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Bible House of Grace.**



God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

The Birth of Jesus

In

Matthew.

(Matt. 1-25).

(2013)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal Plans, Purposes and Promises,
But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

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The Birth of Jesus in Matthew.

Topics.

- Joseph and Heli the father of Joseph.
- Mary was found with child of the Holy Spirit.
- Jewish betrothal and marriage.
- Jewish Ketubba the betrothal contract.
- Joseph resolves to divorce Mary.
- The Virgin shall bear a son and they shall call his name Immanuel.
- Jesus is born.

INTRODUCTION: Matthew chapter one and Luke chapter three are the only references to the actual genealogy and birth of Jesus in the New Testament. In both accounts the virgin birth is very clear. Joseph was a descendent of the house of David and the natural son of Jacob there is no mention of Joseph in Scripture after Jesus was in the temple at twelve years old. Matthew tells the story from the standpoint of Joseph he describes Joseph's reaction when he found Mary was with child.

Matthew shows us Joseph's determination to protect Mary from shame as much as possible and his obedience to God's command that he marry Mary. Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus Christ is called the Royal line, Matthew is concerned with the kingship or Royal line of Jesus, his genealogy establishes the legal claim to the throne of David, through his foster (or legal) father Joseph, there is very good evidence that Matthew writes from Joseph's point of view and Luke from Mary's. Matthew tells of Joseph's perplexity and his private intentions, the dreams by which he was guided and his care of Mary.

Joseph and Heli the Father of Joseph.

Matthew 1:16 ----- 16^JJacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

Matthew says that Jacob is the father of Joseph (Matt 1:16) while Luke says that Heli is the father of Joseph (Luke 3:23). Jacob and Heli are both referred to as the father of Joseph, but it is obvious to all that Jacob and Heli cannot both be Joseph's father therefore Joseph's relationship to Heli must be different to his relationship to Jacob.

Scholars have wrestled with the problems of these two genealogies from the second century, when pagan critics raised the difficulty. There are far too many explanations to pursue them all in this study. The theory that most accept begins with understanding that the meaning of the Hebrew word *begat* as used in the genealogies of the King James Bible is not exact in its meaning it could indicate immediate descent or remote descent it can refer to an adoptive relation or legal heirship as well as procreation. With this understanding many accept the idea that Heli (Eli) was the father of Mary and therefore the father in law of Joseph by his marriage to Mary and that Jacob was Joseph's biological father.

David and Bathsheba gave birth to Solomon and Nathan.

- From Solomon's bloodline came Joseph through his biological father Jacob (Matt 1:6-16).
- From Nathan's bloodline came Heli (Luke 3:23-31) who is believed by many to be the father of Mary.

Thus Jacob is Joseph's biological father while Heli is his father in law. With this view in mind Jesus was biologically born of the royal line of David though his mother Mary and was by marriage legally the rightful heir of the royal line by his foster father Joseph.

Notice Matthew says: -

- And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ (Matt 1:16) (KJV).

Matthew deliberately and carefully says Jesus was born of Mary, but leaves Joseph out this is because Joseph did not beget Jesus like all the previous fathers mentioned in the genealogies.

Mary was Found with Child of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1:18 ----- 18 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.

Mathew presents Joseph emotions, feelings, doubts, insecurities and fears, the entire focus of the chapter is on how Joseph responds to Mary and the angel of the LORD, Joseph is the subject of Mathew and not Mary.

Jewish Betrothal and Marriage.

Jewish betrothal involves a double ceremony performed together in modern times but separated in ancient times by a year. First is the betrothal (erusin), which includes the reading of the marriage contract (ketubba) and the giving of the ring with a declaration, "Behold you are consecrated to me by this ring according to the Law of Moses and Israel," accompanied by certain benedictions. This is followed by the marriage proper (nissu'in), consisting of the reciting of the seven marriage benedictions. The ceremony is performed under a huppa, a canopy that symbolizes the bridal bower.

Jewish Ketubba the Betrothal Contract.

The Ketubba is the formal Jewish marriage contract written in Aramaic and guaranteeing a bride certain future rights before her marriage. Since Jewish religious law permits a man to divorce his wife at any time for any reason, the ketubba was introduced in ancient times to protect a woman's rights and to make divorce a costly matter for the husband.

The conditions stipulated in the document also guarantee the woman's right to property when her husband dies. A Jewish wife carefully preserves the ketubba, not as evidence of marriage but for its future value. In Orthodox and Conservative congregations, the ketubba is a prerequisite for marriage. Two witnesses not related to the couple or to each other and, in some congregations, by the bridegroom also must sign it.

A summary of the conditions is often added in the vernacular, and this is usually read together with the formal document just before or during the marriage ceremony. Handwritten ketubbot with illuminated margins, common in the Middle Ages, have now generally been replaced by printed formulas with a space provided for the specific conditions of the contract.

The formula used by Conservative Jews obliges the couple to appear before a rabbinic court to settle future marital disputes. This obligation provides an opportunity for counselling and precludes the possibility of immediate divorce agreed to in a state of high emotion.

SUMMARY: Mary Joseph's Espoused Wife.

Mary is called Joseph's espoused wife meaning she was promised in marriage, the Bible often recognizes a wife as a woman that has had intercourse with a man (concubines and prostitutes being an exception), but Joseph has not known Mary

this way even though she was pregnant, thus Joseph is recognized, as the legal father of Jesus, not the biological father that is why Mary is called Joseph's espoused wife. Mary being pregnant by God's creative power and the Holy Spirit is still biblically recognized as being betrothed to Joseph while seen as his wife by law, not by consummation (Lk 2:4-5).

The words: -

- Mary was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit (v18).

Means that Mary knew she was pregnant Prior to Gabriel appearing Mary had no knowledge of her future pregnancy or the birth of her child therefore when the verse says, Mary was found with child of the Holy Spirit it does not mean that she had to wait three months for it to show it simply means, Mary now had the knowledge that she was pregnant. She believed everything Gabriel had told her about the future birth and things Gabriel spoke regarding the child, now she has the knowledge that she had conceived and was pregnant, thus she was found with child.

Mary now has an understanding of the birth and the future Kingship of the child and with this knowledge it is almost certain that Mary would have gone and told Joseph, it is hardly likely she would not go and tell the one she loved and intended to marry about this most amazing experience.

We see a similar example of this in the following two stories: -

1. When of Gabriel told Zacharias that his barren wife Elizabeth would have a child (John the Baptist). In this story it is not recorded that Zacharias told Elizabeth his wife all that the angel had told him. The author leaves it up to the reader's common sense to suppose that Zacharias would have told his wife such wonderful and dramatic news.
2. When the angel came to Manoah's wife (the mother of Samson) in a similar fashion and told her she would have a child. She then went and told her husband (Judges 13).

Considering the accounts of Elizabeth and Manoah's wife, and the fact that one is recorded and one is not in regards to telling their partners of their supernatural experience, it is a mistake for us to assume Mary never told Joseph simply because it is not recorded, especially since it is very unlikely that Mary would have kept such and exciting experience secret from the godly man she was intending to marry.

Joseph resolves to Divorce Mary.

Matthew 1:19 ----- ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

Husband: in this context means her betrothed husband to be, Jewish betrothal was entered into by those intending to marry signing a legal contract.

The words, "Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly" clearly shine a spotlight on the truth that Joseph was not the father if he was he would have no reason to divorce Mary. Joseph unlike Manoah in the Old Testament who believed his wife's story doubted Mary so to protect her from shame and mockery he seeks a way to divorce her secretly in contrast to making it a public affair.

The Angel of the LORD appears to Mary.

Matthew 1:20 ----- ²⁰But 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.

Notice: now that Mary is pregnant with the child God calls her Joseph's wife even though the child that is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

The Virgin Shall Bear a Son and they Shall call His name Immanuel.

Matthew 1:21-23 ----- ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

Immanuel: means God with us it carries the idea of a God-like one with great power and might in strength and authority in rank. It was Christ's begetting and birth that made Jesus the Son of God, and made him Immanuel God with us.

The words: -

- Immanuel God with us.

Does not mean that Jesus is God, but that God's favour is for us instead of against us, prior to this time Israel was in darkness and the Gentiles were separated from God, but now God's favour was coming into the world to the Jews and Gentiles alike through God's Son the Lord Jesus Christ thus God is with us through His Son.

Virgin: primarily carries the idea of chaste it can apply to an unmarried or chaste maiden or woman, distinguished for piety or steadfastness in religion. The word chaste means an absolutely pure virgin, one that is restrained, modest, celibate, unused, unspoiled, spotless, stainless and pure.

In nearly all Scriptures that the word virgin is used it refers to a chaste woman. There is only one verse that it could simply mean an unmarried woman, but even in this case the biblical standard is not to be sexually active until married. Therefore when the Bible uses the word virgin it carries the full meaning of being chaste, in the Old Testament once a woman knew a man she was considered to be his wife (unless she was a concubine or prostitute). Added to this Scripture teaches that not having a sexual relationship until married is the ideal standard for single people, therefore when God uses the word virgin in relationship to an unmarried woman it carries the idea of a woman that is chaste and not just young.

For further information see: -

- Virgin in, Bible Dictionary (ON WEBSITE MENU)

The following list shows seven beings that all have the appearance of man yet they all come from a totally different origin.

1. Adam was made from the dust of the earth and enlivened by the breath of God.
2. Eve was made from part of Adam while he was in a deep sleep.
3. Cain was born by natural sexual reproduction.
4. Isaac was born to a woman past menopause and an aged man.
5. John the Baptist was born to a woman that was barren and very old.
6. Angels appear like men, but are immortal and with much greater powers.
7. Jesus was born of a virgin without the intervention of a man.

If it was possible to gather the previous seven people in one room, look, talk and examine them all as we might, they would nevertheless all have the appearance of a man, but each has a very different origin. Therefore it should not be difficult to conceive that God through His creative power by the Holy Spirit created the seed within Mary or altered some genetic information as modern scientist in theory can do today to begin the birth process.

It should not be difficult to accept the virgin birth when we consider that today man is able to manipulate the genes and clone a creature from the DNA of another creature, scientists can artificially impregnate a virgin so that she gives birth and

technically it is within the grasp of science that a dead person may also be cloned, more than this we know God is so creative He is able to produce beings that look, eat, talk, sleep and walk like man in at least seven different ways and we cannot tell the difference between them.

Added to all of these is the fact that while the earth was void and in darkness God spoke and creation came into existence how simple for God to speak the word to Mary and bring that word also into existence.

Jesus is Born.

Matthew 1:23-25 ----- ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Here is the uniqueness and glory of the Christian faith, "Joseph knew Mary not until she had given birth to a son," Jesus is the Son of God by His creative power and the Holy Spirit. Notice Luke says Joseph did not know Mary until! Jesus was born. This shines a brilliant spotlight on the truth that after the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ Mary and Joseph had a normal intimate marriage relationship.

In the book of Matthew we see the Jews saying: -

- Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not all his sisters with us? (Matt. 13:55-56).

So we know Jesus had four half-brothers and at least three sisters (if there had been only two, the word 'both' would have been used instead of 'all') who are accepted as half brothers and sisters of Christ. Because of this it follows that Joseph and Mary were a loving intimate couple and very normal mother and father and husband and wife, and that all those mentioned were alive when Jesus was.

Added to this we are told while Jesus was speaking to the people: -

- His mother and his brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him (Matt. 12:46).

Though there are Scriptural reasons Joseph is not mentioned after Jesus was in the Temple at twelve years of age since the focus of Scripture is upon the true Father of Christ the immortal, invisible, eternal God Almighty and not his foster father, it would not be wrong to suppose that Joseph was already dead when Jesus was crucified especially since Joseph is never mentioned during Jesus' ministry or when he was being crucified and Jesus asked John to look after Mary as if she were his own mother (John 19:26-27).

At that time, none of Jesus' family believed in him and his message. Yet afterwards some did believe, and the letters written by two of them, James and Jude (or Judas) are part of the New Testament.

A brief Overview of the Events.

Mary was promised in marriage by Jewish contract to Joseph, before they came together, Gabriel brings her the knowledge that she will have a child of the Holy Spirit. Mary believes the angel's words that she will have a child and goes that day and tells Joseph all that has happened, but Joseph has doubts about Mary's story and ponders the thought of putting her away.

While Joseph is sleeping the angel Gabriel comes to him in a vision and tells him that Mary's child is of the Holy Spirit and to take Mary as his wife. Joseph wakes from sleep and did as the angel of the LORD commanded him. The angel had told Mary her aged and barren cousin Elizabeth that she is also expecting a child so Mary no-doubt in great excitement goes to visit her.

End.