



2016: Week 50

Sunday, December 11th 2016

"The Virgin Birth of the Savior"

Matthew 1:21–23

"²¹ 'She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.' ²² Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³ 'BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,' which translated means, 'GOD WITH US'" (NASB).

As we enter the Christmas season it will serve us well to focus on the truth behind God sending His Son into the world. The truth behind the *incarnation* (God becoming a man, specifically Jesus being born as a human baby) centers upon two fundamental realities: our sin and God's love. Our sin causes a separation between God and us. This started long ago with our ancestors, Adam and Eve, and it also continues today as well. On our own, we all stand condemned before a holy God because of our sin. **BUT** GOD— out of His great love for us— refuses to leave us helpless or hopeless in our situation. It is because of His unfathomable love that He chose to send His Son into the world. Jesus became a man to personally and eternally deal with our problem of sin. God knew that His plan was the only opportunity for us to be made right with Him. An often overlooked and underappreciated detail in this plan is something we refer to as "the virgin birth." I hope we find encouragement recognizing the attention to detail the Lord demonstrated in order to remedy our plight and offer us salvation from our sins.

READ Matthew 1:18–25

- The text declares that Mary became pregnant with Jesus by using the following phrases:
 "with child by the Holy Spirit" (v.18),
 "the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit" (v.19),
 "the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son" (v.22),
 and that Joseph *"kept (Mary) a virgin until she gave birth..." (v.25)*

Why does Matthew make such an emphasis on the miraculous details behind the conception of Jesus?

Why is it such a big deal that Jesus' mother was a *virgin* while becoming pregnant with Him?

- On Sunday morning, John took us all the way back to the beginning of the Bible regarding the importance of the virgin birth and our problem of sin. In the garden with Adam and Eve the Lord promised that "the seed" of the woman (**Genesis 3:15**) would personally deal with and crush the serpent. This is very unusual language. The only time the term "seed" is used in this sense it is always in connection with a man and never a woman.

In **Romans 5:12 & 18**, Paul states, "¹² just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned... ¹⁸ through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men. " Throughout this section in **Romans 5**, Paul identifies that humanity sinned in Adam and with Adam, and therefore the sons and daughters of Adam received a just condemnation for sin because of Adam's sin.

Jesus had an earthly mother, Mary, and was born fully human, possessing flesh and blood. However, He had no earthly father, and in a technical sense, He was not born a "son of Adam." Because Jesus is not a "son of Adam", He is exempt from the condemnation that passed to all of Adam's descendants. Jesus is without original sin (by birth) and without any other sin (by choice). He is perfect, blameless, spotless, and sinless.

Why did *Jesus' birth* have to happen exactly the way that it did in order for Him to be an acceptable sacrifice, capable of paying for our sins at the cross?

Why did *Jesus' life* have to be lived exactly the way that it was, so that He could be an acceptable sacrifice, capable of paying for our sins at the cross?

FAMILY PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for having a specific plan in sending forth Your Son, so that He would be born without sin. Dear Jesus, thank You for refusing to sin during Your lifetime, so that You would be a blameless and sinless sacrifice for me! Thank You for saving me from my sins and for being Immanuel, "God with me." Dear Holy Spirit, thank You for opening the eyes of my heart, so that I can see and believe in the Gospel. Amen.