

Fallacies about the Virgin Birth

Scripture: Luke 1:34-35

Code: 42-11

Open your Bible to Luke chapter 1. As I said, we haven't gotten very far, we're still in Luke 1 but it's a long chapter with 80 verses. This is part 4 in a segment of this opening chapter on the incomparable child of a virgin.

I want to read the text to you starting in verse 26, Luke 1:26, "Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph of the descendants of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming in he said to her, 'Hail, favored one, the Lord is with you.' But she was greatly troubled at this statement and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might be. And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God, and behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever and His Kingdom will have no end.' And Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be since I am a virgin?' And 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 offspring shall be called the Son of God. And behold, even your relative, Elizabeth, has also conceived a son in her old age, and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing will be impossible with God.' And Mary said, 'Behold the bondservant of the Lord, be it done to me according to your word.' And the angel departed from her."

In Matthew's gospel, chapter 22 and verse 42, Jesus asked the Pharisees a question. That question has been voiced in every generation since. The question Jesus asked was this, "What do you think about the Christ? Who's Son is He?" That is a vital question. On that occasion the Pharisees said to Him, "The Son of David." You see, the Jewish religious experts recognized and believed that the Messiah would be a human who was a member of the lineage of David, who was a member of the royal family of King David, a descendant of David. And they were right. They were right. And that is certainly affirmed by the angel Gabriel in verse 32 where it says, speaking of Jesus, that the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. It was true. Humanly speaking the Messiah would be a human being born into the family or the line of David.

But that's as far as they went. They were right about that. But they were wrong that He was to be only the Son of David. You will notice that Gabriel tells Mary that Jesus in verse 32 will be called the Son of the Most High...Most High being the equivalent of the Hebrew *el elyon*, God Most High. And

verse 5, "The holy offspring shall be called the Son of God."

They clearly affirmed that the Messiah would be the Son of David, but they considered any claim to be the Son of God blasphemous. When Jesus claimed to be the Son of God they therefore accused Him of blasphemy. And it was their perception of His blasphemy that led them to their rejection and execution of Jesus Christ. In spite of that rejection, the Son born to Mary in David's line was also God's Son. He was the God/Man, Son of David through Mary, Son of God through the Holy Spirit.

The writer John in the gospel of John approaches the birth of Christ from the divine side while Matthew and Luke approach it from the human side. Matthew looks at it from Joseph's side particularly. Luke looks at it from Mary's side. Matthew recording the message of the angel in a dream to Joseph. Luke recording the message of Gabriel to Mary. But John looks at it not from the human side through Joseph or Mary, but from God's side. And so John records the coming of Christ with these words, "In the beginning was the Word...meaning Christ...the Word was with God and the Word was God." He starts with a pre-incarnate identification of the Messiah as the Word who was with God who was God. He was in the beginning with God, all things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

In other words, he sees the Messiah pre-incarnation as God Himself the Creator. He was the source of life, life which was the light of men. Verse 14, "When the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," and that's John's perspective on the birth of Christ, it was the Word who was eternal, becoming flesh and dwelling among us, we beheld not His humanity, John says, but His glory which was glory that belonged only to one begotten by God, full of grace and truth.

So, John looks at the conception as God coming down and entering human flesh. Matthew views the same thing, and so does Luke only from the human side, while John looks at it from the divine. Matthew records very specifically that the child would be God and Man. In Matthew, you remember, verses 18 to 23 of chapter 1 Joseph is basically amazed that Mary has become pregnant, he doesn't know why, how this could happen, it's contrary to her character. And he has never known her and he only can imagine that she is worthy of either death or divorce. At that point an angel of the Lord appears to him in a dream, tells him that Mary is with child but by the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son, and it will be the birth of this Son that will fulfill Isaiah 7:14, the virgin shall be with child, says the angel, shall bear a Son and they shall call His name Immanuel which translated means God with us. So Joseph was told the child would be conceived by the Holy Spirit and would be God in flesh.

And that's exactly what Gabriel tells Mary. Go back to our text, chapter 1 verse 35, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, the power of the Most High will overshadow you, for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God."

It is critical, it is foundational to understanding the Christian faith to understand the incarnation...the incarnation. A real incarnation of God, a real incarnation of God demands a virgin conception. And therefore, and I'm going to camp on this, this morning, because it's so important, the virgin conception of the God/Man Jesus Christ is the central truth of Christianity. On it the whole structure of Christian theology and the gospel is built. If Jesus had a human father, He was just a man. If He was just a man, there is no gospel, there is no Savior, there is no salvation and, in fact, the prophets and Jesus lied.

The question then that Jesus asked, as recorded in Luke 22, or in Matthew chapter 22, as I noted earlier, who's Son is He, is of critical importance. Who's Son is He? The New Testament record says He is God's Son and He is Mary's Son and Mary was in the line of David. A real incarnation demands a virgin conception. If this is to be the God/Man, then it must be God and Man coming together to produce this life, and that is exactly what the New Testament says. Who's Son is He? God's Son and David's Son. David's Son as to His humanity, and God's Son as to His deity.

Now this is so critical and so foundational that we need to carefully examine the virgin conception of Jesus. Now last time we looked at the foundations of the virgin conception, the foundations of it. And I basically gave you three foundations. Some people have said, "Well, the disciples invented this, early church tradition invented this, there was never any expectation of this at all." That's not true.

Three things indicate to us that there was expectation of this, that there was every reason to believe and expect a virgin conception for the Messiah.

First of all, the Old Testament promised it...the Old Testament promised it. Genesis 3:15, way back in Genesis God said that Satan would be crushed in the head by the seed of the woman. And we all know that a woman has no seed, but there would be a woman who had a seed, there was only one and that was Mary, the seed of that woman was the one who crushed the head of Satan. He crushed his head, as it were, on the cross where He won the great victory, though he is still kicking around like a chicken with his head cut off until his final demise in the eternal Lake of Fire. The death blow has already been rendered.

We saw Isaiah 7:14 where the promise was a virgin shall conceive and she will bring forth a child who will be God with us. We studied Jeremiah 31:22 which says a virgin shall encompass a man, a virgin shall encompass a man. We looked at Psalm 2 where God speaks to the Messiah and says, "You are My Son, today I have begotten You." Clearly the Old Testament promised a virgin-born Son and a Son who uniquely was born as the Son of God.

Secondly, the doctrine of the trinity provides for it...the doctrine of the trinity provides for it. The Old Testament promised it, the doctrine of the trinity provides for it. What do you mean by that? That God is one and yet in three persons and yet in three persons. Therefore a member of that trinity who

was eternal, always pre-existing, could come into the world in human flesh. And that's precisely what happened. God who is one and yet three persons made a plan which involved all three persons, God the Father establishing the plan, Christ, the second member of the trinity. the Son coming into the world in incarnate form, He was the pre-existing, eternal Word that John wrote about who was with God, with God in the beginning and was the creator of everything that exists. He was God the creator, the second person who came into the world. So the doctrine of the trinity provides for that.

Thirdly we saw that the prophets prophesied it...the prophets prophesied it and in a most unique way. The prophets and the scripture of the Old Testament says that God alone is the Redeemer, God alone is the holy One, God alone is the great almighty King, God alone is the object of worship and God alone is to be the subject of all adoration. And yet the prophets all said that the Messiah was also the Redeemer, the holy One, the King of kings, the Father of eternity, the Prince of peace, the object of worship and the subject of adoration. Therefore one can only conclude if that's only true of God, the Messiah must be God.

So the Old Testament promises a virgin-born Messiah, the trinity provides for it and the prophets prophesied of it. So much for the foundation of the virgin birth, and that's a review.

Let's come to the second point, the fallacies about the virgin birth...the fallacies about the virgin birth. And I know somebody might wonder, "Well, why are you going to go through all of this?" Because it's not true, it's error. I want to go through it for two reasons, one...I want you to understand what has been cast at Christianity to attack and assault the virgin birth so you will be ready to deal with it when you see it. Secondly...I want you to understand how critically important the doctrine of the virgin birth or virgin conception of Jesus is. And one of the ways that demonstrates how important it is, is to understand the massive satanic onslaught and attack against this doctrine. This is not peripheral. This is not the fringe of Christianity. This is not negotiable. This is the heart and soul of the gospel. You must have a God/Man, you must have a virgin conception therefore for Him to be Son of David, Son of God. This then is under attack by Satan because it is the foundation of our gospel and of the Christian faith.

Now, the virgin conception is assaulted in two ways. First by outright denial and secondly by subtle counterfeit. And I want to address those. I think you'll find this fascinating.

If you study liberal theology, all of us who go through seminary are exposed to more of it than we'd like to be exposed to, and I've often thought that if we never brought up the liberal theologians, most people would never know they ever existed and we wouldn't have to even listen to their lies. I think we resurrect them sometimes and give them credit for being intellectual, when all they really are is propounding damnable heresy, to borrow the words of Paul, and we make heroes out of men whose names perhaps should never be mentioned. But because they're there, and because they're a part of the stream of academia that invades Christianity, it's well for us to understand what they say and to

compare it with Scripture.

We know that all the truth of God is going to be denied. Satan's strategy is to lie and lie and lie and deceive and undermine the truth. The apostle Paul writing to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4 says that in the later times, that would be Messianic times and on, and Messiah came and since then these are all the later times, people are going to fall away from the faith because they pay attention to deceitful spirits, doctrines of demons and hypocritical liars. Those are just ways to describe the process of false teaching. These lies come from deceitful spirits. Energized by demons they find their way into the lives of false teachers who teach them and consequently people fall away from the faith into these destructive lies. They get worse and worse, 2 Timothy 3:13, they get more deceiving and more deceiving, 2 Timothy 3:13 says they are deceiving and increasingly deceiving as time goes on. Second Peter 2:1 also describes these false teachers. It says they are destructive in their heresies and they deny the Master who bought them. Their assault is always on the person of Christ, always on the nature of Christ, the work of Christ. Jude 4, it says they deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ. All of false teaching really at its core is directed at assaulting Christ. If He is not born of a virgin, then He is not God. If He is not God, then the gospel is not true. And if you're going to destroy the gospel, they have to start with the nature of Jesus Christ. So they inevitably assault Christ and that assault begins with the idea of the biblical truth that He is virgin conceived.

For example, Nels Foray, a well-known liberal writer in his notorious volume widely read some years back called *The Christian Understanding of God* claimed that Jesus was not the natural Son of Joseph, he doesn't even claim that Jesus was the natural Son of Joseph and Mary, but rather he claims that Jesus was the illegitimate child of a Roman soldier. He explains Joseph's confusion over Mary's pregnancy by the fact that she had been unfaithful to her betrothal vow and gotten pregnant by a passing encounter with a Roman soldier.

The rock opera of more modern times, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, which does everything possible to assault the nature of Jesus Christ states the song of Mary Magdalene and repeatedly in that song, in that rock opera by Andrew Lloyd-Webber, this line goes over and over, "He's a man, just a man...He's a man, just a man." That is ever and always the message of Satan against the nature of Christ.

Now it didn't start in modern times, it started long ago. Turn in your Bible to John chapter 8 for a moment. In John 8 at the beginning of the chapter, the religious leaders, the Pharisees in particular, confront a woman who has been caught in the act of adultery. Verse 4, they say to Jesus, they drag this woman into the crowd, she's been literally ripped out of a bed of adultery, she's dragged in front of Jesus and the crowd. This woman has been caught in adultery in the very act, and they ask Jesus, in the law of Moses she should be stoned. So what do You say?

They were saying this, testing Him in order that they might have grounds for accusing Him. He stooped down, you remember, and kind of scrawled around with his finger on the ground and they

kept on asking Him. And finally He said, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." He stooped down and kind of marked the ground. "And when they heard that they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones." The older ones went first because they had more adulteries to remember, more sins to remember. And finally everybody was gone, and He was alone and He said, straightening up to the woman, where are you...where are they, rather, did no one condemn you? Then neither do I condemn you.

I'm sure there were people who heard that. Some people think that might have been setup even, that they were really exposing what they believed to be the truth about Jesus, that He Himself was a child of adultery, that He Himself was a child of sexual sin. They may well have seen Him being gracious to that woman as reflective of His own necessity, of tolerance for adultery because He Himself was an illegitimate child.

You say, "That's pretty vague there." Well it might be vague there, but go over to verse 41. As you follow along in what's going on in this chapter, Jesus confronts them directly, verse 41, "You're doing the deeds of your father," and, of course, their father was the devil, as He says down in verse 44. And then they say this to Him, verse 41, "They said to Him, we were not born of fornication." Whoa! What are they saying? "At least we aren't illegitimate." This could well be what was in their minds. At least we aren't illegitimate.

Go down to verse 48, and it gets even more direct. "The Jews answered and said to Him...Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan?" Whoa! Do you know what a Samaritan was? A Samaritan was somebody who was half Jewish, half...what?...Gentile. There's sort of a flow in this chapter that would lead us to indicate that they may well have come to the conclusion that all these supposed stories about Mary not being the mother of...that Joseph rather not being the father while Mary was the mother, all of this certainly had certainly been known and certainly been discussed in the circles around Nazareth and beyond...certainly Mary would have told many people that she conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit and not by Joseph. And it all would have come out, of course, because of the betrothal, and she was pregnant before the wedding ever occurred and everybody who was involved at the wedding, and that would be a community event would have known that, so there had to be an explanation for that. And so this explanation of a virgin birth would have circulated and it would have been for sure along the way that some of the Pharisees would have been exposed to this because they were scattered throughout the land and it would have been their idea that it didn't happen by God's power.

Jesus was an illegitimate Son of some Gentile who had cohabitated with an unfaithful Mary. After all, Nazareth was located just off the main highway between Jerusalem and the Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon. And the highway was traversed all the time by Roman soldiers and they went to Nazareth on occasion. Nazareth was a city of ill repute, frankly. It was a place notorious for corruption and vice. That's why John 1:46 the question is asked, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" It was

full of Roman soldiers and Greek merchants and it was known for its vice.

Maybe that's kind of where this whole thing began to develop to assault the deity of Jesus Christ even then, and mock Him by saying, "Well at least we weren't born out of pornea." Out of that grew a strange tradition called the Pandera tradition. Pandera, supposedly being the name of the soldier who lay with Mary and produced the child. You can read about it in sixth century and eleventh century Jewish writings. The whole story became very refined in the future as a way to explain away Jesus as a non-Messiah, the Jews having always rejected Him as Messiah.

There was another explanation that this Pandera name kind of got going and so there was another story that Mary's husband was named Joseph Pandera. Not everybody wanted to make Mary look really bad, so they did want her to have a husband named Joseph Pandera. That didn't solve much because that legend says there was a neighbor named Jochenan(?) and he went in and seduced Mary, but here's how he did it. Wanting to protect Mary because she was Jewish, some of the Jewish writers said, "Well, one night she was sleeping in her bed and Joseph was away in the night and the neighbor seeing Joseph depart in the night crept in when Mary was in bed and she thought it was her husband and she conceived." Joseph when he found out, according to the legend stayed until the birth and then deserted the family, but Mary always believed that Joseph was the real father. Well that's another one of those wacky bizarre fabrications.

The purpose of these, and I could go on and on with others, but the purpose of these blasphemous stories is singular, it is to deny Jesus as God. You understand that. It's to deny Jesus as God, to remove His claim to deity, His kingly right, His divine nature. And, of course, that's all a satanic agenda.

It wasn't too many years ago, probably 15 or 20 years ago when Hugh Shoefeld(?) wrote the very widely read book called The Passover Plot. It was as if people had been waiting for somebody to write a book that they could buy into as an explanation of the New Testament that they could tolerate. It was as if he served all the unbelievers well, all the critics, all the Christ-haters, all the rejecters of the gospel well by giving them an alternative explanation for what the New Testament said.

Hugh Shoefeld is a Jewish writer. He claimed that Jesus, first of all, was the natural son of Joseph and Mary. And that Jesus became a master conspirator. That's the main idea of The Passover Plot. Jesus was a smart guy and He figured out a plot, a really master conspirator who conspired to fulfill messianic prophecies, to engineer what looked like the fulfillment of messianic prophecies. And the whole reason that Shoefeld wrote the book was to exonerate the Jews from deicide. It has never been a popular idea with Jewish people, and it's understandable, that they wanted their Messiah executed. It is unthinkable to Jewish people that they would be guilty of killing God.

It's unthinkable. It creates tremendous hostility in the minds of many Jewish people that the Jews of the time of Jesus wanted Jesus executed and in pressuring the Romans to execute Him, they actually executed God. Shoenfeld wants to deliver Jewish people, at that time, from that stigma and so in order to do that he sets about to prove that Jesus was not God. All they did was kill a false claimant, a conspirator who was attempting by machinations and subtle tricks to convince people that He was the Messiah when in fact He wasn't.

All the critics that come at Christianity strike Christianity at the point of the deity of Jesus Christ. And the point where all of that is focused is on who He is, which is established by a virgin conception and virgin birth. So they start their denial at that point.

There are others who say that the Bible writers actually did believe in the virgin birth but they were wrong. They just recorded their wrong beliefs.

Some say the Bible writers lied. Shoenfeld says, and I quote, "There was nothing peculiar about the birth of Jesus, He was not God incarnate and no virgin mother bore Him. The church in its ancient zeal fathered a myth and became bound to it as dogma," end quote. Now what does he use to support that? Nothing.

Another writer, Boslooper(?) wrote, and here's a strange statement, "The virgin birth is a myth in the highest and best sense of the word," end quote. What is the highest and best sense of a lie? What is that? That's a strange phrase.

When we were in seminary we were always studying this kind of stuff and the key idea that liberal theologians have always used is bound up in a word "demythologizing." In their academic pride and in their blatant and obstinate unbelief they think they're engaging in a scholarly enterprise called demythologizing the Bible. And one of the most insidious myths that they have to get out of the Bible is the virgin conception, so they demythologize the Bible by stripping it of the virgin conception which strips Jesus of His deity.

Shoenfeld says that the virgin birth story takes the reader out of the world of sober reality into the world of fairy tale. Shoenfeld charges that the evangelical church has applied to its eyes the very dust of faith.

English bishop...the bishop of the Anglican Church, Bishop Robinson ranks the story of the virgin birth with Andy Capp comics. He says both are of the same kind of myth.

Well obviously these Christ deniers deny what Scripture says, of course. And the reason they deny what Scripture says is so that they can deny the deity of Christ and to do that they have to deny the virgin conception. They say the Bible would be a lot easier to believe without the miracles and Jay

Gresham Machon(?) said, "Yeah, but it wouldn't be worth believing." A Christ without a virgin conception would be no Christ at all. And Christianity would be another empty philosophy.

So these denials of the virgin conception are just ubiquitous. They're everywhere.

There's a second way in which Satan attacks the virgin conception, that's by counterfeiting it. These are more subtle and it's kind of interesting how the strategy has worked. I find this fascinating.

Now Satan is a very accurate interpreter of Scripture. Are you ready for that? First thing about it, Satan knows that every word in Scripture is true, he knows that because he knows God is truth and cannot lie because he himself dwelt in the presence of God before his fall. He knows God very well. He's been back to heaven on many, many occasions to accuse the brethren and to interface with God as indicated in the book of Job, and other occasions in Scripture. He knows God very well, he knows the character of God, the truthfulness of God and he knows the Word of God very well. And he's an outstanding expositor. He has the right interpretation of Scripture.

And there may be some Bible teachers who don't understand Genesis 3:15, but he does. Satan definitely understands it. I believe that Satan knew when God cursed him and cursed the man and cursed the woman, when God cursed Satan He said to him, "The seed of the woman is going to bruise your head." Satan knew what was going to happen. The seed of the woman, Genesis 3:15, the first prophecy of the Messiah, that a woman would have a seed...a woman would have a seed. Women don't have a seed, that's an indication of a virgin birth. I think Satan understood that.

You say, "Why do you think that?" Because Satan began to counterfeit the virgin birth. There's an ancient Sumerian Akkadian, those are ancient languages in the Middle East, an ancient Samarian Acadian story inscribed on a building at the time of Tacoulte(?) Orta(?) the Second who was a monarch from 890 to 884 B.C. And it says about Tacoulte Orta II that he was created by the gods who went into the womb of his mother and created him. It was even claimed that the goddess of procreation, some supposed deity, superintended the conception in the womb of the mother of King Sennacherib who was a real king, too, who ruled from 705 to 681 B.C. So Sennacherib was supernaturally conceived in his mother's womb.

Now if you go from there further east to Buddhism, I've always been fascinated by Buddhism, I did some work on it early in my education because of its fascination. Here is one, you ask a Buddhist how Buddha was conceived and they've got a story. Here it is. Buddha's mother has this dream, a noble elephant white as silver and snow, having six tusks, well proportioned trunk and feet, blood-red veins, adamant firmness of joints and easy pace has entered my belly. Now there is an evasion. I mean, that is just completely unimaginable. Ten months later Buddha was born.

I mean, that's everywhere so that when Christianity comes and says, "We have a virgin-born Savior." The world says, "Yeah, we do too."

"Yeah, we have one that was conceived by God in the womb of Mary." "Yeah, we have one too, yeah right out of heaven." Satan knew what was coming. All kinds of smoke screens.

When you start going around the world and you start studying all these religions, they've all got some kind of supernatural birth for the main person.

What about Hinduism? Hinduism is sometimes hard to figure out because millions and millions of deities. Hinduism claims that the divine Vishnu, if you know anything about Hinduism you know about the name Vishnu, the divine Vishnu was reincarnated seven times. The first Vishnu was incarnated as a fish. Vishnu is divine, he came as a fish, then he came as a tortoise, then he came as a boar, b-o-a-r, then he came as a lion...(laughter), if I hadn't had said anything you might have laughed anyway, right? Anyway, back to the point, he came as a fish, a tortoise, a boar, a lion and finally in his seventh incarnation this Vishnu deity descended into the womb of Divoky(?) and was born in her as the son named Krishna. Now if there's any name you associate with Hinduism, it's Krishna. If there's any other name you associate with Hinduism, even with a million gods, it's Vishnu. And right there you have this mother/child cult which supposes some supernatural conception.

It's the same story, same story, same story, same story, same source...satanic. You can study Greco-Roman mythology, the mother of Persius, this is another one of them, the mother of Persius conceived him by the power of the god Jupiter when he visited her in the form of a golden rain shower. There legend also, and this is maybe familiar to some of you who have studied Greek history, there was a legend that Alexander the Great was born by supernatural conception. The story was that the serpent, the serpent was Zeus and Zeus when he wanted to could take the form of a serpent. And so one time he took the form of a serpent at night and he crawled into bed with Olympus, who was the wife of Philip of Macedon, Philip of Macedon was the father of Alexander the Great. So one night when Philip was away maybe fighting a war or whatever, Zeus got into bed with Olympus as in the form of a snake. Zeus, by the way, if you study Greek mythology, he is the chief sexual deviate of all mythology...which is a projection of the deviation of the people who invent gods like that. But anyway, he impregnated as a serpent Olympus so that Alexander was the child of the god Zeus.

Maybe the wackiest of all of them is the belief that Pallas(?) Athena, this is kind of a reverse twist on it, Pallas Athena was born without a mother. According to Greek mythology he sprang out of the head of Zeus...full grown in full armor. Strange and bizarre, aren't they?

Now all of that to say this. The world has literally been covered with a mother/child cult. It comes in all forms, in all these great world religions, it's everywhere.

Why am I going through this? Because I want you to understand that this doctrine of virgin conception is so important that Satan has been doing everything he can possibly do to either deny it or to literally defuse it into a whole world of myths so that it looks like something utterly insignificant and not at all uncommon. It's just another myth and another legend. And you can understand how a Hugh Shoefeld or some other guy who doesn't know the Lord and doesn't believe the Bible starts wandering around and finds this mother/child myth everywhere, he comes in to Christianity he sees the same thing there and his conclusion is just the same old myth that wanders all over the globe and fits in to every different kind of world religious system. And when we Christians come and say that Jesus Christ was the God/Man born in the womb of Mary without a human father....really, you've got one of those, too. Satan is very subtle, isn't he?

You know what is so wonderful to me, the Bible just doesn't bother with all of that. In Luke 1 verse 35 it just says, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, the power of the Most High will overshadow you, for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God." That's the...that's the entire description of the virgin conception right there. There's no attempt to sort that all out from all of Satan's lies, it's just so pure, so clear, so clean, so precise.

And that leads us to the third point. The first point a week ago was the foundations of the virgin birth. Then today I've given you the fallacies of the virgin birth. Now I'm going to give you the fact of the virgin birth...the fact. That takes us to the text. We're going to look at verses 34 to 38. We're not going to look at it today, we don't have time to do that, just give you a little bit of it, but we're going to finish it two weeks from today because I have to preach in a conference next Sunday. But verse 34 to 38, give us the fact.

Now remember, let's go back to how we've outlined this four-part series. We saw the divine messenger in verse 26, back to verse 26, the divine messenger was Gabriel. He came to the divine choice, a virgin named Mary who is about a 13- or 14-year-old girl. He brought a divine blessing, verse 28, you're favored, the Lord's with you, verse 30, you've found favor with God. The divine messenger came to the divine choice, brought a divine blessing and announced a divine child, verses 31 to 32. You're going to have a child, the child will be Jesus, that is He'll be the Savior, He'll be great, He'll be the Son of the Most High. He will be in the line of David, reigning on the throne of David and that will last forever.

So divine messenger, divine choice, divine blessing, divine child, comes to the fifth point, divine miracle...35 to 38...I'm sorry, 34 to 38, divine miracle. And it's...the way to understand this is just let me give you five words as we go through. Word number one, supplication. They all start with "s". Word number one, supplication.

Verse 34, and we'll just look at this first one. "Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be since I'm a virgin?'" She had just been told the most astonishing thing that any woman in history had ever heard. You're going to have a Son and that Son will be the Savior, will be the Son of the Most High, el elyon, God, and He will be an eternal King. She seeks to understand this. She doesn't doubt it. She's not like Zacharias. You remember when God said to Zacharias, you and Elizabeth in your old age are going to have a son in verse 18, Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this for certain?" I'm not sure I believe you. I'm not sure I believe you for I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years. He was careful how he referred to her, he wasn't about to say I'm an old man and she's my old lady. He knew a thing or two.

He doubted. He said...I don't...I'm not certain about this. I love verse 19. "The angel said to him, 'I am Gabriel.'" This isn't some local yokel talking to you, I am Gabriel, I stand in the presence of God and I've been sent by Him to tell you this, what do you mean you don't know whether what I've said is true?

And then Gabriel said to him...Well, there's some consequences for your unbelief, you're going to be...you're going to be deaf and dumb until the child's born.

That wasn't the case with Mary. Doubt is unbelief, she didn't have any unbelief, she didn't have any doubt. She just said, "How can it be?" She wanted to know the method. She wasn't questioning the reality of it, the truth of it. She believed what Gabriel said. She just said, "How can this be since I am a virgin?" Literally in the Greek, "I do not know a man." Knowing a man was a sort of a Hebrew euphemism for having a sexual relationship. We carry that over into English, we talk about sexual relationships as carnal knowledge. She didn't question that she was going to have a child, she just said how can it be since I'm a virgin?

Now some people have said, "Well, the angel was just predicting that when she got married she would have a Son." Well then why would she ask such a question? How can this be since I am virgin? She knew what the angel was saying was this, you're going to have a Son, you're going to have a kind of Son that is going to be the Son of the Most High. Joseph was never discussed. She also knew that it was going to be immediate, that it was going to be imminent, that it was going to happen before she married Joseph and before they had any relations. She knew that.

She also knew that insemination apart from a man was humanly impossible, yet the angel was declaring an imminent pregnancy before her marriage. She knew he wasn't talking about...Well, yeah, you're going to get married and then you're going to have a baby...or she wouldn't ask...how can this be since I'm a virgin? She knew she was to be conceiving while a virgin. And she said, "How can that happen?"

Such an honest question. There's no rebuke as there was in the case of Zacharias. The only way her query, or question makes any sense is to accept the fact that she understood it to mean she would have a child while she was still a virgin...otherwise it's a nonsense question. She asks the question.

By the way, the Roman Catholic Church jumps in here and teaches the doctrine of perpetual virginity...that not only was she a virgin when she conceived Jesus and up to the time Jesus was born, but she was permanently a virgin or she was always a virgin. That's not true. Matthew chapter 1 verse 24, "Joseph arose from his sleep after the angel had announced in his dream that she was going to have a child who would be God. He did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, took her as his wife, and kept her a virgin." Forever? No. "Until she gave birth to Jesus." He kept her a virgin until she gave birth to Jesus. After that she had a lot of children. Matthew 12 verse 46, "While Jesus was speaking to the multitudes, His mother and brothers were standing outside seeking to speak to Him. And someone said to Him, 'Behold, Your mother and your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You.'" He had a family of brothers, they were half-brothers in the sense that He Himself was not a son of Joseph, but they were in the same family, they were born to Mary. They're even identified. Matthew 13:55, Jesus is teaching in the synagogue and the people say, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" Isn't this the carpenter's son? "And is not His mother called Mary and His brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas, and His sisters, are they not all with us?" We don't know how many children that Mary and Joseph had, but after Jesus was born Mary and Joseph had both boys and girls, a full family. John 7 verse 3, verse 5, verse 10 talks about Jesus' brothers.

That did take place. She did get married. They did have children. But she knew...that's why she asked the question that this was something completely apart from that.

The angel answered her question. How is it going to happen? I love this, verse 35, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you. The power of the Most High will overshadow you, for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God," not the son of Joseph. That verse, verse 35, is so deep and so profound, it's really beyond our comprehension. It's the description of the miracle of virgin conception by the Holy Spirit. We're going to look into that, try to see what our minds can understand next time as our time is gone. And we'll go from the supplication to the strategy which the angel reveals.

Father, we thank You for the great, great truth of the virgin conception. We thank You that Your promises are fulfilled, Your power has no limit and Your people are Your instruments. Those are such wonderful lessons we see in the story of Gabriel and Mary. Your promises will be fulfilled, Your power has no limit and Your people are Your instruments. In this case this dear young girl, Your instrument, to bring into the world the Savior. Thank You for this great truth, in Christ's name. Amen.

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