"THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF DEITY"

Matthew 1:18-25
12/18/2016

INTRODUCTION:

***Jesus is Messiah! The virgin birth proves it.**

I. The <u>HOLY SPIRIT'S POWER</u> produced the Virgin Birth (v. 18-20)
(Christ's supernatural conception)

II. The <u>NAMES GIVEN TO CHRIST</u> prove the Virgin Birth (v. 21-23)
(Christ's supernatural titles)

A. The name **"Jesus"** means He is **<u>SAVIOR</u>** (v. 21)
Jesus (Jehoshua) = Jehovah Saves!

B. The name **"Emmanuel"** means He is **<u>GOD</u>** (v. 22-23)
Emmanuel = God with us!

CONCLUSION: V. 24-25

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INTRODUCTION:

"After establishing Jesus' human lineage from David, Matthew proceeds to show His divine lineage. That is the purpose of verses 18-25." (MacArthur, p. 14)

"Apart from Jesus being both human and divine, there is no gospel. The incarnation of Jesus Christ is the central fact of Christianity. The whole superstructure of Christian theology is built on it." (MacArthur, p. 13)

***Jesus is Messiah! The virgin birth proves it.**

I. The HOLY SPIRIT'S POWER produced the Virgin Birth (v. 18-20)
(Christ's supernatural conception)

V. 18

"Mary was espoused to Joseph" - "Espoused" = to be betrothed; engaged to be married.

> "Betrothal (erusin qiddushin) preceded the actual marriage by a period varying in length, but not exceeding a twelve month in the case of a maiden. At the betrothal, the bridegroom personally or by deputy handed to the bride a piece of money or a letter, it being expressly stated in each case that the man thereby espoused the woman. From the moment of betrothal both parties were regarded, and treated in law (as to inheritance, adultery, need of formal divorce), as if they had been actually married, except as regarded their living together. A legal document (the "Shitre Erusin") fixed the dowry which each brought, the mutual obligations, and all other legal points. Generally a festive meal closed the ceremony--but not in Galilee, where, habits being more simple and pure, that which sometimes ended in sin was avoided."
>
> (Edersheim, p. 354)

"From that moment Mary was the betrothed wife of joseph, their relationship as sacred as if they had already been wedded. Any breach of it would be treated as adultery; nor could the band be dissolved except, as after marriage, by regular divorce. Yet months might intervene between the betrothal and marriage (Edersheim, p. 150)

The betrothal period was one of purity and chastity; one could not live with nor have sexual relations with the betrothed during this period.

Under the Law: "If a man seduced a girl who was espoused to be married, and if the seduction took place with her consent, both he and she must be put to death (Deut. 22:23-24). If the girl was raped, then the man was put to death (v. 25), and if the girl was not betrothed, then the man was obligated to marry her, and "he may not put her away all his days" (v. 28-29).

“Before they came together" - The phrase "came together" is a euphemism for sexual intercourse. Before Mary and Joseph had physical relations, Mary became pregnant.

"She was found" - Mary was observably pregnant.

"Of the Holy Ghost" = lit. from (ek) [the] Holy Spirit

This most miraculous of pregnancies was wrought by the power of the Spirit of God.

Gabriel made this announcement to Mary <u>before</u> she became pregnant. (Lk. 1:34-35 - "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost 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."

Exactly how the Holy Spirit implanted the complete eternal essence of the Son of God into the womb of the Virgin Mary will forever be a mystery.

To think that God could be reduced to a seed that fertilized the human egg of Mary is indeed mind-boggling!

As in every work of God, the Triune Godhead was involved in the incarnation of Jesus. The incarnation was accomplished:

--By the <u>plan</u> of the Father (Jn. 3:16; Gal. 4:4)
--In the <u>Person</u> of the Son (Jn. 6:51; I Tim. 1:15)
--Through the <u>power</u> of the Spirit (Lk. 1:35)

V. 19
"Joseph her husband" - During the betrothal period, Mary and Joseph were considered husband and wife.

"A just man" - a righteous, upright, morally sensitive man.

NOTE: Joseph's justice was not harsh and cruel but compassionate (though he no doubt was deeply hurt to find his espoused wife pregnant, rather than having Mary publically humiliated and even stoned, he chose to privately divorce her [cp. Mt. 5:32, 19:9]).

"A public example" - to be exposed and humiliated publically

Joseph could have demanded her death, as provided by the Law (Deut. 22:23-24)

"Was minded" - was determined; had made up his mind

"To put her away" - lit. to <u>divorce</u> (apoluo)

> (NOTE: This author believes that this is the only legitimate grounds for divorce [fornication during the betrothal period justified divorce]. It was in reference to the betrothal period that Jesus gave His "exception clause" in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9. The Jewish audience to which Matthew wrote understood perfectly this cultural practice.)

"Privily" - secretly; privately, so as not to humiliate the girl he loved.

V. 20
I'm sure Joseph was shocked when he found out that Mary was pregnant. He could not believe that such a virtuous woman would be unfaithful to him. Such illicit sexual behavior would have been out of character for such a godly person, he thought.

"While he thought" - After he contemplated the divorce, after being mentally shattered by the fornication he thought Mary had engaged in, and after deciding to go through with a private divorce, an angel appeared.

No doubt Mary tried to explain to Joseph that the angel Gabriel had appeared to her and told her about this miraculous conception (Lk. 1:35), but Joseph, like most anyone, would have viewed such a story as absurd, unheard of, a figment of one's imagination.

Therefore, in response to such musings, an angel of the Lord (no definite article in Greek), perhaps Gabriel himself (the angelic announcer of good tidings) confirms Mary innocence, and forbids the intended divorce by exhorting Joseph to marry Mary.

"That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost" - Implying: her conception is not the

result of fornication with some man, but is the mighty, miraculous result of the Holy Spirit.

II. The NAMES GIVEN TO CHRIST prove the Virgin Birth (v. 21-23)
(Christ's supernatural titles)

A. The name **"Jesus"** means He is **SAVIOR** (v. 21)
Jesus (Jehoshua) = Jehovah Saves!

What is so important about a name?

Today, people name their child by the sound of the name; how good it sounds. In Bible times, names had more significance than today. A name meant something. It described a particular, outstanding feature about a person.

EX: Adam named his wife "Eve" = "Life gives" because she was the "mother of all living"
God named Abram "Abraham" = "Father of a multitude"
"Daniel" = "God is my judge"
"Michael" = "One who is like God"
"Jacob" = "Supplanter"
"Stephen" = "Crowned one"
"Timothy" = "Honorable one"
"Vincent" = "Conqueror"
"Doug" = "Out of the dark waters"

Of all names, the name of "Jesus" is most significant. The Bible says that "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow . . ."

Why was this one, Who was born in a manger, whose birth is celebrated every year, called Jesus? This verse (21) gives the answer. **"He shall save his people from their sins"** The name "Jesus" (Yashua) means Jehovah is Savior (Deliverer).

1. Salvation is only through Jesus (The exclusiveness of salvation) "He"

Jesus said, "I am the way . . . the truth . . ."

Peter and John testified: "Neither is there salvation in any other . . ." (Acts 4:12).

Paul said, "For this is one God, and one mediator. . ." (I Tim. 2:5).

Philip preached unto the Ethiopian eunuch only one word in Acts 8:35 –

"Jesus"

"I, even I am the Lord (Jehovah) and beside me there is no Savior" (Is. 43:11; cp. Is. 45:21-25).

I'm glad salvation is only in a single person. Why? Because I no longer have to doubt whether or not I have it.

Satan has offered hundreds of substitutes (counterfeits) for Christ

Satan also offers additions to Christ (EX: You need Christ plus St. __ ; You need Christ plus a church, works, etc.)

Salvation is not from: a religion, baptism, church membership; it's not from good works, a priest, or a preacher. It's not from: turning over a new leaf, keeping the Golden Rule, or ten commandments.

---It is from Jesus!

God has no other means of salvation. There isn't one way for the Moslems, and one different way for Hindus, Africans, Chinese, etc.

The way to heaven is narrow! (Mt. 7) But praise God, it is available. Never a road block!

Why is salvation only through Jesus (`Eph. 2:8, 9)?

--Jesus is God's only plan - "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"

--Jesus is the only one who could pay for your sin - infinite penalty demanded an infinite payment

2. Salvation is certain through Jesus
(The certainty of salvation)
"shall save"

There are not many things that are certain today.

We are not guaranteed perpetual freedom, prosperity.

We don't know when we will die, what the price of gold will be next year, the interest rates, etc.

But we can be sure of our salvation.

God did not say: Jesus may save, might save, could save, or would save -- but shall save (future tense, pointing to certainty)

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro. 10:13).

"He that hath the son hath life . . . these things have I written unto you . . . that you may know" (I Jn. 5:13).

3. Salvation is limited to those related to Jesus
(The condition of salvation)
"His people"

In the context of Matthew, Jesus is presented as the King of the Jews. He came for the lost sheep of Israel.
He came to save His own people. (This promise will ultimately be fulfilled prior to the Millennium, at the end of the Tribulation - Zech.12:7,10; Joel 2:32)

But the Bible says "HIs own received Him not." Therefore Salvation is offered to all.

(See John 1:10-13; Salvation is only for those who are born into God's Family. cp. Jn.3:3-6)

You must be personally related to Jesus to have His salvation.

You are adopted into His family, and can wear His name - "Christian" the day you fully trust Jesus.

Salvation is available for all - it is sufficient for all (Luke 2:10, 11 - "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord.""

I Jn. 2:2 - "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

It is sufficient for all, but it is only to those who believe (Acts 16:31 -

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ . . .")

4. Salvation is a spiritual matter through Jesus
(The spiritual nature of salvation)
"From their sins"

EX: When you speak about being "saved" people only think about the physical (EX: saved from drowning, saved from financial ruin, saved from illness, etc.)

God's salvation is spiritual.

From a Christmas card: "If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator. If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist. If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist. But since our greatest need was forgiveness, God sent us a Savior."

I Jn. 3:5 - He was manifested to take away our sins.

--Our sin would bring us to Hell; God's son brings us to heaven
--Our sin would condemn us forever; God's Son grants forgiveness
--Our sin would separate us from God; God's Son joins us to the Father

Why the name "Jesus"?

Because He alone can save.
Because He alone does save.
Because He alone does save from sin.

The sweetest name to the believer's ear is the name of Jesus!

This name causes the angels of Heaven to sing, all men to bow down, and all saints to rejoice.

This name occurs 972 times in the NT and fills our hymnal.

"Many of our hymns begin with it, and scarcely any, that are good for anything, end without it. It is the sum total of all delights. it is the music with which the bells of heaven ring; a song in a word; an ocean for comprehension, although a drop for brevity: a matchless oratorio in two syllables; a gathering up of the hallelujahs of eternity in five letters." (Spurgeon, p. 78).

"His name is Jesus" - Why? "He shall save His people from their

sins."

B. The name **"Emmanuel"** means He is **GOD** (v. 22-23)
Emmanuel = God with us!

V. 22
"That it might be fulfilled" = an often repeated phrase by Matthew, who authenticates Jesus' Messiahship by citing proof texts from the O.T. (cp. 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 27:35)

"Spoken by the Lord through the prophet" - a proof of the inspiration of Scripture. The Bible is God-breathed! (II Tim. 3:16) God is the Author, who used men as His instruments to write His Word.

V. 23
A quote of Isaiah 7:14 - Hebrew for "virgin" is "alma" - Never is used of a married woman in the Bible, but only of virgins (Gen. 24:43; Ex. 2:8; Ps. 68:25; Prov. 30:19; Son 1:3, 6:8)

LXX translated "alma" as "panthenos" which exclusively means virgin.

The Hebrew quote ends with the name "Emmanuel".

The reason why Matthew interpreted the name is to add emphasis to Christ's deity**.**

Whereas the name "Jesus" describes what He came to do (save His people), the name "Immanuel" describes who He was (God!)

In Bible days, a name had meaning. It described one's character or nature. It revealed attributes.

So it is with every name applied to Jesus Christ.

He is called Jesus (Mt. 1:21), Christ (Jn. 1:41), Messiah (Jn. 4:25), Lord (Lk. 23:42), the "I AM" (Jn. 8:58, 18:6), the Son of God (Lk. 1:32), the Son of man (Mt. 8:20), the Son of Abraham (Mt. 1:1), Son of David (Mk. 10:47), the Son of the Highest (Lk. 1:32), the last Adam (I Cor. 15:45), the Word (Jn. 1:1, 14), Savior (Lk. 2:11), Rabbi (Jn. 1:38), Master (Mt. 9:11), Alpha & Omega (Rev. 1:17), King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16), Faithful and True (Rev. 19:11), the Way, truth, life (Jn. 14:6), Bread of life (Jn. 6), the living water (jn. 4), the Good Shepherd (Jn. 10), the Light of the World (Jn. 8), the Door (Jn. 10:9), the Branch and the Vine (Jn. 15), the Cornerstone (mt. 21:42), the Messenger (Mt. 21:37), the Morning Star (II Pet. 1:19), the Prophet (Jn. 4:19), the Rock of Offense (I Cor. 1:23), the only begotten Son (Jn. 3:16), the Lord of Glory (Ja. 2:1), the Great High Priest (Heb. 4:14), the Redeemer

(Eph. 1:7), Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6).

There are over 200 names and titles applied to Christ in the bible, but no name is as miraculous, no name is as awe-inspiring as the name "Immanuel." For this name means "God with us" and points to the miracle of miracles - the virgin birth - the incarnation of deity!

Immanuel" - from the Hebrew (Is. 7:14)
"Im" = with (together with)
"(Ma)nu = us
"El" = God
Hence, "With us (is) God"!

*The name "Emmanuel" shows: CHRIST'S DEITY
("God with us")

The Bible teaches that Christ is divine, equal with the Father, God very God, and Lord of Lords!

1. Jesus is Directly Called "God."

"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Mt. 1:23).

a. He is called God by John.

John 1:1 - "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (the "Word" refers to Jesus - v. 14).

I Jn. 5:20 - "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

Rev. 21:7 - "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

b. He is called God by Thomas.

Jn. 20:27-29 - "...and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. Jesus said, Because ye have seen me, thou hast believed..."

If Thomas had erred so seriously in addressing Jesus as God, why was there no correction by Jesus? And why did Jesus commend his faith?

c. Jesus refers to Himself as God.

John 5:17-18 - "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God."

John 10:30 - "I and my Father are one." [Note the reaction of the Jews (v. 33) - "...Thou, being a man, makest thyself God." Jesus shortly after this said, "...that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him. Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand" (v. 38, 39).

John 14:9 - "...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father..."

d. He is called God by the writer of Hebrews.
Heb. 1:3 - "His Son...who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person..."

e. He is called God by God the Father.
Heb. 1:8 - "But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom." (quoting Ps. 45:6, 7)

f. He is called God by the Apostle Paul.
"Israelites...whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is over all God blessed for ever. Amen."

Acts 20:28 (Luke quoting Paul) - "...Feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood."

Phil. 2:6 - "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."

Col. 1:15 - "Who is the image of the invisible God."

Col. 2:9 - "For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." ("fullness" = completeness or perfection; "Godhead" = to have the same essence as God)

I Tim. 3:16 - "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

Titus 2:13 - "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." (cp. I Jn. 5:20; Rev. 21:7; Is. 9:6)

2. Jesus Claimed and Exercised the Prerogatives of God.
(Christ had the rights of God, and did the works of God.)

a. Forgives sins (Mk. 2:10; Lk. 7:48)

b. Raises the dead (Lk. 7:12-15; Jn. 5:25, 29; 6:39-44; 11:24, 25).

c. Controls nature (Mt. 8:26).

d. Judges motives (Mt. 7:22-27).

e. Receives worship (Ps. 2:8, 12; Mt. 8:2, 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 28:9, 17; Jn. 9:35, 38; 20:28, 29; Lk. 24:51, 52; by angels - Heb. 1:6; by all men - Phil. 2:10.
[Note: Peter (Acts 10:25, 26), Paul (Acts 14:11-18) and angels (Rev. 19:10 refused to be worshipped.]

f. Taught with independent authority (Mt. 7:29).
Jesus did not say, "Thus saith the Lord" as the prophets did, but boldly states, "I say unto you" (cp. Mt. 5).

g. Sends the Holy Spirit (Jn. 15:26).

h. Creates (Gen. 1:26; Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:15, 16).
Note: "Firstborn" (Col. 1:15) is a Jewish concept which refers to preeminence or authority, not origin (cp. Col. 1:18 - EX: Jacob & Esau). Jesus had the rights of the firstborn. Cp. Jn. 3:16 - "only begotten" - lit. "one of a kind"; "unique"; not referring to origin. Cp. Heb. 11:17 - Isaac was not Abraham's only son. Cp. Acts 13:33 - reference to the resurrection.

i. Sustains (He preserves creation) (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3).

j. He is the only Judge (cp. Jn. 5:22 with Rev. 20:11).

k. He is to receive equal honor with the Father (Jn. 5:23).

l. The only Savior (cp. Is. 43:11 with Jude 25; I Pet. 3:18).

m. He grants eternal life (Jn. 10:28).

n. He answers prayer (Jn. 14:14).

3. Jesus Christ has the Same Attributes as God.

a. Self-existence (Jn. 8:58 - "I am"; Jn. 1:14, 14:6).

b. Immutability (Heb. 13:8 - "The same...for ever")

c. Eternal (Rev. 22:13 - "Alpha & Omega"; cp. Is. 44:6; Jn. 8:35).

d. Omnipresent (Mt. 28:20 - "I am with you always"; cp. 18:20).

e. Omniscient (Jn. 21:17 - "Lord, thou knowest all things"; cp. Jn. 1:48, 2:24, 4:18, 29).

f. Omnipotent (Rev. 1:8 - "Almighty"; Jn. 1:12, 4:19-21; Phil. 3:21, 21).

g. Life (Jn. 1:4 - "In Him was life").

h. Truth (Jn. 14:6 - "I am the truth").

i. Infinity (meaning no limits or boundaries except those that are self-imposed) (Eph. 3:8 - "unsearchable"; cp. Col. 2:3).

j. Perfection (Col. 2:9 - "fullness of the Godhead"; Eph. 4:13).

k. Omnisapience (I Cor. 1:24 - "the wisdom of God").

It was God who entered the womb of Mary! (Note: Mary was merely the vehicle through which Christ would acquire a physical body to be born - she is in no way deified, nor did Christ come into existence via Mary. Rather, He took on flesh via Mary.

Mary gave birth to her Creator, to her Master, to her Lord, to her Savior.

It was God who was wrapped in swaddling clothes!
It was God who was laid in a manger!
It was God whom Mary fed and cared for!
It was God who brought joy to the home of Mary and Joseph!
It was God who walked the streets of Jerusalem!
It was God who stunned the scribes and doctors of the law with His intense knowledge of the Scriptures!
It was God who worked as a carpenter with His father!

Jesus could not forgive sins unless He was who Matthew said He was (God). For even the scribes knew that no one could forgive sins but God only (Mark 2:7).

If Christ was not virgin born, He could not be God (Mt. 1:23); If Christ was not God, He could not be Savior! (Is. 43:11)

CONCLUSION: V. 24-25

"Knew her not" - Did not have intimate, sexual relations with her.

"Knew" = a common Hebrew euphemism for sexual intercourse (cp. Gen. 4:1, Lk. 1:34)

"Knew her not till" - Joseph did not have a sexual relationship with Mary until after Jesus was born (implying that he did afterwards).

Mary did not remain a perpetual virgin all of her life as the RCC teaches Mary and Joseph had other children (Mt. 12:46; Mark 6:3; Jn. 2:12; 7:3, 5, 10; Acts 1:14; I Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:19).

Mt. 13:55-56 - "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?"

Who do you really believe Jesus is? Is He really Lord? Is He Lord of your life?