

The Occurrence of the Virgin Birth

Scripture: Matthew 1:21–25

Code: B111225

Matthew's explanation of the significance of the virgin birth came within the revelatory dream God gave to Joseph. Such extraordinary, direct communication evidently occurred while Joseph slept. Matthew does not record any detail of Joseph's immediate reaction, except to say that he woke up and obeyed the angel's instructions: "Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus" (Matthew 1:24–25).

You can imagine how great Joseph's feelings of amazement, relief, and gratitude must have been once he realized what the Lord, through the heavenly messenger, had told him. Not only could he go ahead and gladly take Mary as his wife with honor and righteousness, but also he could rejoice at the privilege of being allowed to bring up God's own Son.

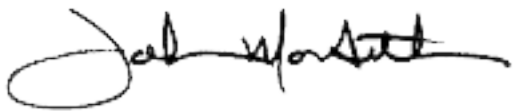
The wedding ceremony of Joseph and Mary likely took place soon after Joseph received the angel's announcement. Matthew makes it clear that Mary remained a virgin until after Jesus was born, implying that normal marital relations began after that time. That, along with the references to Jesus' brothers and sisters (Matthew 12:46; 13:55–56; Mark 6:3), proves Mary was not a virgin for her entire life, as some claim.

Finally, Joseph followed through on God's command in Matthew 1:21 and named the baby Jesus, indicating, as we've already seen, that He was to be the Savior.

The amazing fact of Jesus' supernatural birth is the only way to explain the perfect, sinless life He lived while on earth. A skeptic who denied the virgin birth once asked a Christian, "If I told you that child over there was born without a human father, would you believe me?" "Yes," the believer replied, "if he lived as Jesus lived."

Christ's virgin birth is a necessary component that helps us believe and make sense of the entire story of His person and work. His extraordinary conception and birth, not before or since equaled, is an amazing reality that we should with joy and gratitude never take for granted.

Keep those truths central in your celebration of the Savior this year. Have a blessed Christmas!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Fort". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a trailing flourish at the end.

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