

The Birth of the King

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 80-31

We're going to take a few weeks off our of study of 1 Timothy in order that we might identify ourselves with this wonderful time of year, the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. And I would encourage you, if you will, to take your Bible and open it to Matthew chapter 1. I want to read a couple of portions regarding His birth from Matthew and then Luke, and emphasize in the message this morning the significance of the virgin birth of Christ.

Matthew's gospel, chapter 1 and verse 18 says, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her desired to divorce her secretly. But when he had considered this, behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit and she will bear a son and you shall call His name Jesus for it is He who will save His people from their sins. Now all this took place, that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son and they shall call His name Emanuel which translated means God with us. And Joseph arose from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took her as his wife and kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a son and he called His name Jesus."

And then in Luke chapter 1 beginning at verse 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."

Now in both of these passages the emphasis of the text is clearly upon the truth that Jesus was born of a virgin woman, that His mother who bore Him had no knowledge of a man in the physical sense. This birth is without question the most startling, amazing of all births in the annals of human history.

And history has some pretty amazing births. The birth of Isaac to nearly 100-year-old parents who were barren all their life and who laughed at the thought of a barren woman giving birth at that age and yet the miracle happened and Abraham and Sarah brought forth Isaac.

And then there was the amazing and miraculous birth of Samson. The wife of Manoah was also barren all her life long but the Lord opened her womb and gave her a child, a child not like any other child who had ever lived, a child who could turn a lion inside out, who could tie the tails of foxes together, set them on fire and send them through a field, a child who could kill a thousand men with a jawbone of an ass, a child who could pull down a temple on thousands and thousands of the enemies of God. A miracle child and a miraculous birth.

And then there was the birth of Samuel to the barren Hannah who longed so much to have a child. And having had her womb closed, the Lord also opened her womb and she brought forth that Samuel, that unique prophet, priest and anointer of kings.

And then there was the astounding birth of John the Baptist to Zacharias and Elizabeth who was also called barren. But in old age by a miracle of God was given a child of whom Jesus said he was the greatest man who ever lived up until his time.

Biblically then there have been some amazing births and even historically. We won't take the time to chronicle all the amazing births. I think back to the famous Dionne quintuplets born in 1934, receiving international attention. And even more recently the Stanic(?) sextuplets born in Colorado in 1973. And then I think to little Louise Brown in 1978, the first test-tube baby, an incredible result of twelve years of research, the mother's egg being fertilized outside the mother's body by the father's sperm, conceived in a test tube, placed back in the womb, carried to full term until the child was born. That's an amazing birth. And the world, by the way, has made some monumental issues out of its capabilities in terms of childbirth in these days.

But even though the births that I've mentioned to you were amazing, in some cases the biblical ones were even divinely the result of God's action, yet none of them even comes near the incredible birth of Jesus Christ. Now science has done some interesting things in the area of quote/unquote virgin birth. I don't know if you realize this but if you take the word parthenos which is the word for a virgin and you take the word Genesis which is the word for birth or beginning and put them together you have parthenogenesis which is a historic scientific pursuit. Scientists even today are studying partheno genetics...in other words, the capability of producing a child from a virgin. It literally means virgin birth. And so, partheno genetic lab experiences go on all the time as they attempt to produce parthenogenic life among lower forms of life.

And there has been a modicum of some interesting results. For example, within the world of honeybees, unfertilized eggs develop into drones and they are sort of parthenogenesis. In 1886,

Tacommeroth(?) a scientist developed the capability for artificial parthenogenesis in the unfertilized eggs of silkworms by creating an environment in which that took place. Around 1900 Morgan and Mead were able to start the eggs of sea urchins and marine worms to develop by placing them into various salt solutions and sea water.

And then perhaps most interesting of all, in 1939 and 1940 there was a scientist named Pinkus(?) who produced several rabbits through chemical temperature effects upon the ova. Now this has been part and really the extent of the capability of parthenogenetic science but no success has ever been known in the higher forms of life and none at all in the human level, of course. Virgin births at the human level are biological impossibilities. And no explanation of science can in any way, shape or form explain the birth of Jesus Christ. Science has no explanation.

The best that science could do would be to trump up some kind of imaginary possibility of Mary partheno genetically producing a child because some circumstances might have been made right within the environment of her body. But the best that that could accomplish is very interesting. That absolutely impossible dream could never bring forth a son...and I'll tell you why. Geneticists have demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that mammals, including man if you look at man from the standpoint of his physiology, have two x chromosomes in the females and in the males there is an x and a y chromosome. Thus when an unfertilized egg cell would duplicate its chromosomes in response to some artificial stimulation, since it can only happen in a female and since a female only has two x chromosomes, a female if it could parthenogenetically reproduce could only reproduce another what? Female. And so there is absolutely no scientific possibility for a parthenogenetic birth that can be explained in any natural way at all. Even if we can allow for some natural thing, Mary would have produced a daughter not a son, but that even producing a daughter is an utter impossibility. When Mary gave birth to Jesus without a father, Jesus was a son, the theory of any natural explanation was forever eliminated. And since the human male determines the sex of the child, it is obvious that the sex of Jesus' human nature was determined by a miracle of God. He was God the Son and not to be parthenogenetically produced as God the daughter...in spite of what Women's Liberationists would like to think.

God divinely created male chromosomes, planted them in the body of Mary so that she without any contact with a man her life time could produce a male child. The birth of Jesus Christ then stands alone as utterly inexplicable from any natural vantage point. He was born of a woman who had never known a man and He Himself was a son, produced by no earthly father at all but by the heavenly Father who because He created all that is found it not difficult at all to produce the God/Man Jesus Christ. No thing is hard for God, no thing is easy for God, all things are equally done by God at the express purpose of His will and intention.

The message of Christmas, people, is not gifts and trees and presents around the tree and cards and manger scenes and all of that, that's peripheral. The message is the incarnation God born in human

flesh. And that's what we want to communicate when given the opportunity.

Some Jewish leaders at the time of the birth of Christ, no doubt, believed that the promised Messiah would be the son of David. They must have believed that. They were happy to sing hosannas to the Son of David at His triumphal entry. They assumed the Messiah would come through the line of royalty based on 2 Samuel 7, the promise of God to David. But they really didn't know anything more than that and there certainly was no pervasive belief that the Messiah would be a virgin born incarnation of the very God of Gods Himself. In fact, when Jesus claimed to be God incarnate, they accused Him of...what?...of blasphemy. And the same denial persists today. The virgin birth is attacked constantly. And it's attacked because people deny the deity of Christ. Whether they are atheists, skeptics, liberals, or occultists, typically two of which came to my door yesterday while I was studying and they were the Jehovah's Witnesses who wanted to argue with me that Jesus is not God.

Well, I'm ready for that. But it's amazing to me...it's amazing to me that even within the framework of Protestantism, for example, the last available survey that I saw of students in Protestant seminaries in America, indicate that about 56 percent of them believe in the virgin birth. And 59 percent of the people in the major denominations believe in the virgin birth. And it's on the decline. Now if you deny the virgin birth, you have a major problem. One, the Bible is lying so you've just lost your authority. Two, you have eliminated the possibility of Jesus Christ being God. Therefore the whole of the gospel is destroyed. But fortunately truth is not established by the vote of seminary students...nor is it established by the vote of people in the major denominations. Paul said, "Let God be true and every man a liar." If God loses by 20 million to one, God is still right. We don't determine truth by majority vote.

But the virgin birth is so essential and that's why it's constantly being attacked. But the attack on the virgin birth is simply a way to deal with the issue of denying the deity of Christ.

Go to Matthew 16 for a moment as we begin to look at the Scripture a little more closely. In Matthew 16 we find a typical scenario that can be pulled into our own time today. When Jesus came to the district of Caesarea Philippi, which is way in the north area above Galilee, He began asking His people saying, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" In other words, what is the latest Gallup Poll tell us the popular viewpoint about Jesus is? And here comes the answer. "Well they said, some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, others Jeremiah, and still others say one of the prophets."

Now what do all of those have in common? They are all...what?...men...people, human beings. Common opinion is that Jesus is a man, maybe a reincarnated man, maybe...not a reincarnated man really but a resurrected man, but nonetheless a man. He is John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, one of the prophets. Nobody's saying He's God. "But He said to them, Who do you say that I am? And Simon Peter at that very moment was compelled by the Holy Spirit to open his mouth and say, Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." Men say He's a man, but God says He's God. And that is the

crux of the issue. If you go out today to survey the world around you, you will find that the popular viewpoint is that Jesus was a man, Jesus was a good man, Jesus was the best of men, Jesus was the noblest example of humanity who ever lived. The answer is wrong, He is God. And a real incarnation, a real incarnation of God in human flesh demands a virgin birth. You cannot have a being who is God and man unless the progenitors of that being are God and man. And so God fathers and Mary mothers the product being the God/Man, the incarnate eternal Son of God.

Now let's look at the virgin birth from a couple of angles. Okay? I want you to understand it. The foundations, first of all, of the virgin birth, why do we believe this? Well, first of all, we just affirmed why we believe it from the standpoint of Scripture, right? So the first foundation on which the virgin birth is built is the veracity, authenticity, inerrancy and inspiration and truthfulness of the Word of God. It's very clear in Matthew 1:18 to 25 and in Luke 1:26 to 33 and following that Jesus is said to be born of a virgin. Now if you deny the virgin birth, you are denying the truth of Scripture. If you deny the truth of Scripture, you are denying the truthfulness of God. If you are denying the truthfulness of God, then you have an unholy God. And if you have an unholy God, we can pack the whole thing in and forget it and live like animals because nothing matters anyway. So you tear the whole of the seamless garment and rip it to shreds if you attack only the virgin birth. Everything else goes down, too.

So, the first thing is the New Testament document very clearly says He was born of a virgin. In fact, to just illustrate that a bit further, Matthew chapter 2 having followed up, of course, the statement of the angel with the details of the birth of Christ affirms this. You will find something conspicuously absent in the testimony of chapter 2 and that is any identification of Joseph as the father of Jesus. None exists. And there's ample opportunity for that to have been stated, if indeed it should have been. For example, verse 11, it says, "And they...being the wise men, the Magi...they came into the house, saw the child with Mary His mother." Then you'll notice further in verse 13, "When they had departed, behold an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph...it doesn't say Joseph His father but Joseph...arise and take the child and His mother." Verse 14, "And he arose...it doesn't say the father arose...he arose, took the child and His mother." And down in verse 20, "Arise and take the child and His mother." Verse 21, "And he arose and took the child and His mother."

Now you'd have to be blind not to understand the emphasis there. Mary is the mother but nowhere is Joseph ever alluded to as the father...nowhere, because he wasn't the father. In fact, the father is designated in verse 15, "And there, it says, they went into Egypt and were there until the death of Herod, that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet," this is from Hosea verse 1 of chapter 11..."the prophet might be fulfilled saying, Out of Egypt did I call My Son," and that's God speaking. God is Father, Mary is mother. And with a divine Father and a human mother, you have the God/Man Jesus Christ.

So, the first foundation of the virgin birth is found in the pages of the New Testament. The second one is in the Old Testament. Let's go back to Genesis chapter 3 to a somewhat familiar text and just make

mention of it. The foundation of the virgin birth is not only in the New Testament but also in the Old. When the serpent is cursed by God because of his part in leading the human race into sin, verse 15 of Genesis 3, the judgment of God comes upon that serpent, Satan, and God says, "I will put enmity," that is antagonism, hatred, opposition, "between you and the woman and between your seed, the offspring of Satan, and her seed. He shall bruise you on the head and you shall bruise Him on the heel."

Now there's a general sense in which this could be understood to be nothing more than a statement that the children of Satan and the children of the covenant, or the promise, the righteous seed that will eventually come out of Eve will fight against each other. It could be a very general statement that Satan in the end is going to be defeated by man. But it has to be seen as more specific than that because what man is it who will ultimately defeat Satan? If Satan and his children are set against mankind and the children of men, and if Satan will bruise the heel of mankind but Satan's head will be bruised by mankind, what man is it who bruises the serpent's head? There's only one man and that man here, I believe, is most interestingly identified as HER seed, between your seed, Satan, your offspring and HER seed. It is obvious that no one woman has ever had a seed. No woman has ever produced a child parthenogenetically, and yet here is the prophecy that the seed of the woman would bring about the devastation of the serpent. And we know that in the cross of Christ and the victory that He gained there, He accomplished the devastation of Satan and his eternal damnation. And so there is a sense in which the very term "her seed" alludes to the reality of a virgin birth because the only time a woman ever had a seed was when Mary was impregnated by the Spirit of God to bring forth Christ.

Now I want you to look to a second passage in the Old Testament, Isaiah 7:14, a very familiar one, we won't take the time to develop the whole context. We've done that on other occasions. Simply to read Isaiah 7:14 and then allude to the commentary on it which comes in Matthew 1:22 and 23. Isaiah 7:14 says, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign, behold a virgin," and the word here is *almah* in Hebrew, it appears nine times in the Old Testament, eight of those times it means pure virginity, and so that is its predominant meaning and certainly its meaning here because that's the way it is interpreted by the inspired writer Matthew. And Matthew being inspired and interpreting Isaiah gives us its true interpretation. So it should be translated a virgin. Some people say no, it just means a young woman. Well if it means a young woman shall be with a child and bear a son, that's nothing special. Why and how would that be a sign of any significance? But when a virgin is with child and bears a son and then calls his name Emanuel, the last two words...pardon me, the last two letters "el" is the name of God. The first part means with us. When a virgin has a child named "God with us," that is unusual. So Isaiah predicts here the birth of a child born of a virgin whose name will be "God with us."

Now as I said, in Matthew 1:22 and 23 that is very directly interpreted. Now all this took place that was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled saying, Behold the virgin. And Matthew

uses parthenos which means virgin and nothing else but virgin. She will be with child and bear a son and call his name Emanuel, translating that it means God with us. So Matthew tells us essentially what Isaiah meant. The total absence of sexual intimacy is bound up in the word parthenos or virgin.

Jesus used that word three times in the parable of the ten virgins to emphasize their virginity. Luke used it twice of Mary and used it also of Philip's four daughters when he wrote the book of Acts. Paul carefully in 1 Corinthians 7 distinguished between a virgin and an unmarried woman who was married prior and been divorced and a wife who was presently married. John records the word as descriptive of men who had no sexual relationships with woman but were totally yielded to God, he so speaks in Revelation 14. So sexual abstinence is essential to the meaning of parthenos. Mary was a virgin and a virgin with child is a miracle. In fact, the text can be literally translated, "Behold, the pregnant virgin is bearing a son and she calls His name God with us." God has come down, joined in this miracle, that seed of a man with the egg of a woman to produce the God/Man. This is the sign, the divine miracle.

And then there is Jeremiah 31:22, you don't need to turn to it. But in Jeremiah 31:22 it says this, listen to this, "The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth." Having a baby is not a new thing. The Lord has created a new thing. Listen, "A woman shall encompass a man." Now we cannot be explicitly dogmatic on that but it is interesting if you look at the rabbis' interpretation of Jeremiah 31:22. They said, for example, this is a Messianic context to be sure, they said, quote: "Messiah is to have no earthly father." Another rabbi said, "The birth of Messiah alone shall be without any defects." Another said, "His birth shall not be like that of other men." Another said, "The birth of Messiah shall be like the dew of the Lord as drops upon the grass without the action of man."

So when the rabbis looked at the Messianic text of Jeremiah 31 and looked at that verse, they saw in it a miraculous birth. It may well be that even at the time of the birth of Christ, though the vast majority of people did not expect Him to be virgin born, though the vast majority of people obviously didn't believe He was virgin born. There may have been some who understanding this rabbinic interpretation of Jeremiah 31:22, understanding the meaning of Isaiah 7:14 and Genesis 3:15 may not have been surprised at all when Jesus claimed to have been born of a virgin. By the way, that claim must have gotten out. It must have been known. The testimony was that this Jesus was born of a virgin. That was not hidden.

For example, in John 7:27 speaking of Christ as compared to the Messiah, there's an interesting statement made by the people. The people say, "We know where this man is from." In other words, we know Jesus came from Nazareth. "But whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He's from." In other words, they just couldn't accept that Jesus was the Messiah because everybody knew He came out of Nazareth and they may have had this lingering feeling that there would be some kind of grandiose supernatural birth and Jesus seemed to be such a normal common person. So some people may have assumed the Messiah was going to be born in a miraculous way. Others may have

known Jesus was born in a miraculous way. And some wouldn't have believed that Jesus was born in a miraculous way at all.

But the Old Testament was clear. If they had understood Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14, Jeremiah 31:22 and even Psalm 2, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." And so the Old Testament, the New Testament lays the foundation for the virgin birth.

Can I give you a third foundation? The doctrine of the trinity. The Bible very clearly teaches that God is one God. Deuteronomy 6:4 and 5, "The Lord our God is one...the Lord our God is one." We believe in one God, there are no other gods, God will not tolerate any other gods. And the Scripture says you are to love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength.

What that means is you have no affection left for any other deity. You have no love for any other God. You are to love the one true God with all the capacity to love that you have because there is no other God and so you give everything to Him.

Now only if God was one God could we love Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. We couldn't love more than one with all our whole being, anymore than you could love one husband with all your heart and soul and mind and strength and love somebody else the same way. If there were three gods, as some would like us to believe, then we could love two and leave one off or love one and leave two off, or give a third of our love to each, but there's only one God and we are to love that one God with all our capacity and that one God reveals Himself in three persons. You say, "Do you understand that?" Of course not, I only believe that. I do not understand that. And there is no illustration that I've ever heard that makes it more understandable to me. Any illustration I've ever heard of the trinity confuses me and diminishes the reality of the trinity.

But even though God is one and we are to love Him totally as one, He has three persons. In fact, in Genesis 1 He uses the term God in the beginning, God created and the term is plural. Elohim is plural. In Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man in...what?...our image." That's plural personal pronoun. In Isaiah 6:8, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us, says God." God speaks as a plurality. In Isaiah 48:16, "Come ye near unto me and hear ye this, I have not spoken in secret from the beginning, from the time that it was there am I and now the Lord God and His Spirit have sent Me." That's Christ talking, preincarnate, about the Father and the Spirit and Himself.

In Matthew 3 at the baptism of Christ, Jesus in the water, the voice of the Father, "Thou art My Son in whom I am well pleased." The Spirit descends as a dove, you have all three at the same moment in time at the same event. In John 15 Jesus talks about going and He will ascend and He will send from the Father the Holy Spirit...Father, Son and Holy Spirit are there as well. At the end of 2 Corinthians, you know that beautiful benediction that comes in verse 14 of chapter 13, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." All three members of

the trinity in one verse. They are three and yet one.

Now if Jesus Christ is really God, then the virgin birth occurred, then the incarnation is real. This is a logical sequence. Putting it in frail human terms, you cannot have God born into this world unless God is born to God. You can't have God born to man being God. God has to be born to God to be God, but born to man to be man, so He is God impregnating a woman. The Old Testament demands it. The New Testament demands it. The doctrine of the trinity demands it. And so I say, if you attack the virgin birth, you wipe out the veracity of the New Testament, you wipe out the veracity of the Old Testament and you have just wiped out the heart and soul of everything we know to be true about the nature of God and that is that He is three in one.

And then fourthly, Messianic prophecy comes into the picture also. The Messiah had to be God in human flesh. He had to be God in human flesh. And this because of what the Old Testament has to say about God. Now let me give you what I mean then. There's so many Scriptures but I'm going to boil it down to just a very brief look at Isaiah 43...Isaiah 43. Messiah has to be God in human flesh, thus His birth has to be a miracle of deity and humanity united. But notice Isaiah 43 verse 11, listen to this, "I...God speaking here...I, even I am the Lord." Okay? He just said in verse 10, "Besides Me there's no other God...no other God," before Me or after Me. "I even I am the Lord," no one else, "and there is no Savior beside Me." There is no Savior beside Me, now God says that.

You know what Matthew 1:21 says? "Call His name Jesus for He shall...what?...save His people from their sins." Now if there's only one Savior and God says I'm that Savior and Jesus says I'm that Savior, the logical conclusion is Jesus is God. The testimony of Messianic anticipation demands the affirmation of Jesus as God. And if He is God, then His birth has to be a miracle of deity and humanity united.

Verse 14 of Isaiah 43, "Thus says the Lord your Redeemer...the Lord your Redeemer." God takes on the title of redeemer, the one who buys back the sinner from sin and death and judgment. In verse 22 of Isaiah 45, "Turn to Me and be saved all the ends of the earth." God alone is able to redeem men and yet in Galatians chapter 3, the testimony of the Apostle Paul comes in verse 13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law." Now if there's only one redeemer and God is that redeemer and Christ is that redeemer then those two must be one. They must be one. And if Christ is one with God, then He must have been born of God, therefore there must be a virgin birth of God and man coming together to produce the God/Man.

Look at verse 15 of Isaiah 43, "I am the Lord your Holy One," and here God takes the title of the Holy One, the one set apart from all evil. Back in verse 14 He said it also, "The Lord your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." And yet in Luke 1:35 it calls Jesus that holy offspring. If God is the Holy One and Christ is the Holy One, then Christ is God. And verse 15 also says, "I am your king." God says I am your king. You can't have two kings, only one king. And yet in Revelation it says that Jesus Christ is

King of kings and Lord of lords, Revelation 19:16. In Deuteronomy 6:13 it says you are to worship the Lord your God and Him only shalt thou serve...and yet God in Hebrews 1:6 says Christ is to be worshiped. He says, "Let all the angels of God worship Him." If God says worship only Me and then God says worship Christ, Christ must be the same as God. And it just goes on and on like that.

Isaiah 45 verse 22, "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself that the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back," then this line, "that to Me...that is to God, listen...every knee will bow, every tongue will confess allegiance." Does that sound familiar to you? Is there a New Testament passage like that? Philippians 2:9 to 11 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue should confess Jesus as Lord to the glory of God. Here it says you bow to God, in the New Testament you bow to Christ and therefore Christ is God. There is no alternative to that...no alternative. And I could go on and on with a myriad such Scriptures.

But the point is the foundation of the virgin birth is bound up in New Testament revelation, in Old Testament prophecy, it's bound up in the doctrine of the trinity, the nature of God and it's tied together in the link between the deity of God and the deity of Jesus Christ which Scripture makes so very clear when you compare the Old Testament statements about Christ with the New Testament statements...pardon me, the Old Testament statements about God with the New Testament statements about Christ. The foundation then is solid.

Now that leads me to digress for a moment to talk about the fallacies about the virgin birth...the foundation is solid but the fallacies are abundant. This doctrine is incessantly attacked. I was talking to a friend of mine yesterday who said that one of the leaders in the church he just left affirms the deity of Christ but denies the virgin birth. How in the world you could ever come up with that is beyond me. You really are saying I just have committed intellectual suicide but I choose to do that. I have eliminated all logical thought from my mind and so I believe this utterly illogically.

When anyone denies the virgin birth of Christ and anybody buys into such a denial, that denial is based upon the desire to eliminate Christ as deity...to deny His deity. That's what they're after. It's not as if the virgin birth stood alone and people are saying, "Well, I can't believe that, just too far fetched." The idea is they want to deny the deity of Christ and the only way to really cut that apart is to attack His virgin birth.

For example, a very well-known book of some few years back, "The Christian Understanding of God," written by Nels Faray(?) who is a hopeless liberal, absolutely lost in his own confused degenerate unregenerate mind, Nels Faray who writes about a Christian understanding of God doesn't know God, doesn't understand and isn't a Christian, and yet that's what he titled his book. It reminds me of Christian Science, you know. Christian Science isn't Christian or scientific, it's like Grape Nuts, there not grapes or nuts...I don't know what they are. But anyway, Nels Faray in his book, "A Christian

Understanding of God," which a lot of philosophers have read claim that if Jesus was not the natural son of Joseph then He had to be the illegitimate child of a Roman soldier. So he said you Christians can decide for yourself if you'd rather have Him be legitimate or illegitimate.

And, of course, the rock opera "Jesus Christ Superstar" has that one song that's the most popular song that says over and over, "He's a man, just a man." The title of the song is "I don't know how to love Him," or something like that. He's a man, just a man. And that's the heart of the issue. That's the real agenda. Let's get Jesus down from being God and make Him a man.

And even the religious leaders of Jesus' day, I think, were into this sort of illegitimate child idea. For example, I don't know if you ever noticed John 8:41. It's a very interesting statement. He is in this dialogue with the Jews who are very angry with Him, the Jewish leaders. And He says to them, "You're doing the deeds of your father." They were saying, "We're Abraham's children, we're Abraham's children." He's saying no, you're the devil's children and you're doing the deeds of your father. And so they said to Him, listen to this, "We were not born of fornication...what do you think they meant by that?...at least we aren't illegitimate." That was really a...really the intimation of the fact that Jesus was illegitimate. There may have been even at that time the rumbling rumor that He was born out of wedlock, that yes Joseph had not come together with Mary and yes Mary was a virgin in so far as Joseph, but that in fact she had had an affair with a Roman soldier.

Following that up, the next couple of verses down to verse 48 of John 8 is most interesting. "The Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?" They said to Jesus. Now what is a Samaritan? A Samaritan is a half-breed Jew and what? Gentile. They said, "Are we not right in saying You're a Samaritan?" Now that may be again another indication that the common belief among them was that Jesus was the result of Mary being impregnated by a Roman soldier or some Gentile. In fact, some liberals have even suggested that in John 8 where Jesus defends the woman taken in adultery and remember He says to the leaders, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone," that Jesus is defending this adulteress woman because He's defending His own heritage. This is the way His mother was and it was very emotional with Him so He's defending another harlot like His own mother. Blasphemous.

And, of course, Nazareth was located on the main highway between Jerusalem and the Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon. It was loaded with Roman soldiers. It was loaded with merchants. It was notorious with corruption, prostitution and vice. And so these Jews might have thought, "Out of Nazareth You've come...oh ho, that explains everything." Nathaniel's comment in John 1:46 was, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

So out of this grew what became known as the "Pandera" tradition, that a soldier named Pandera lay with Mary and produced the child. this appears again in the sixth century and in the eleventh century in Jewish writings. This is a very common Jewish explanation of where Christ came from.

Another Jewish explanation was that Joseph Pandera was married to Mary in a prior marriage. But a neighbor by the name of Jochanin(?) was actually the seducer of Mary. One night when Joseph was away on business, Jochanin sneaked in the darkness and Mary thought it was Joseph and he got with Mary and she conceived. Joseph when he found out stayed around until the birth and then deserted the family but Mary always believed Joseph was the real father. Poor victim Mary.

What's the purpose of such blasphemy? The purpose is not because of confusion in fact in Scripture, there's no confusion at all. The purpose is not because the Old Testament isn't clear. The purpose is not because it doesn't make sense in the trinity. The purpose is not because you can't compare Old Testament statements about God with New Testament statements about Christ. The purpose is a Satanic purpose to deny the deity of Jesus Christ, that's the purpose...to remove His Kingly right and His divine nature.

In recent years the book that I have become most familiar with in this subject is the book written by Hugh Shoenfield(?) called "The Passover Plot." Some of you may have seen or read that book. He's a Jewish writer. He claims that Jesus is the natural son of Joseph and Mary, that the Bible lies in what it says. That Jesus grew up to be a master conspirator who thought He could become the Messiah and so He plotted to fulfill all of these Messianic prophecies. He planned it all out...The Passover Plot. Only He didn't plan on getting executed at the end, that's where He goofed up His plans. And the whole book, the whole book from beginning to end is an attempt to deal with one issue, Shoenfield is mad that the Jews have been guilty of crucifying God's son, and so in order to get the Jews off the hook for killing the Son of God, since history is clear that they were involved in doing it, he has to prove Jesus wasn't the Son of God. And so the Jews simply killed a plotting phony Messiah and instead of then being victims of the judgment of God they become heroes because they eliminated one more phony Messiah. So the agenda is simply to deny the reality of Christ and who He is.

Shoenfield says, "There was nothing peculiar about the birth of Jesus." Isn't that brilliant? Nothing peculiar..where did he get that information? Right out of his own degenerate evil heart...right out of his own denial. He was not God incarnate, he says, and no virgin mother bore Him. The church in its ancient zeal fathered a myth and became bound to it as a dogma.

And you know, people believe that book. They believe it even though there's no evidence. Boslooper(?) another writer said, I like this line, "The virgin birth is a myth in the highest and best sense of the word." Really? I didn't know there was a highest and best sense of a lie. This is a common approach that liberal theologians call "demythologizing" the Bible. Shoenfield says, "That the virgin birth story takes the reader...get this...out of the world of sober reality into the world of fairy tale." And he charged that the evangelicals have applied to their eyes the fairy dust of faith. Bishop Robinson from England ranks the story of the virgin birth with Andy Capp comics. He says both are the same kind of myth.

But, you see, a Christ without a virgin birth would be no Christ at all. You don't have a God/Man. But that's the whole point, isn't it? That's what they're denying. So Satan attacks by flat out denial. But there's a second way, and this is most interesting, Satan attacks the virgin birth by counterfeiting it. I don't know if you know this but the world of religion is filled with virgin births, did you know that? In fact, current mother/child kind of cultic orientation in Roman Catholicism is not a direct product of the Scripture but it's a product of an amalgama of all kinds of mother/child counterfeits that Satan has postulated in myriads of religions.

Let me show you what I mean. Satan figures that if I can proliferate virgin birth and make it a common thing, that Christian reality of the virgin birth of Christ isn't going to stand up. So I don't know if you know this, but in Roman mythology, Zeus somehow impregnated Semele without contact. He thought her pregnant in his mind. And she gave birth as a virgin to Dionysius, the Lord of the Earth. Now who do you think invented that? Satan invented that and that was part of the mother/child cult. The mother was Semele and the Lord of the Earth was Dionysius. And you can look in Roman mythology and you will see there this mother/child cult, the counterfeit of the true Christ and Mary.

And then study Babylonian cultism, mystery religions that come out of the Babylonian time. Symeramus(?) who was the first priestess of the occult and the wife of Nimrod, the mighty hunter, she conceived a son whose name was Tammuz...you can see Jeremiah 44 and Ezekiel 8 and it tells about it there. And the record of the Babylonian occult says that Tammuz was conceived in Symeramus by...are you ready for this?...a sunbeam, a phony virgin birth. By the way, when Tammuz was born he was killed by a wild boar and died and his mother cried for him for 40 days and he rose from the dead, and that's where Lent comes from, not from the Bible. It strictly comes out of Babylonian myths.

The legend of Symeramus and Tammuz then passed all over the world. If you go to Egypt, it's the story of Isis who gave birth in a virgin way to Osiris. If you go to India it's Ecee(?) and Eswara(?). If you go to China, do you know they have a mother/child cult, it's Ching Muu(?) the holy mother with a baby in her arms. Now did you know about Ching Muu, the holy mother, and the baby? How about Asteroth and Baal in Phoenicia? Or how about Aphrodite and Keros in Greece? It's a very common myth that Satan has proliferated. In an ancient Samarian Acadian story described on a building which archaeologists have discovered, a certain Tu Kulte Orta II who lived in 890 and down to 884 B.C. or reigned at that period of time, he told in his document which he wrote on this building how the gods created him in the womb of his mother without a human father. It was even claimed that the goddess of procreation superintended the conception and the womb stages of King Sennacherib who was around 700 B.C.

How about Buddhism? At the conception of Buddha his mother has this dream and it's recorded in the Buddhist literature...A noble elephant white as silver or snow, having six tusks, well- proportioned

trunk and feet, blood-red veins, adamantive firmness of joints and easy pace has entered my belly...and ten months later Buddha was born. She was impregnated by a mystical elephant. Now when I take a look at Buddha, I'm not surprised because there is definitely a resemblance... I don't know if you've done any study of Hinduism, but Hinduism claims that the divine Vishnu after seven reincarnations...I don't know if you remember but Vishnu was reincarnated as a fish, a tortoise, a boar, a lion and then finally descended into the womb of Divoki(?) and gave birth to a virgin born son by the name of Krishna. And that's why the Beatles can sing, "Krishna" and switch over to "Lord" and back to "Krishna" and over to "Lord" because the convoluting of the whole virgin birth thing has mixed that up. And that's why Buddhists and even Hindus can find a place for tolerance to some extent of the story of the birth of Christ.

In Greek mythology, Greek-Roman mythology, the mother of Perseus(?) conceived him as a virgin because Jupiter made it rain golden rain on her and she gave birth to a child. And there was even a legend, you may have read this in some of your studies about Alexander the Great saying he was virgin born because one night a snake was sharing the bed of Olympus..that was the wife of Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander, and the snake got in bed and the snake somehow put a seed into Olympus and the seed was actually from Zeus through the snake and she conceived Alexander the Great.

There is the pagan account of the birth of Dallas Athena who had no mother and he was born, get this one, by springing out of the head of Zeus, full grown in full armor. Bizarre counterfeits of Satan...but Satan will attack the virgin birth by outright denial whether they're Jehovah's Witnesses or liberals or whoever, he'll attack it by convoluting the understanding of the virgin birth with a whole pile of other bizarre impossible virgin births that he has invented.

But that doesn't move the foundation for me, does it for you? In fact, when I read those things, if they weren't so tragic they'd be laughable.

But what is the end result of this? What is the point of the virgin birth? Look with me finally to Galatians chapter 4 and verse 4 and I just want to close with this. Please listen carefully. "But when the fullness of the time came," in other words, on God's perfect clock, within God's perfect timetable, when the time was right, "God...did you get that?...sent forth His Son." There's the Father...God sent forth His Son. The second person of the trinity became incarnate. The eternally existing second person of the trinity, fully God, became incarnate. God sent forth His Son. Then the human half, "Born of a woman," not born of a couple, not born of a father and mother, born of a woman...fully God and now fully man.

Why did He come? Verse 5, "In order that He might redeem those who were under the law that we might receive the adoption as sons." What does it mean to be under the law? I'll tell you what it means. God made a law, we broke it, we're under the law in reference to the consequence of

breaking it. We're under the law in the sense that we're under the chastisement, punishment, penalty of breaking that law. So here are all these sinners in the world about to be blasted into eternal hell because they have broken God's law and here comes Christ into the world, the God/Man, His agenda is to redeem those who were under the law and take them out from under the law and make them sons of God. Verse 6 says, "And when we are sons, God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts and we cry, Abba Father." In other words, we are intimately identified with God, we are no longer a slave but a son and if a son, then an heir through God. He takes us out from under the judgment of the law and makes us heirs of all that God possesses as His own sons. That's why He came.

If you deny the virgin birth, you deny the veracity of the New Testament. If you deny the virgin birth, you deny the veracity of the Old Testament. If you deny the virgin birth, you deny the essence of the nature of God as trinity. If you deny the virgin birth, you deny the very statements of Old Testament about God and New Testament about Christ which are demanded to be paralleled. If you deny the virgin birth, the sum of it all is this, that you deny your own redemption. There is no salvation. There is no redemption. And we are under the law, as to its curse. We are under the law, as to its damnation.

But Jesus Christ did come born of a virgin. God of very Gods and man as well, He...and this is important to understand...He as God had the power of salvation. He as man could fill the privilege of substitution...the perfect God/Man who died for us. Let's bow together in prayer.

Affirm in your heart in this moment of silent prayer before the Lord your belief in the virgin birth of Christ...affirm that to the Lord, thank Him for sending His Son. Do you believe? Is He your Lord? Have you bowed your knee to Him? Have you accepted the salvation, the redemption that He came to bring? That's what Christmas is about. It's about something so profoundly beyond the silly stupid things that occupy men at this season, it's something so profound that only God can fully understand it while man can reap the full benefit of it. It's something so profound that to spend ourselves in the shallows and trivialities of the world's preoccupation with its own indulgence is an affront to the holiness of this remembrance. You affirm in your heart the significance of the birth of Christ. And if He is your Savior, you thank Him. And if He's not, invite Him to be.

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