

## **GOD’S WAY IS NOT OUR WAY—THE BIRTH OF JESUS APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS OF JESUS’ BIRTH**

Take yourself back to the Old Testament times somewhere in the era of the prophets. What would you do with the writings of Moses and the prophets where there are seemingly contradictory passages dealing with the birth of Jesus? The prophets were confused, as even in their own writings there are prophecies that seem to contradict each other. They would write about the Messiah who would be the king and Savior of men, but then they would write that He would be a man of sorrows and rejected by men. The king would be a servant and be crucified and die.

1 Peter 1:10-11 says “Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when he testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.”

They could not figure out exactly what those scriptures meant as it seemed they clashed with each other. Only God Himself could have written this book. No man would have written problematic passages and gotten away with it. Through Christ, God fulfills the scriptures.

What are some of the prophecies that we would have trouble with in interpreting at that time? The first paradox we will look at is the deity and humanity of the Messiah. Those two natures of one being does not seem logical at all, and to a human mind without God’s revelation, it really can’t be understood. That is one reason why people have so much trouble in believing in the biblical God. What would you make of the Old Testament if you had read verses that pointed to the Messiah but they seemed to contradict ?

### **1. GOD AND MAN**

#### **A. SEED OF THE WOMAN--- Gen 3:15**

The first passage in the Bible dealing with the God-man is found in this early part of Genesis. This is known as the proto-evangelium, which means; the first good news. We see that God’s solution is going to come from a woman. He will be the Seed of the woman. We are not given much to learn here, but in light of other scripture, we know who this is and what it’s about. This one will deliver man from his sin.

#### **B. SEED OF ABRAHAM Gen 22:18**

The line of Abraham will bless the world in giving the hope through his people to the rest of the world. The ultimate hope is Christ who comes from Abraham. Again it is the seed of humanity that Christ will enter this world.

#### **C. SON OF GOD Psalm 2:7**

After seeing prophecies that dealt with the Messiah coming from mankind, we now come upon a verse that seems troubling. Instead of being born a man, he is spoken of by God as being His Son. He was to be the Son of God.

D. DESCENDANT OF DAVID- Psalm 132:11

This time a prophecy speaks of Messiah as coming from the line of David. Again, that would be the humanity of this one. It also deals with his kingship.

E. SON AND GOD BORN OF A VIRGIN Isaiah 7:14

Now, we come to the highlight passage of this God-man doctrine. God is going to give a sign. This means something out of the ordinary, or the supernatural. This is a virgin who will give birth to the Messiah. That is supernatural. A virgin, not a young woman will do this. A virgin woman will give birth to God's Son. Now, we are starting to get somewhere in putting this puzzle together. But puzzled is what it leaves us with. God's Son will be born into humanity. The other verses have said something like this. There must be something to this. How remarkable this is.

F. SON AND GOD AND KING Isaiah 9:6

This is only two chapters later and we are going to get more puzzled as we see that the Child will be born through humanity. But he is called Mighty God. God says here that there will be a man that is called Mighty God. What do we do with that? This would be difficult to comprehend. How can a child be born who is Mighty God? How could a child be born in time when he is the Father of eternity?

G. BORN OF MARY Luke 1:30

We will turn now to the New Testament to see if it can enlighten us on these confusing verses about one who is going to become man while he is already God. He was to be born to this specific woman, Mary, and yet, the Son of God. This is baffling. A woman will give birth to a son who made her.

H. BORN OF WOMAN Gal 4:4

He was to be fully man so he could take on our sin and pay for it.

I. SON OF MAN Luke 19:10

Luke referred to Jesus as the Son of Man describing how he related to man. So there is no doubt that this one had to be a man.

J. SON OF GOD Heb 1:2

Here, this is obvious that this one that keeps being identified is God. He created and is in the exact image of God. He is divine.

K SEED OF ABRAHAM AND DAVID Matthew 1:1

Matthew relates to the O.T. in showing that the Messiah was to be a man who came from the line of Abraham and David.

So: our summary is that just a plain reading of the texts shows that the Messiah was to be God and man, even as hard as that may be to swallow, it must be true. This is supported by Old and New Testament passages written by different men over many centuries.

Jesus the man, is the Yahweh God of the Old Testament.

How can God be man, and how can man be God?

He was the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us.

Another paradox or difficulty with certain passages would be the contradiction Of Judah.

## 2. THE LINE OF JUDAH

**A. KINGS WILL ALWAYS BE FROM JUDAH Gen 49:10**

Moses wrote this, that the line of Judah is where the kings would come from. There was to be no king outside the line of Judah.

That creates a problem, however.

Shiloh means the one to whom it belongs, or the one whose right it is. Whoever this king is, he is going to have to come from Judah. The 12 tribes are narrowed down to one from which will the ruling One come. So, what's the problem?

**B. THE PROBLEM Gen 38:24-30 / Lev 20:14, Deut 23:2**

How could David ever reign? Moses wrote about Judah being the only tribe from which the kings would come. Moses also wrote the Genesis 38 section. How was he going to figure this out with what he wrote? The Messiah was going to come through Judah, but Judah was a bad man. His son died and left a daughter-in-law for Judah. She seduced him into having relations with him as she played the harlot for him, without him knowing it was her. He committed adultery but he didn't know. She got pregnant by him and had illegitimate twins. Their names were Perez and Zera.

Moses wrote that Judah, by harlotry, had illegitimate children.

Moses also wrote that Messiah's line would not cease through the Line of Judah. Deut 23:2 says illegitimate children shall not enter the assembly. If the offspring is an illegitimate curse line, how could David ever reign? So then how could Messiah from the line of David ever reign?

**C. THE SOLUTION Matthew 1:3-9 10 generations**

It was up to the tenth generation. Now let us see something very interesting. Judah begot Perez and Zerah, that's two. Hezron begot Ram, that's three.....so on and so forth.. Obed begot Jesse(9) and Jesse begot David. (10) The curse was removed with David.

Four women. Three prostitutes and an idolatress. Don't tell me God isn't a God of grace when He includes three prostitutes and an idol worshiper in His Messianic line. People say, "There is no grace in the Old Testament." Don't you believe it. Rahab the harlot became actually the wife of Solomon and begot Boaz. Boaz married the idolatress, Ruth, and she was the grandmother of David. Ten generations after that seductress Tamar, the purification of the line took place. God is a God of grace. The paradox is resolved in Christ

**3. THE BIRTHPLACE**

**A. BETHLEHEM Micah 5:2**

Jesus was to come from Bethlehem

**B. PROBLEM Hosea 11:1 here, it says Egypt.,**

Isaiah 11:1 says Nazareth which means sprout. Sproutsville There will be a shoot out of Sprouttown.

**C. SOLUTION Matthew 2:1,13, 23**

2:1 says Bethlehem. Verse 13 says Egypt and verse 23 says Nazareth

All the paradoxes are beautifully resolved

**4. SHEPHERDS**

**A. LEAST LIKELY WITNESSES Matthew 2:8-14**

John MacArthur: You know, it's the most unlikely group of people to make this proclamation to. If you were orchestrating this, if you were a PR agent and you were designing a campaign to announce that the Savior of the world had been born, the last people you would go to is a bunch of shepherds. I mean, literally the last people you would go to. You might say... Well, we want to get this thing out, we need to go to the people who have the greatest influence. We want to go to the influencers, as they would be called today. We want to go to the movers and the shakers. We want to go to the people who have the ear of the world. Well, first of all, we might consider going to the high priest. I mean, he would be the religious leader of Israel. We might be considering going to the chief priest and the scribes who were the teachers. We might be going to the Sadducees who basically made up the Sanhedrin who were the ruling body of Israel, a body of 70 elders of Israel basically responsible for the nation as a theocracy under God. Or you might say we go to the Pharisees because they had the great... they were the religious fundamentalists. They were fastidious about prophecies and we might want to go to them because they search the Scriptures. They were looking for the Messiah. And we might want to go to somebody who had some influence. Might even want to send a memo or a press release to Caesar Augustus to let him know that the true Savior had been born. Shepherds? Not on your life.

But that's exactly where the Lord sent the message. And verse 8 says, "In the same region," that's the region around Bethlehem, Bethlehem was about six miles south, directly south of the city of Jerusalem. It's just a small village, certainly not a city. So, down in that region, "There were some shepherds." There's no adjective for these shepherds. It literally says, "There were shepherds," in the Greek, just shepherds. It doesn't tell us anything about them. There's really nothing to say about them. This is the most unlikely group to which God's angel proclaims the good news of the Savior.

#### B. THE POOR                      Isa 61:1 / Luke 4:18,

MacArthur He's not coming to the up and inners, He's not coming to the influencers, He's coming to the poor, the lowly, the meek, the afflicted, the broken hearted, the captives, the prisoners. That's just a category of outcasts.

When the Messiah comes He's going to touch the outcasts, He's going to touch the low lives. In fact, as Jesus went through His life, He attracted to Himself the outcasts of society, the tax collectors and absolute nobodies and prostitutes and sinners and drunkards and you know all that because the Jewish elite, the aristocracy of religion in Israel criticized Him for that and they said He hangs around drunkards and prostitutes

Isn't that the point? Isn't that the point? Isn't that just like God to disdain the religious elite, to disdain the quote/unquote spiritual establishment, to disdain the hypocrites who thought they were good enough to achieve relationships with God by their own self-effort? And to make the announcement, the greatest announcement that's ever been made in the history of the world to the lowest of the low, the humblest of the humble... shepherds. And by the way, lest you demean being a shepherd, Jesus Himself was happy to call Himself the Good... what?... Shepherd. So

there's nothing wrong with the task in itself. But in society, they were the lowest and commonest nobodies of Israel's society and culture.

C. NOT MANY MIGHTY 1 Cor 1:26-27

D. GLORY OF THE LORD SHONE ABOUT THEM

MacArthur

Now I've been telling you all the way along in our study of Luke, nobody saw angels. There hadn't been any account of anybody seeing an angel in 500 years, half a millennium. And now, all of a sudden, we start seeing angels

So there shepherds are there checking out the fold, doing whatever they do and all of a sudden here's Gabriel standing there. And it's evident that he's not one of the guys. It's very evident.

It's a dark night to whatever degree, it's all of a sudden emblazoned with the highest of all created beings standing in the midst of the lowliest of all earthly folks

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glory of the Lord shone around them." Now we read that and we've heard that and we perhaps haven't thought about it very deeply. Folks, I can't even describe to you what a significant statement that is. That is one of the high points of all of history.

good news extends to all nations. That's the big picture. That's the collective picture. Look at the individual picture in verse 11. "Today in the city of David there has been born...look at this, what are the next two words?...for you a Savior...for you." That's right, you guys standing right here. You...you...you shepherds, the angel standing right with them says "for you...for you." You could say it this way, "The Savior has been born and He will be the Savior of everybody, and the Savior of anybody who comes and believes." The humblest, the most ignorant, the most uneducated, the most lowly and unskilled, even despised, even the chief of sinners, even the lowest of low, He is the Savior of everybody who is saved, from every people and tongue and tribe and nation on the face of the earth and anybody who chooses to come. He's the world Savior and He's your Savior.