christ looked like God because He was God!

B. Christ was "Equal with God." — vs. 6

It was not robbery for Jesus Christ to claim equality with God. How could He "steal" equality if He is equal?

C. Christ Emptied Himself. — vs. 7

By comparing this passage with other Scriptures we can see that Christ emptied Himself of all but His Essential Glory.

He laid aside certain rights that were His as the eternal God. He changed from sovereignty to slavery. He became a "nobody" and took upon Himself the form (expression) of a servant.

Jesus Christ took off the robes of deity and put on the robes of flesh.

D. Christ "Humbled Himself." — vs. 8

He was found in fashion as a man. The word "fashion" speaks of the visible expression of God as a result of the incarnation.

He humbled (lowered) Himself and became obedient unto death. (The word "unto" does not mean that death was ever His master — but that He was obedient to His Father to the extent that He allowed men to put Him to death.)

IV. The Uniqueness of the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ.

The student should note that the birth of our Lord was not rare — it was unique!

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Isaac was miraculously born when his parents were past the age of natural child-bearing. Likewise, John the Baptist. However, the birth of Christ does not rank with these categories — Jesus was Virgin Born! He was born without having a human father.

V. The Virgin Mary and Mariolatry

The Roman Catholic “Church”, along with other Orthodox religions, holds to a doctrine known as Mariolatry — the worship and veneration of Mary.

This doctrine developed in the 5th century A.D. Augustine (354-430 A.D.) — The “Father of Corrupt Theology” — exalted Mary as the “Mother of God.” The ecumenical councils of Ephesus I (431 A.D) and Ephesus II (449 A.D), called chiefly to settle the Nestorian Controversy, formulated the doctrine.

In simple terms, the following rationale will demonstrate how this doctrine developed:

1. Mary was the Mother of Jesus Christ
2. Christ is God
3. Therefore Mary is the Mother of God
4. Therefore she has a special motherly influence over the Son
5. Therefore if we really want something, pray to her — she will be far more able to talk to the Son than any man.

This doctrine presents Christ as mean and unapproachable, and turns Mary into a Mediator and Redeemer.

A. Christ is not Mean and Unapproachable. — Matthew 11:28

B. Mary was not “Immaculate” (Sinless).

1. She needed to be saved like any other person. — Luke 1:47
Nonetheless, Mary was a godly woman of great faith. She was chaste, and one whom God could use for His holy purpose.
2. She did not receive any special recognition from Jesus. — Matthew 12:46-50
3. She was not able to direct or influence her Son. — John 2:3-4
4. She was not considered to be above other believers. — Luke 11:27-28
5. She was “Blessed AMONG Women” — Not ‘Above’ Women. — Luke 1:42

C. Mary is not the “Mother of God.”

This expression is man-made. The Bible refers to her as the mother of Jesus — and she is the mother of Jesus with regard to His humanity, not His deity.

See Luke 1:43

D. Mary went on to have other children by natural means.

Matthew 13:54-56; Galatians 1:19

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She was not translated sinless directly to Heaven (the Roman Catholic doctrine of “The Assumption of Mary”) — she no doubt died as a believer and awaits the resurrection day.

- E. Christ alone is our Mediator.
I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:25; I John 2:1
- F. Christ alone is our Redeemer.
John 14:6; Acts 4:12