

March 8, 2020  
WHAT IF JESUS...? - Part 1

## **“What If Jesus *Wasn't* Born to a Virgin?”**

**Luke's account of Jesus' birth is generally seen as being told from Mary's perspective.**

**Luke 1:26-33 (ESV):** “<sup>26</sup>...the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, ‘Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!’ <sup>29</sup>But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup>and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’ <sup>34</sup>And Mary said to the angel, ‘How will this be, since I am a virgin?’ <sup>35</sup>And the angel answered her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy – the Son of God.’”

**Three times Luke tells us Mary is a “*virgin*,” but she will conceive a child through the power of the Holy Spirit *instead of Joseph*.**

**Matthew's account is generally seen as being told from Joseph's perspective.**

**Matthew 1:18-25 (ESV):** “<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’ <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: <sup>23</sup>Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel’ (which means, God with us). <sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, <sup>25</sup>but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.”

**Matthew adds that Mary remained a *virgin* until after giving birth to her Jesus.**

**Matthew 1:25** (NLT): “But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born....”

**The Enlightenment was “an intellectual and philosophical movement that dominated the world of ideas in Europe during the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century,” and emphasized reason, individualism, skepticism and science. (Wikipedia)**

**Enlightenment thinking among some theologians led to them trying to harmonize the bias *against* the supernatural of the “enlightened” mind with the church’s historic teaching about Christ.**

**If Jesus was *only* a man, then God wasn’t his Father – it had to have been Joseph, which meant Mary wasn’t a virgin when she conceived Jesus.**

**If we can’t trust the Bible’s story of Jesus’ birth, what else can’t we trust?**

## **WHY IS THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS SO IMPORTANT?**

**1. It affirms the credibility, trustworthiness and authority of Scripture.**

**Matthew was a tax collector who had to be precise in his work, while Luke was an educated man, a doctor.**

**Luke 1:1-4** (ESV): “<sup>1</sup>Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, <sup>2</sup>just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, <sup>3</sup>it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup>that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.”

**The fact that Paul didn’t write about Jesus’ birth can be explained as simply as the issue wasn’t controversial in the churches, so he had no reason to write about it.**

**Isaiah 7:14** (ESV): ““Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.””

**2. It demonstrates the divinity of Christ.**

**John 1:1,14** (ESV): “<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

**Colossians 2:9** (NIV): “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form”

**2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV):** “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

**Jesus was the full, perfect, sufficient, complete sacrifice for our sins, and that was only possible if he was sinless and divine.**

**3. It demonstrates the humanity of Christ.**

**1 John 4:2 (NLT):** “This is how we know if they have the Spirit of God: If a person claiming to be a prophet acknowledges that Jesus Christ came in a real body, that person has the Spirit of God.”

**Jesus understands everything we’ve gone through, because he he’s faced every temptation known to man.**

**Hebrews 4:15 (NIV):** “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin.”

**4. It shows God’s great love for all people.**

**The virgin conception and birth of Jesus was a complete act of God’s grace and love for us.**

**Jesus:** “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:10 ESV)

**Jesus:** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16 ESV)

**2 Corinthians 5:17-21 (ESV):** “<sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. <sup>18</sup>All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup>that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup>Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

**If we understand all God has done for us, then we understand that we weren’t simply saved for ourselves but to join in as his disciples in his ongoing mission “to seek and to save the lost” through the power of the Holy Spirit at work in and through us.**

## **Next Week: What If Jesus Gave into Satan's Temptation?**

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