

The concept of an eternal Son, coming down from heaven, and being incarnate (that is, embodied in human flesh) of Mary, is not only foreign to the Scriptural account, but is incompatible with all those passages in both Old and New Testaments, which speak of Jesus not only as a man, but as being descended from others of the human race. The subject of the nature of Christ is, however, dealt with more fully in other pamphlets in this series.

Finally, we must consider the place of the Virgin Birth in God's purpose. It is seen to be an essential element in the Divine plan of redemption for mankind. Only by the unique combination of Human and Divine parentage, was it possible to obtain one of our nature, a representative of the human race, who would offer his life as a real sacrifice, and yet, because of his affinity with the Father, led a perfect life. That sinless life enabled God to raise him with perfect justice from the dead, and thus open the way of life for all who subsequently become sons of God by adoption, born spiritually - as he was literally, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

The Christadelphians

Please be assured that anything connected with the Christadelphians is entirely free, and based wholly upon Christ's precept, "freely ye received, freely give". Christadelphians, or as the name implies, brethren in Christ, are a body of people (established initially in the mid-nineteenth century) bound together by a wholehearted belief in the Bible. We do not profess to have received any new revelation, but hold that the Bible itself is able to make one "wise unto salvation" (**2 Tim. 3:15-17**). Believing in the Divine Authorship of the Bible, we do not accept any interpretation which does not harmonise with its teaching as a whole. Finding that the creeds and practices of those who claim to be Christian are in many ways opposed to this teaching, we feel compelled to stand apart from them. We believe in the personal, visible return of Christ to the earth, to establish his throne and reign thereon, and we seek to share this knowledge with others. However we guarantee that we will not pressurise you in any way, if at any time you wish to discontinue contact.

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The virgin birth

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The virgin birth

The Virgin Birth of the Lord Jesus Christ is a fact which, like all true Christian teaching, has its roots in the Old Testament. In the beginning, when Adam and Eve came under God's sentence for disobedience, a Saviour was promised who would bruise the serpent power of sin in the head - a fatal wound, while himself being bruised in the heel - a temporary wound. The one promised was described as a 'seed' or descendant of Eve.

(Gen. 3:15)

This is the first of many passages that emphasise the human descent of Christ. He was to be Abraham's 'seed', **(Gen. 13:15; 22:17)** raised up from among the Jews, **(Deut. 18:18)** David's son. **(2 Sam. 7:12)** Each of these passages are quoted in the New Testament as referring to Jesus.

Alongside these allusions however, are references to Christ's Divine Sonship. God said to David, 'I will be his father, and he shall be my son'. **(2 Sam. 7:14)** In the Psalms, God says of him 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee', **(Psa. 2:7)** while through Jeremiah, God states that although a descendant of David, his name would be called 'The Lord Our Righteous'. **(Jer. 23:5-6)**

How could Christ be both son of man and Son of God? The prophet Isaiah gave the answer, 'Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel'. **(Isa. 7:14)** This name means 'God with us', so that as a result of this Virgin Birth, the child born would be 'seed of the woman', and yet Son of God - a manifestation of God among men.

Attempts are made to undermine the force of this prophecy, by suggesting that the word 'virgin' here means merely a young woman, and that it referred to

an incident in the life of the prophet. Yet the prophecy was given as a sign from God to unbelieving Jews, represented by wicked King Ahaz, and the birth of a son to a young married woman, is such a natural event that it would have been no sign. Moreover, it is significant that the Scriptures have no record of the fulfilment of such a sign in Isaiah's time, yet we have such a record in the New Testament, a simple, dignified, yet factual account of one of the most momentous of all miracles. In the course of the account, the prophecy of Isaiah is quoted and the use of the Greek word 'parthenos' completely excludes the idea of a young married woman. **(Matt. 1:20-23)**

The Divine message came through the Angel to Mary, a virgin, that she was to have a son. 'The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' **(Luke 1:35)** Thus the 'seed of the woman', promised from the dawn of humanity, came at last to fruition. 'When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law'. **(Gal.4:4-5)**

There had been miraculous births before; Isaac, for example, and John the Baptist, but in these cases there had always been a human father. The conception of Christ was different; there was no human father, but God, by the same power that created Adam, created all the conditions necessary for conception in Mary. Jesus alone therefore is referred to as 'the only begotten Son of God'!

It is apparent from the narrative in Luke, that after this miraculous conception, a quite normal development and birth followed, so that Jesus was born in all

respects like any other child, a literal son of Mary. It is written, 'In all things 'it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people'. **(Heb 2:17)** The words 'in all things' imply no exceptions. Compare, too, the significance of the word 'brethren' in this passage, with that in **Deut. 18:18** already quoted.

Such is the simple teaching of the Scriptures concerning the Virgin Birth, but as with many other early Christian truths, many people today are not prepared to accept it; while others have so embellished and distorted it, that the original teaching has been entirely lost.

Against the authenticity of the records, it has been alleged that the Virgin Birth was a late addition to the Gospel records. There is however, absolutely no justification for such an assumption, the record is confirmed by all authentic versions. It is singularly apposite that, by God's inspiration, the most detailed account is that given by Luke, a physician, and therefore qualified more than any other to relate the details in a factual and dispassionate manner. Explanations of the incident on 'scientific' grounds, too, are irrelevant. The fact is plainly recorded as a miracle and therefore without parallel in nature.

The Church has been responsible for introducing errors of another kind. The official doctrine on the subject is that of the Nicene Creed, which speaks of the Son 'begotten of his Father before all worlds... who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man'. ►►