

given during the Old Covenant. The second fulfillment is found in the first chapter of Matthew.

5. Both the Hebrew word *almah* and the Greek word *parthenos* are adequate, acceptable terms to describe a sexually pure virgin woman.

6. Luke's evangel compliments Matthew's record of the miraculous virgin conception of Mary.

7. The genealogies of Matthew and Luke harmonize perfectly, and are no more a dichotomy towards one another than certain genealogical "problems" in other places in Scripture.

8. We can find proofs throughout the Bible giving us an even stronger faith in the doctrine of the virgin birth of the Messiah.

Why not just accept what the Bible teaches? That is the question for you who may still not believe in the virgin birth. My plea is that you honestly consider all angles, examine everything, and only hold fast to that which is true. The non-virgin birth doctrine is detrimental to a person's belief in the inspired word of Yahweh. Let us believe the Bible, and let go of the vain traditions of man which teach against Scripture and deny the plain teaching of the virgin birth of our Messiah.

The Virgin Birth

Fact or Fiction

MATTHEW JANZEN

MINISTERS OF THE NEW COVENANT
Conyers, Georgia

chapter he uses the word “born” three times, but in speaking of Christ’s birth he uses a different word from that employed when speaking of Ishmael and Isaac (Galatians 4:23, 29).⁸³

This, in and of itself does not conclusively prove anything, but coupled together with the other overwhelming evidence from Scripture is a significant point in showing the difference between the conceptions of the Messiah and John the Baptist, or any other conception in Scripture. Yes, the Messiah’s statements in both Matthew 11:11 and Luke 7:28 give further evidence for the doctrine of the virgin birth.

Final Conclusion

When the Scriptures are read in their entirety, without bias or prejudice against the doctrine of the virgin birth, a person cannot help but believe in the virgin birth if he chooses to believe in the Bible. We have found throughout this treatise the following things:

1. The New Testament is indeed Scripture.
2. The Messiah was indeed the only begotten Son of Yahweh. He was a Son of Yahweh much different than anyone else in the Bible.
3. The first two chapters of Matthew are authentic and need not be doubted. These chapters are the nail in the coffin of the non-virgin birth doctrine. The supposed discrepancies in Matthew’s evangel can also be answered Scripturally and logically.
4. Isaiah 7:14 was in fact a singular prophecy with a dual fulfillment, much like other prophecies

⁸³ *The Incomparable Christ*, by J. Oswald Sanders, copyright 1971, Moody Press – Chicago, pg. 19.

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John bare witness of him, and cried, saying,
This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh
after me is preferred before me: for he was before
me. [John 1:15]

The phrase “is preferred before me” simply means that John considered the Messiah to be ahead of him in power, i.e. the Messiah was greater than John. This was because (as John states) the Messiah was before him, or ranked higher than him. Yeshua was Yochanan’s (John’s) chief.

“But,” someone now says, “...doesn’t Scripture state the Messiah was born of a woman?” The answer to that question is... not exactly. You see there is a slight variation in what is stated in Matthew 11:11, Luke 7:28 and another statement in Galatians 4:4. Galatians refers to Messiah as being, “...made of a woman...” not *born* of a woman. As a matter of fact the word *made* in the Greek language is the word *ginomai*, while the underlying Greek word for born in both Matthew and Luke is the word *gennetos*. This word finds its root in the Greek word *gennaō*; a word which has the meaning of pro-creation.⁸² J. Oswald Sanders took note of this verse in Galatians when he wrote:

He [Paul] invariably employed some unusual and significant expressions when referring to the incarnation. This is especially the case in the verse: “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Galatians 4:4). In this

⁸² *Gennaō* is SEC #1080 and is defined as “...to procreate (*prop.* Of the father, but by *extens.* Of the mother; *fig.* to regenerate...” This word as well as the other, *gennetos*, are related in the Greek language to the word *ginomai*. However, *ginomai* is a word which is used in a variety of ways, some of which are translated as was done, be made, be fulfilled, which have been done, was come, may be, come to pass, etc.

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was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. [Hebrews 3:1-3]

We saw in chapter two of this work the greatness of the Messiah, and this verse in Hebrews shows forth that greatness all the much more. In light of all the Scriptures showing the awesomeness of the Messiah, consider our Master's statements in these particular passages.

For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of [the] Almighty is greater than he. [Luke 7:28]

Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. [Matthew 11:11]

These two passages would be extremely controversial in light of the greatness of Messiah had he been born of a woman in the same way as John the Baptist. We saw earlier in this book that Messiah's birth was indeed different than the birth of his forerunner; both were miraculous conceptions but one was without the aid of pro-creation between the common male and female. Surely, if Yeshua had been born of a woman, as John the Baptist was, the statements above could not be made, seeing that the Messiah was indeed greater than John the Baptist. Even John himself recognized this to be true.

Such is hardly the case. The Messiah was a creation of Yahweh which came through the means of a virgin woman. She was a virgin in every sense of the word. Her body was simply the means through which the Messiah entered this world. Yahweh performed the miracle without breaking any of His laws. Furthermore, the Scripture simply states, “The word became flesh...”⁸⁰ The flesh body did not eternally exist in heaven but rather came on the scene when Yahweh’s word was made flesh in Bethlehem of Judea in a lowly stable. Did he become fully flesh? According to the Scriptures the answer is yes. There was no half and half. Yahweh created a body. This body was fully man, just as Adam, but he was the Son of Yahweh because of his miraculous creation.

No Greater Man Born of a Woman

Was the Messiah great? Most would answer with a resounding yes. Was he really great though, I mean just incomparable? Please consider how great of a man Moses was. Moses was Yahweh’s elect to lead his people Israel out of what was arguably the greatest physical bondage in the nation of Israel’s history. Moses was Yahweh’s mediator between Him and man for a time, even the law of Yahweh is time and again referred to as the law of Moses⁸¹ throughout Scripture. Yet even the greatness of this man cannot be compared to the glory of the Messiah.

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Messiah Yeshua; Who

⁸⁰ John 1:14

⁸¹ Deuteronomy 33:4; Joshua 1:7, 8:32, 22:5, 23:6; I Kings 2:3; II Kings 14:6, 21:8, 23:25; II Chronicles 23:18, 25:4, 30:16, 33:8; Ezra 3:2, 7:6; Nehemiah 8:1, 10:29; Daniel 9:11,13; Malachi 4:4; Luke 2:22, 24:44; John 1:17, 7:19,23, 8:5; Acts 13:39, 15:5, 28:23; I Corinthians 9:8; Hebrews 10:28.

INTRODUCTION

The Virgin Birth: *Fact or Fiction?*

A few years ago I had my first encounter with a Bible believing, non-virgin birth proponent. It was very intriguing to say the least. I had been raised in a non-denominational assembly, and had always been taught that the Messiah was indeed born of the virgin Mary. Matthew and Luke’s accounts seemed quite plausible to me, and I never questioned them in the least fashion, but now someone had approached me with the possibility of a non-virgin birth. I was all ears seeing this was strange new doctrine to my ears!

“You see, the first two chapters of Matthew are interpolated Scripture!” I was told. “As a matter of fact the prophet Isaiah was not even speaking of the Messiah in Isaiah 7:14!” was the next statement made by the gentlemen. All points made to me verbally, as well as in the study paper given to me, were very persuasive. Needless to say, I began to study diligently in the spirit of a Berean (Acts 17:11). “Could this man be true?” I thought. Everything seemed to line up. Then it hit me, a familiar verse in the Bible was all I needed to prolong my research on the topic.

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.
[Proverbs 14:2, 16:25]

I did not realize it at the time, but I know now that according to Scripture, the end of the non-virgin birth doctrine is death. “Wow!” you may say, “That is an incredibly bold statement!” I agree that the statement is direct and to the point, nevertheless, I stand behind it with all my mind and heart. There are many things I do not say are vital to know for achieving salvation, but after studying this doctrine, I believe it can be consequential for the person not holding to it.

As you read this book please keep your mind on Yahweh’s¹ word, His inspired word. Do not lose your hope in it. If you feel that Scripture is your foundation, and that you stand behind it at all costs, then you will not be able to help believing in the virgin birth. Or as one pro-virgin birth author wrote:

When viewed superficially, each of these arguments [of the non-virgin birth proponents]² has merit which is why many have rejected the virgin birth throughout history. If we examine these points under the light of Scripture, we can’t help but establish our faith in this doctrine and in Yahweh’s Word.³

¹ Yahweh is the personal, proper name of the heavenly Father and is preferred by the author.

² Brackets, in quotations of other writers, are the authors, unless otherwise noted.

³ *A Defense of the Virgin Birth Doctrine*, by John Cordaro, pg. 1.

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. [Romans 5:14]

One of the ways that Adam was a figure of the Messiah is that Adam was created rather than pro-created. Nevertheless, Adam was completely a man, a created man much like the Messiah. Adam, as we know, was created from the dust of the earth, after which Yahweh breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and Adam became a living soul. The Messiah was also a creation of Yahweh, through the womb of a virgin, through the working of the Holy Spirit. He was completely man, made like unto his brethren – the seed of Abraham. However, this was not by pro-creation but by miraculous creation.

We should also briefly mention Adam’s created wife Eve. Eve was not pro-created either. She was rather miraculously created by Yahweh through the means of a rib belonging to Adam. We could say that, in a sense, Eve was the product of a virgin birth; Adam being a virgin man, and Eve being a creation out of Adam. This came without the action of sexual relation. However, none of this disqualifies Eve from being a natural woman, which in turn produced people – men and women.

The key is that even though Adam was a creation, a son of Yahweh as Scripture states, he was still a lesser form of the last Adam that was to come. The first man Adam was an earthly man, while the second man Adam was the only begotten Son of Yahweh. The only Son of Yahweh to come through the means of creation from the womb of a virgin woman.

This in turn answers the objections concerning Yahweh breaking his law because of the virgin birth. Some non-virgin birth proponents say that the doctrine of the virgin birth causes Yahweh to break his laws concerning the taking of another man’s betrothed wife, or causing a hybrid creation – ½ flesh, ½ spirit.

italicized words, the passage reads, “For verily he took not on angels; but he took on the seed of Abraham.” The meaning being that he does not give aid or help to angelic beings, but he was manifest to give aid, help, or security to the seed of Abraham, most specifically through the chosen seed of Isaac and Jacob. This is why most versions of the Bible render the verse in this fashion or meaning. Consider the 1901 American Standard Version.

For verily not to angels doth he give help, but
he giveth help to the seed of Abraham. [Hebrews
2:16]

But Wasn't He Like His Brethren?

I can now hear someone saying, “But what about Hebrews 2:17? What are you going to do with that verse?” Let's look at Hebrews 2:17 and see if it contradicts anything we have stated in this book.

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren,⁷⁹ that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to [the] Almighty, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

The above bold phrase has the words under consideration. If the Messiah was not just like us, how in the world could he be made like unto his brethren? How could he be a man? In answer to this question we must bring up the case of the first man Adam. The first man Adam is comparable to the Messiah; as states the Apostle Paul:

⁷⁹ I might also add at this point just who the brethren of the Messiah really are. He makes it very plain in Matthew 12:50, “For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.”

CHAPTER ONE

What is Holy Scripture?

“Oh, that's just the New Testament” is a phrase often heard by the non-virgin birth proponents. This phrase is given when these persons feel that New Testament passages “contradict” Old Testament passages. Instead of attempting to harmonize the totality of Scripture, it is very easy for them to say that something does not belong in Scripture, supposing an interpolation, and go on their way as if they had done justice to interpreting Scripture. Scripture, to most of these individuals, is what is commonly termed as the Old Testament. With that belief I have no problem. The problem occurred when I understood that they did not accept the New Testament as Scripture, and therefore did not believe it was inspired by Yahweh.

Old Covenant vs. Writings of that Dispensation

Although people do refer to the books of Genesis to Malachi as the Old Testament, this is not the best word representation for the books themselves. There must be a distinction made between the Old Covenant, and the writings which took place under the Old Covenant. We find Yeshua⁴ referring to these books as: the

⁴ Yeshua is the original name of the Messiah, and is preferred by the author in lieu of the English derivative, Jesus.

Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms.⁵ He identified these headings as Scripture in John 5:39 when He stated “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” We also find the apostle Paul referring to the writings of the Old Covenant as Scripture in Romans 1:1-2.

Paul, a servant of Yeshua [the] Messiah, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of [the] Almighty, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

Paul did not say that the prophets spoke of these things in the Old Testament, simply because that is not what 1st century believers commonly called this collection of books. We find a very similar reference by Paul in his epistle to Timothy, where he states that even from a child Timothy had known the Holy Scriptures.⁶

The Old Covenant is very simply the covenant that Yahweh made with the nation of Israel, beginning on Mount Sinai in Exodus 19. However, the writings which took place during the covenant were not known primarily as the Old Covenant (Testament) but rather the Sacred Writings, or Holy Scriptures.

New Covenant vs. Writings of that Dispensation

The same can be said in regards to the New Covenant. The New Covenant itself was a Covenant, once again made with

⁵ Luke 24:44-45 “And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.”

⁶ 2 Timothy 3:15 “¹⁵And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Messiah Yeshua.”

descendant of David. Why did he not respond to their answer by saying, “Great job you all, that was the perfect answer!” or something of the like? It had to be because their answer was not the perfect answer. It was not the answer that Peter gave to a similar question earlier in the book of Matthew, when he (Peter) was asked by Messiah, “But whom say ye that I am?” Peter’s answer was that their teacher was the Messiah the Son of Almighty Yahweh. To this answer the Messiah gives no refutation, He answers not with a question, but with applause. He tells Peter that this was revealed to him by the Father in heaven, and not any mere human (such as the Pharisees of Matthew 22:41-46) on earth.

Hebrews 2:16

A passage in the book of Hebrews is sometimes used to insinuate that Messiah could not have been born miraculously through a virgin womb. “He didn’t take on the nature of angels...” they say, “He took on the seed of Abraham.” I whole heartedly believe Hebrews 2:16, but the non-virgin birth proponents have misused a verse which has been mistranslated or misinterpreted in such versions as the King James Bible. For instance, in the King James Version of the Bible this verse reads as follows:

For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

The point some attempt to make from the above citation is that the Messiah was a fleshly descendant of Abraham rather than some type of angelic, spiritual being. I too believe the Messiah was a man, but his manhood came not from pro-creation, this we will delve into shortly. As for now, we should point out that this passage in the King James Version has added certain words, written in italics, which do not belong in the verse. Without these

the son (meaning descendant of David. None of these statements are refuted by any of the new testament writers.⁷⁷

There is no doubt in my mind that the Messiah can be referred to as a son or descendant of David, but as we saw in the last chapter, this is through the means of adoption, much like when Yahweh adopted the nation of Israel and they became His son.⁷⁸ What I find interesting in the above paragraph is the sentence I chose to underline. This is because in one particular passage cited as a reference by this individual, the context clearly shows a refutation of the answer “son of David” given by the Messiah himself. The passage is found in Matthew 22:42; reading only verse 42 will not give you the meaning or context of the passage, but reading verses 41-46 definitely will.

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Yeshua asked them, Saying, What think ye of Messiah? Whose son is He? They say unto Him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Master, saying, “Yahweh said unto my Master, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?” If David then call him Master, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions. [Matthew 22:41-46]

As the context shows, the answer that the Messiah received here from the Pharisaical party was insufficient. He was looking for them to accept His role as the Son of Yahweh, not the

⁷⁷ *What Think Ye of Messiah? Whose Son Is He?* By Raymond Yakley, pg. 1.

⁷⁸ Hosea 11:1, Romans 9:3-4.

physical Israel, and can be found most clearly identified in Hebrews 8:7-12. The writings which took place under the New Covenant should not be termed as the New Covenant. We could phrase them as epistles of the New Covenant, or New Covenant Holy Scripture. That’s right, the epistles were also Scripture, Holy Scripture.

There are many Bible verses which show this to be true. Not only do the apostles attribute the term Holy Scripture to the writings of the prophets existing before them, but they also refer to their writings as being Scripture as well. The apostle Peter made it very plain when he spoke of Paul’s writings in this way.

And account that the longsuffering of our Master is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction. [2 Peter 3:16]

Peter makes mention here that there are some things that Paul wrote that the unlearned and unstable twist and mangle, just as they do the other Scriptures. The use of the phrase other Scriptures is a clear implication that Peter viewed Paul’s writings as Scripture, equal to what the prophets had written years before Paul. This needs to be understood by all students of Holy Scripture.

Yeshua Messiah himself claimed that His words “...will not pass away.”⁷ Such a claim is evidence that he viewed His words as coming directly from Yahweh. What words of an uninspired man

⁷ Mark 13:31

could be said to never pass away? The Messiah did refer to the writings of the prophets before him as Scripture, but this in no way was meant to imply that his teachings were uninspired. After all, if we accept what the Bible says, he was the only begotten son of Yahweh (John 3:16). He came from Yahweh's being. Why wouldn't we think his words were inspired? Yeshua compared his teachings with the Law of Moses,⁸ whom he viewed as inspired, and also gave commandments to the apostles by the Holy Spirit.⁹ Matthew 28:20 even shows that Yeshua told his apostles to teach all nations to observe whatsoever He commanded them.

The Apostle Paul also wrote in his epistle to the Corinthians:

If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Master. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. [1 Corinthians 14:37]

When the assemblies received the words of the apostles they were not receiving words coming from uninspired men as you and I. The assemblies were to recognize that their words were the very words of Yahweh.

For this cause also thank we [the] Almighty without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of [the] Almighty which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of [the] Almighty, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. [1 Thessalonians 2:13]

⁸ Matthew 5

⁹ Acts 1:2

CHAPTER NINE

Tying Up Loose Ends

We shall now conclude this study on the issue of the virgin birth of the Messiah in Scripture. I am sure that there could be much more stated on the subject than what I have covered in this small book, but hopefully I have dealt in enough detail so as to counter the remarks of the non-virgin birth proponents.

What Think Ye of Messiah?

It is not my intention in the least to demean anyone's personal intelligence throughout this book, but I must say that one particular article I have in my possession causes me to wonder deeply. This is because of the very title of the article, "What Think Ye of Messiah? Whose Son is He?" The article then goes on to use the text of Matthew 22:41-42 as its opening statement in the following manner.

Yahoshua asked the Pharisees, in Mt. 22:42, "What think ye of Messiah? Whose son is He?" Their answer was "the son of David." Were they wrong? Let's see what the new testament (so called) writers say. In Mt. 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30; 21:9, 15; 22:42; Mk 10:47, 48; 12:35; Lk. 18:38, 39; Acts 13:23; Ro. 1:3; & 2 Tim. 2:8 it is stated by various people that Yahoshua was called

considered a birthed child and an heir to the inheritance of family heirlooms, whatever they might have been. We are the children of Yahweh, not because Yahweh is our literal father, but because we have been adopted by Yahweh and bought with the price of the precious blood of His Son, Yeshua the Messiah. However, the Messiah is the actual Son of Yahweh, but the *adopted son* of Joseph and thus because of his adoption is therefore considered to be a legitimate, acceptable root and offspring of David, his ancestor, and Joseph his father.

The apostle Peter was also inspired, as he was given the keys to the kingdom of heaven. He was told that whatever he loosed or bound on earth should be loosed or bound in heaven.¹⁰ This binding and loosing does not mean that Peter privately chose what to loose and bind, quite the contrary. It shows he was Holy Spirit inspired. The Holy Spirit spoke through Peter in such passages as Acts 2:38, which concerned New Covenant salvation, and Acts 10:28, which concerned not calling any man unfit for salvation.

By Permission and not By Commandment

Those who do not view the New Covenant epistles as inspired are often quick to quote a few passages penned by the apostle Paul in the book of I Corinthians, chapters seven and eight. Paul says the following in these chapters.

But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment. [1 Corinthians 7:6]

But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. [1 Corinthians 7:12]

Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. [1 Corinthians 7:25]

I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. [2 Corinthians 8:8]

¹⁰ Matthew 16:19-20

Many use these verses to show that the apostle Paul was merely an uninspired man as you and I, and had no authority, but merely gave his judgment or opinion on doctrine. However, these people are not looking at the superior picture. In these passages the apostle could be saying one of two things:

1. He has no direct commandment from Yahweh, but he speaks by permission of the Messiah who has granted him the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
2. He was simply at the present time giving his opinion on a few things.

Also notice after the statement made by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:6, he goes on to say in verse 10, "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Master..." He also states in 1 Corinthians 7:25, if you will recall, that he gives his judgment as "...one that hath obtained mercy of the Master to be faithful." Both of these passages would align with the #1 possibility given above. Although he does have a direct audible or written word from Yahweh, he does speak under Yahweh's inspiration, and desires for the Corinthians to know and believe this. In 2 Corinthians 8:8 I feel Paul to be purposefully not commanding them to give, in order to see if they will join in the giving, out of a want to help the brethren, as opposed to a have to.

Those who only use the passages I quoted by Paul, are only accepting the passages they wish to accept; the passages which go along with their doctrinal bias. If you accept everything Paul said then you must accept the following.

- Paul's writings were Holy Scripture.¹¹

¹¹ II Peter 3:16

Yahweh rules in the kingdom of men, and "He gives the kingdom [and its throne] to whomever He will" (Dan 4:25). His adopted sons, or "overcomers," will inherit all things.

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

One of the things they will inherit is the right to sit on the throne of David with Yahshua. The point, however, is that they don't sit on the throne because they are David's literal seed according to the flesh, but because, as adopted sons, they receive it through inheritance.

If overcomers can sit on the throne of David with Yahshua even though they are not the literal seed of David according to the flesh, then Yahshua can as well. He can sit on David's throne because he is Joseph's adopted son. As such, he was adopted into the tribe of Judah through Joseph and therefore entitled to Joseph's inheritance as well as the right to sit on the throne of David, the throne of Yahweh.

Actually, Yahshua has more right to sit on the throne of David than David himself since Yahshua is literally Yahweh's Son whereas David was only Yahweh's adopted son.

Some may continue to argue that an adopted son cannot be considered "the seed of David." Are not adopted sons in Messiah Abraham's seed? (Gal 3:29). If we are Abraham's seed, then we are also Isaac's seed, Jacob's seed. Yahshua is the seed of David through Joseph's adoption of him (Joseph being the seed of David as well).

Conclusion

In this section we have seen that just because someone alleges a contradiction in the Bible doesn't make it so. Such is the case with the two genealogies of Messiah in Matthew and Luke's evangels. They are harmonized when a person understands the concept of adoption. In the Hebraic lifestyle an adopted child was

spirit, that we are the children of Yahweh: And if children, then heirs; heirs of Yahweh, and joint-heirs with Messiah; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of Yahweh.

Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of Yahweh.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love Yahweh, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom 8:14-17, 19, 21, 28)

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of Yahweh: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of Yahweh, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 Jn 3:1, 2).

We have a glimpse of what we shall be in Revelation. We shall be kings reigning with Yahshua. We have already seen, in Rev 3:21, that the throne that overcomers will sit upon is Yahshua's throne, the throne of David, the throne of Yahweh. How does one acquire the throne? One way is through inheritance!

"He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are Yahweh's, and he hath set the world upon them." (1 Sam 2:8)

In other words, Yahweh will bring to power whoever He chooses to inherit it. Deut 17:15 says Yahweh is the one who would choose Israel's king. He chose Saul. Then He chose David even though David was not the firstborn of Jesse (1 Sam 16:11-13). Eventually Joash became king even though he was not the firstborn of Ahaziah (2 Kgs 11:12).

- Paul's writings were commands of Yahweh.¹²
- Paul's writings were the word of Yahweh.¹³
- Paul sometimes gave his opinion.¹⁴

I believe each of the above four points, simply because this is what the Bible teaches. Anyone else who chooses to make the Bible their measuring stick must also acknowledge these points.

"But, this is simply Paul and others claiming their own inspiration!" some might wish to say. However, is that not what the authors of the Old Covenant writings did as well? Every time they stated a "Thus Saith Yahweh..." they were claiming their own inspiration. I should also point out that the passages used by non-virgin birth proponents to show the Old Covenant writings as being inspired, are found in the New Covenant writings! Yes, 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:18-21 are the passages predominantly used to prove that the Old Covenant writings were indeed inspired. Many want to accept Paul and Peter's teachings here, but not elsewhere. "Inconsistency" is the word that rings out in my ears.

Conclusion

Many point out such passages where Paul might state something such as "The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee..."¹⁵ and state that surely I do not believe Paul was inspired to ask for his cloak! Well, of course I do not believe that. Paul's uninspired request for his cloak is nothing different than certain Old Covenant Holy Scriptures such as Genesis 24:64 which says, "And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel." I would say that

¹² 1 Corinthians 14:37

¹³ 1 Thessalonians 2:13

¹⁴ 2 Corinthians 8:8

¹⁵ 2 Timothy 4:13

asking someone for your cloak or getting off of a camel is of equal level. While both statements are true, neither is teaching doctrine by way of moral command. However, in matters of faith and doctrinal practice, both the Old Covenant writings and New Covenant writings are equally inspired of Yahweh.

We need to be at a place where we can acknowledge the books of Matthew to Revelation as inspired of Yahweh. Then and only then can we work from a foundation. Without a foundation for our beliefs, we cannot really discuss the virgin birth issue, or any other issue for that matter. Therefore, for those non-virgin birth proponents who do not view the New Covenant writings as inspired, I cannot reason with you concerning the virgin birth, unless you are willing to acknowledge the fact forthrightly shown throughout the apostle's writings. The fact that their writings were and are Holy Scripture.

"And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and anointed him unto Yahweh to be the chief governor, and Zadok to be priest. Then Solomon sat on the throne of Yahweh as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him. (1Ch 29:22b, 23)

Solomon was actually seated on the "throne of Yahweh." He was there instead of David. In other words, David also sat on the "throne of Yahweh" as king over Israel at one time. This is said because Yahweh was Israel's first King and it was His throne they ruled from after rejecting Him.

Saul would have been the first fleshly king to sit on Yahweh's throne. All successive kings of Davidic descent clear down to Zedekiah sat on the throne of Yahweh. (They also sat on the throne of David).

The point is this; every king that ever sat on the throne of David, including David himself, was an adopted child of Yahweh. As such, they were entitled to inherit everything from their father (Yahweh). Every king of Davidic descent, even though they were adopted, was permitted to rule.

It doesn't stop there, however. Rev 2:26, 27; 5:9, 10; 20:5, 6 all show that believers in Yahshua (the king who sits on David's throne), will also reign as kings. Whose throne will they sit on?

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev 3:21).

Those that overcome will sit on the throne of David with Yahshua and will rule with him over the nations. Who are those overcomers? Are they literal descendants of David through an earthly father? No. They are adopted sons of Yahweh who are entitled to the throne just as though they were literal sons.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of Yahweh, they are the sons of Yahweh. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our

David. Again, an adoption might have occurred during the chaos of captivity into Babylon.

As you can see, there are various points that non-virgin birth proponents have not considered in regards to these two respective genealogies.

John Cordaro's "A Defense of the Virgin Birth Doctrine"

I have in my possession another article by the name of the above mentioned title. I would now like to quote a section of this article which deals with the subject at hand, giving full credit to the author of this article, John Cordaro.⁷⁶

The Scriptures have several teachings concerning adoption that would help us to understand this issue as it relates to Joseph and Yahshua. The question is, "Can an adopted son sit on the throne as King?"

Rom 9:4 says "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;"

The Israelites were adopted by Yahweh. That is why Yahweh spoke of them as "my son" (Ex 4:22,23; Deut 14:1,2; Isa 43:6; Jer 31:9; Hos 11:1).

Now, who was the first king over Israel? 1 Sam 12:12 & 8:7 tell us Yahweh was their first King. Yet, they rejected Him as King resulting in Saul reigning over them. David followed Saul as Israel's next king. He, in turn, was succeeded by his son Solomon. Notice what the Word says about David and Solomon;

⁷⁶ This article can be read in its entirety at www.intergate.com/~jcordaro/Virgin_Birth.html.

CHAPTER TWO

This Doctrine Matters!

Many non-virgin birth proponents make the claim that the teaching of the virgin birth is a mute teaching, that is, it really makes no difference if you are for or against the doctrine. In other words, it really doesn't matter when it comes to one's salvation. One such proponent stated the following:

...let me be clear in stating that one of my primary objectives is to show that the "virgin" birth is NOT a redemptive issue, that is it does NOT decide the eternal fate of an individual. The New Testament very clearly does not present, as necessary for salvation, that one must accept (or deny) the virgin birth. Even the most forceful proponents of the literal virgin birth must admit, unless they are dishonest, that the virgin birth issue is not an issue that determines one's eternal destiny. In other words, study the issue and believe as you wish, knowing your sincere opinion will not influence your eternal life.¹⁶

¹⁶ *How the "virgin birth" doctrine weakens Yahshua's claim to being Messiah*, pg. 1, taken from www.TorahofMessiah.com.

I entirely disagree with the authors above statements. Call me dishonest with the Scriptures if you wish, but I stand firm on my belief. Why do I make such a claim? After all, there is not a verse in Scripture stating "Thou shalt believe in the virgin birth to be saved." Although the Scriptures do not state this verbatim, they do state something else we must accept and believe as essential doctrine. A non-virgin birth makes it impossible to accept and believe this very doctrine.

Son-ship

The Scriptures unequivocally state that in order for one to have salvation, they must believe that Yeshua is the son of Yahweh.¹⁷ What makes the Messiah's son-ship different from our son-ship? A very big difference is found in the doctrine of the virgin birth. You see, if the Messiah was born just as you and I, and committed sin (as some teach) as you and I, he was merely a son of Yahweh - just as you and I. Someone who obtained son-ship as you and I can obtain son-ship does not meet the qualifications shown in many passages in the New Covenant Holy Scriptures.

For instance, recall the account of the question asked to Peter concerning who the son of man really was.

When Yeshua came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living Almighty. ¹⁷And Yeshua answered and said unto

¹⁷ John 3:16-18; 1 John 4:15; 5:10-13

In true Jewish tradition, as we have already seen, the Bible does not say anything to distinguish between genetic birth and adoption. In this case it is not even possible to tell from the context who is the genetic father of Zerubbabel and who is the adoptive father.

This, of course, provides the answer to all the Jewish anti-missionary groups that try to ridicule Christians with the suggestion that if the New Testament can't even get the genealogy of Yeshua right, how can we believe anything else it says? They should be aware that the same apparent contradictions occur in the Tanakh, for the same reasons. Not only do we have two different fathers of Zerubbabel, but we have also seen how Michal, the daughter of Saul, was childless until the day of her death, yet she bore five sons to Adriel.

It is likely that at the time of Yeshua, many different genealogical tables existed, and none of them made any distinction between genetic birth and adoption. Far from contradicting each other, Matthew and Luke are actually strengthening the point, that Yeshua was descended from David, by giving two different tables that both have the same result.

The book of 1 Chronicles goes on to list the children of Zerubbabel.

... And the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister: and Hashubah, and Ohel, and Berechiah, and Hasadiah, Jushab-hesed, five. (1 Chr. 3:19-20)

Why does it say "five"? Some translations say "five others". Are these the five who were born after their sister Shelomith, or were they adopted? In true Jewish style it doesn't tell you. This whole chapter is just a fragmented genealogy and there is no reason to believe there were only five. There might have been six or seven. Matthew's Gospel says there was a son of Zerubbabel called Abiud, and Luke says there was a son called Rhesa.

According to Luke's Gospel, the father of Shealtiel was Neri instead of Jehoiachin, giving a different line of descent from

Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying... (Haggai 1:1)

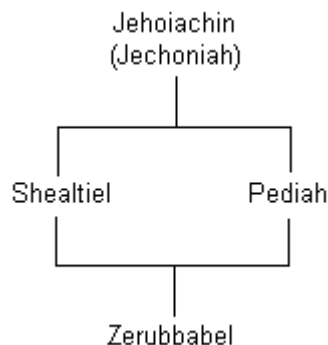
Speak now to Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying... (Haggai 2:2)

In 1 Chronicles 3 there are a number of fragmented genealogies of the tribe of Judah. Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) is mentioned as the father of Shealtiel, in agreement with Matthew's Gospel, but Zerubbabel is not listed as the son of Shealtiel. Instead he is the son of Shealtiel's brother Pediah.

And the sons of Jeconiah were Assir, and Shealtiel his son, and Malchiram, and Pediah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedebiah. And the sons of Pediah: Zerubbabel and Shimei. ... (1 Chr. 3:17-19. Green's Literal Translation)

Why does this verse appear to be at variance with Ezra, Haggai and Matthew's Gospel, suggesting that Zerubbabel was the son of Shealtiel's brother Pediah? The only possible answer is that Zerubbabel was the genetic son of one of these two brothers, but was adopted by the other. During the return from the Babylonian captivity, there must have been many orphans who required adoption. It is very likely that either Shealtiel or Pediah might have died and Zerubbabel was adopted by the surviving brother.

The genealogy is as follows:



him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. [Matthew 16:13-17]

Please note that Yeshua's question acknowledged that the apostles knew him as the Son of man. Yeshua called himself the Son of man when asking the question. The answer Yeshua was looking for was something other than his Son of man status. Peter's revelation must have consisted of more than just acknowledging Yeshua as a son of Yahweh, as Peter could be. Peter knew that he was the Son of Yahweh; that he had a heavenly origin, coming from the bosom of the Father. The Messiah did not have a revelation that Peter was the son of Yahweh, or any other of His disciples for that matter. No, the revelation consisted of believing that the Messiah was the Son of Yahweh, and the context shows that this is differently than you or I can be.

Consider also Matthew 14:22-33. The Messiah had compelled the apostles to go ahead of him in their boat. As they were out at sea, the winds prevailed and they eventually saw the Messiah walking towards them on top of the water. Peter wanted to do the same, and could, as long as his eyes stayed upon Yeshua. Upon Peter taking his eyes off of the Messiah, he was held up by the Master's hand, and both came to the boat and got on board. Upon the Messiah's entry, those who were in the boat made an extraordinary claim.

Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of [the] Almighty. [Mark 14:33]

Do you really think those in the boat thought that they were the Son of Yahweh, in the same way that He was? Some would have us to believe so.

Now, some will say that the Scripture says that Yahoshua is the “Son of Yahweh.” Therefore, one must look at what it takes to be a “son.”... Yahoshua is referred to as “the son of Yahweh” approximately 100 times (many of these are implied, not specific) in the new testament. In very, very few of these instance is Yahoshua the speaker. Rather he referred to himself as the “son of man,” to which he referred himself approximately eighty-five times!¹⁸

I find it odd that one cannot accept 100 passages, whether implied or specific, which refer to the Messiah as the son of Yahweh. All I would need was one Scripture, and that would settle it for me. Both passages I have already shown from Matthew’s epistle plainly show that the Messiah’s son-ship is different from our own. I can see no way in getting around the truth of these passages. We can become sons of Yahweh, but the Messiah is and was always the son of Yahweh.

Let us also consider two passages in the epistle of I John which indicate a different son-ship for the Messiah.

In this was manifested the love of [the] Almighty toward us, because that [the] Almighty sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved [the] Almighty, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. [I John 4:9-10]

¹⁸ *What Think Ye of Messiah? Whose Son is He?* Pg. 8, by Raymond Yakley, 10-3-89.

generations in Luke, and the names are different. According to Matthew, the father of Joseph is called Jacob. According to Luke, he is called Heli. It is not certain whether Matthan and Matthat are the same person, listed in Matthew and Luke respectively as the grandfather of Joseph. The only two names that appear identically in both lists are Zerubbabel and his father Shealtiel.

One possible explanation for the differing genealogies is that Luke's Gospel gives Mary's genealogy, with Joseph's name used as a covering to avoid the suggestion that Yeshua was illegitimate.

However, a much more satisfactory explanation is that one or both lists include adopted children, and there is nothing in either of them to suggest who is an adopted son and who is a genetic son.

To illustrate this, we should look at the two names that appear in both lists, Zerubbabel and Shealtiel. Matthew associates them with the exile into Babylon as follows:

And Josiah fathered Jechoiachin and his brothers, at the carrying away of Babylon. And after the carrying away of Babylon, Jechoiachin fathered Shealtiel; and Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel. (Matt. 1:11-12. Green's Literal Translation)

These are undoubtedly the same Shealtiel and Zerubbabel that appear in Ezra as follows:

Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon ... Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel...appointed the Levites ... to set forward the work of the house of the Lord. (Ezra 3:2-8)

They also appear in Haggai as follows:

In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of

as opposed to the Greek which reads, "...whom she bore to Esdriel..." I do believe this is also solved in the answer to the aforementioned "dilemma."

The harmonization is that Merab bore the sons, but they must have been brought up by Michal. Do not miss that because of Michal's bringing them up they are said to be the "...five sons of Michal." This harmonizes with the verse which states that Michal had no children, meaning that she did not actually birth any children. Adoption is the key here, and adoption or the bringing up of a child is the key to harmonizing the genealogies of Matthew and Luke.

Rather than me going into the issue in greater detail, I would rather like to quote excerpts from two excellent articles that deal with this very issue.

Mike Gascoigne's "Virgin Birth, Jewish Adoption, and Genealogy of Yeshua"

In an article with the above mentioned title, there is a section entitled The Genealogies of Yeshua in Matthew and Luke. I would now like to quote this sections entirety, giving full credit to the author, Mike Gascoigne.⁷⁵

The Genealogies of Yeshua in Matthew and Luke

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke give two different genealogies of Yeshua.

Matthew 1:1-17 gives the genealogy from Abraham to David, and then from David to Yeshua via Solomon.

Luke 3:23-38 gives the genealogy in reverse order, and goes all the way back to Adam. The line of descent from David is through his son Nathan instead of Solomon. There are many more

And we know that the Son of [the] Almighty 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 Yeshua the Messiah. This is the true Almighty, and eternal life. [I John 5:20]

These passages make no sense if the Messiah is only a son of Yahweh as we can become. Yahweh sent His Son for the propitiation of our sins. We are to confess that the Messiah is the Son of Yahweh.¹⁹ Why would we have to confess something of someone else, that we are ourselves? When the Scripture states words as "These things saith the Son of [the] Almighty"²⁰ they are speaking of a being different than us, a being who came into the earth through the womb of a virgin woman. When Paul preached in the synagogues that the Messiah was the Son of Yahweh,²¹ it was something extraordinary. Paul was not preaching something about Yeshua that was also true of him-self.

A Son by Resurrection

Many, who believe in a non-virgin birth, state the claim that the Messiah became the Son of Yahweh only at his resurrection. Note the statements by one author:

Beyond a shadow of a doubt, Saul believed that Yahoshua was born of the flesh, a man, from the seed of David. That He BECAME the Son of Yahweh, born of the Spirit at His resurrection from the dead. Notice how he confirmed this belief in his letter to the Romans: "Concerning His Son Yahoshua the Messiah our Master, Which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.

¹⁹ I John 4:15

²⁰ Revelation 2:18

²¹ Acts 9:20

⁷⁵ This article can be read in its entirety at www.write-on.co.uk/vbirth.htm.

And declared to be the Son of the Almighty with Power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead” (Romans 1:3-4).²²

I cannot argue with this passage in Romans, neither its parallel passage in the book of Psalm 2:7 stating the same. However, Yeshua addresses himself as Yahweh’s only begotten Son before His resurrection in John 3:16-18.

For [the] Almighty so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For [the] Almighty sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of [the] Almighty.

Obviously, if Yahweh gave his only begotten Son (meaning giving him up to die) he had to be Yahweh’s only begotten son before the resurrection. Therefore another understanding must be sought for, for the passages in Psalms and Romans, a spiritual understanding perhaps.

If you do an examination of the references to the Messiah before his resurrection as the Son of Yahweh you will find that he is referred to by this title many, many times.²³ This thoroughly

²² *Do You Believe Moses?* The Liberty Newsletter, No. 11, November 1981, pg. 5, by Richard H. Francis Jr.

²³ Mt. 4:3, 6; 8:29; 14:33; 26:63; 27:40, 43, 54; Mk. 1:1; 3:11; 15:39; Lk. 1:35; 4:3; 4:9, 41; 8:28; 22:70; Jn. 1:34, 49; Jn. 3:18; 5:25; 9:35; 10:36; 11:4, 27; 19:7; 20:31.

within her heart. Her actions resulted in a stern rebuke from David, as well as a punishment from Yahweh which stated:

Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death. [2 Samuel 6:23]

Very clearly, Michal’s punishment was that she would have no children unto the day of her death, would you agree? I mean, that’s what the text says, right? Of course that’s what it says, and we must believe it to be the truth. However, we find a seemingly contradictory passage further in the book of 2 Samuel 21:8.

But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite:

How is it that Michal had no sons unto the day of her death, and yet is said here to have five sons? Let there be no doubt, the Hebrew text here in 2 Samuel 21:8 reads as Michal and not as Merab. We also find that in the Septuagint translation the name Michal is used. Consider this passage in the Septuagint.

And the king took the two sons of Respha the daughter of Aia, whom she bore to Saul, Hermonoi and Memphibosthe, and the five sons of Michol daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Esdriel son of Berzelli the Moulathite.

The actual Greek text here for Michol reads as Micol, a definite reference to Michal and, once again, not Merab. The only difference between the Hebrew and Greek of the Scriptures here is that the Hebrew reads, “...whom she brought up for Adriel...”

The Harmonization

The objections to the genealogies in a nutshell (as I've encountered them) are as follows:

- The genealogy in Matthew does not completely harmonize with the genealogy given in I Chronicles.
- The genealogies in Matthew and Luke discontinue their similarity with differing sons of David.

Both of these objections are accurate in their basic assertions. It is true that the genealogies of Matthew and I Chronicles are not identical in the names they give. It is also true that the genealogies of Matthew and Luke discontinue their similarity with Nathan and Solomon (Mt. 1:6-7, Lk. 3:31). However, these problems are rather easily harmonized when one understands the Hebraic concept of adoption. That is, when a child was adopted in an Israelite family the child was considered as one which was literally born into the house. One example of this can be found in the case of David's wife Michal.

Michal and Merab

In 1 Samuel 14:49 we find that King Saul had two daughters by the names of Merab (the first-born) and Michal (the younger). When we read 1 Samuel 18 – 2 Samuel 3 we find that David wed the younger of Saul's daughters, then lost her for a time, and then acquired her again. In 2 Samuel 6 we find that as the Ark of the Covenant was brought into the city of David, David danced before Yahweh with all that he could muster, while clothed with a linen girdle; this was done with much shouting as well as with a mighty blowing of trumpets. It was at this time that Michal, looking out of her window, saw David's actions and despised him

disproves the belief that the Messiah became the Son of Yahweh only after his resurrection.

Adam: a Son of the Almighty

An excellent example showing the difference between Yeshua's son-ship and ours is by realizing the difference between Adam's son-ship and ours. Yes, Adam was without a doubt a son of Yahweh differently than you and I. Notice a portion of the genealogy of the Messiah in the book of Luke.

Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan, Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of [the] Almighty. [Luke 3:37-38]

This passage singles out Adam as a son of Yahweh. Notice how every other man in this passage has an earthly origin, but Adam is referred to as being "of Yahweh" because he had a heavenly origin. This shows that the phrase "son of the Almighty" or "son of Yahweh" is not always a phrase that can be used of all believers, believers meaning, those who believe in the Son of Yahweh. Do you see the point?

A Parable to Consider

If the Messiah was a son of Yahweh just as you and I, this would imply that he was also a son of Yahweh just as the prophets. Yet consider a parable of the Messiah in the book of Matthew 21:33-41.

³³Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and

hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: ³⁴And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. ³⁵And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. ³⁷But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. ³⁸But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. ³⁹And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. ⁴⁰When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? ⁴¹They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

One author, in an article entitled *A Defense of the Virgin Birth Doctrine*, had a few statements concerning this parable.

This parable refers to the nation of Israel killing the son (Yahshua). Prior to that, Yahweh (the householder) sent many servants (prophets included) who they also killed. Yet, those servants are not referred to as sons. There was only one son sent. Why? Because the householder (Yahweh) only has one true son (Yahshua).

We therefore plainly see that the son-ship of Yeshua is distinctly different than the son-ship we as believers do have.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Harmonizing the Genealogies

One of the most common objections to the virgin birth of Messiah is that the genealogies listed in the books of Matthew and Luke are in complete contradiction towards one another. Certain groups even go so far as to teach that if the New Testament writings cannot even get the genealogy of Messiah correct, then why should we trust anything else the New Testament has to teach? The truth is this: this objection stems from a cursory review of the genealogies with presupposed biases against the doctrine of the virgin birth. We should rather seek to harmonize the two to the best of our limited ability before claiming one or the other (or both) to be nothing short of spurious. There have been many men throw away the Bible because they feel that it contradicts itself in various areas. Believe me, if you are looking for “contradictions” you will find them! However, if you realize that you are a finite creature and Yahweh is an infinite Mighty One, you may just be a person who although not understanding something at the present time, does not throw out the proverbial “baby with the bathwater.”

Such is the case with the genealogies at a hand. Do they contradict? Is there a possibility of harmonization? Let’s closely look at the two and see what results we can yield.

Yahweh's Own Blood

In the book of Acts, during the Apostle Paul's great speech to the assembly at Ephesus, he made a statement that unambiguously shows the Messiah's unique son-ship.

Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of [the] Almighty. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the assembly of [the] Almighty, which he hath purchased with his own blood. [Acts 20:26-28]

I am a Father. I can rightfully refer to my son as my own blood. Without me, my son would not exist. Your son (if you have one) could not be referred to by me as my own blood. In like manner, the Messiah is Yahweh's own blood, because Yahweh is His Father. There is never a time in Scripture when we as believers are referred to in the fashion as Paul speaks of here.

Association with the Father and the Holy Spirit

A final way I will use to prove the incomparable son-ship of Yeshua the Messiah, is to show his relationship with the Father and the Son. A certain passage in Scripture does this emphatically.

And Yeshua came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: [Matthew 28:18-19]

Here we see the close relationship of the Son to the Father and Holy Spirit. Is anyone really going to try to explain how the one mentioned here as the son, is a son just as you and I as believers are?

Another point to make on this passage is the undeniable fact that the Son here shares the one heavenly name with the Father and Holy Spirit, the name Yahweh. No mere man has the authority to attribute this name to him self. Sure, we as believers are part of the family of heaven and earth, and are named after the heavenly Father in a spiritual sense,²⁴ but not a one of us are mentioned in the Matthew 28:19 passage. It is exclusively applied to the Son, the Messiah.

This is also the case with an Old Covenant Scripture verse in the book of Proverbs. A son is mentioned in connection with the Father. This son, once again, shares the Father's name.

⁴Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell? [Proverbs 30:4]

The answer to the first six questions in this passage is the name Yahweh, we can therefore logically conclude that the answer to the seventh question is also Yahweh. What is his son's name? The answer must be Yahweh. This passage speaks of an exclusive Son, which bears the heavenly name, of the heavenly Father (Jeremiah 23:5-6).

The assertion is repeated that Joseph "knew her not until she had borne a son" (Matt. 1:25). Luke is no less specific. Mary's response to the annunciation was one of bewilderment. She said, "How can this be, since I have no husband?" (Luke 1:34). The answer was, in effect, "No husband is necessary. God will cause you to conceive" (v. 35). These are the clear affirmations of the virgin birth. They cannot be explained away by textual evidence. They can only be accepted or denied. The reporting is modest but clear. It is history or the boldest fiction.⁷⁴

²⁴ Ephesians 3:14-15

⁷⁴ *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Copyright 1975 by Zondervan, Volume 5, pg. 888.

on other uses of the word shall in Scripture. Finally, a comparison between Elizabeth's miraculous conception and Mary's miraculous conception shows that Mary could not have been in her old age, but rather (as the text says) a sexual virgin who would conceive without the aid of a man. Men may try their best to get around the plain teaching of Scripture, but Scripture will stand for those who accept what it states, rather than making an attempt to get around what it states. One pro-virgin birth proponent stated the following in answering a rebuttal to a non-virgin birth proponent's interpretation of Luke.

Yes, the angel told her that it would be future, but still Miriam's response was, "How shall this be, Seeing I know not a man?" Her response was to reveal that the conception was to take place without the aid of her betrothed Joseph. Otherwise, she would not have wondered. She would have just accepted that she and Joseph were going to have relations after marriage, and she would have a child out of the marriage. This is not imputed here at all. It is imputed that she, being a virgin, was going to conceive and have a child.⁷³

I should now say that with the evidence from both Matthew and Luke, I personally do not see why anyone would deny the doctrine of the virgin birth of the Messiah. Scholars do agree:

All alleged ambiguity vanishes when the passages are read in full. Specifically, it was "before they came together" that Mary "was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit" (Matt 1:18).

⁷³ Elder Evangelist Jerry Healen COMMENTS in response to the following article which denies the virgin birth of YAHshua our Messiah, pg. 36-37.

Conclusion

We have seen that throughout the evangels, that the Messiah was known as Yahweh's own Son, his only begotten Son. The Messiah is a son of Yahweh similarly (yet not the same) to Adam²⁵ who was a son of Yahweh differently than you and I. The passages which speak of Yeshua's son-ship can only be understood as meaning that he was from the being of Yahweh. To demand a simplistic understanding of the passages I have cited, as if there were no difference in son-ship between the Messiah and ourselves, is to wholly disregard the framework of the passages.

Therefore, what is the ingredient that distinguishes the Messiah from us? It is none other than the doctrine of the virgin birth. Yeshua was born differently, miraculously, in comparison to my birth and yours. Truly, Miriam knew what she was saying when she questioned the angel with the words, "...How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"²⁶ The angel also spoke by heavenly revelation when he stated:

³⁵And the angel answered and said unto her, 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 [the] Almighty. [Luke 1:35]

²⁵ Though Adam and Yeshua are both referred to as a Son of the Almighty, Adam is never referred to as the only begotten Son of Yahweh, nor is the name Yahweh ever attributed to Adam. Therefore Yeshua's son-ship is somewhat superior to Adam's. For instance, we do not have to believe in Adam to inherit eternal life, but we do have to believe in Yeshua to inherit eternal life. (1 John 2:23; 4:15)

²⁶ Luke 1:34

There is no reason for us to doubt Luke’s account here concerning a virgin conceiving and bringing forth a son. There also is no reason to not believe Matthew’s account in the first two chapters of his evangel. However, non-virgin birth proponents claim the first two chapters of Matthew are spurious and thus useless. Could they be correct? Maybe the non-virgin birth proponents can support a claim after all?

Comparing Elizabeth and Mary

We will now compare Elizabeth’s account with Mary’s account and show unequivocally that Mary must needs have been a sexual virgin according to the context of Luke chapter one.

Elizabeth was barren and well stricken in years – Lk. 1:7	Mary was described as a virgin, Greek = <i>parthenos</i> – Lk. 1:27
The angel told Zachariah his wife would bear him a son – Lk. 1:13	The angel told Mary she would conceive in her womb – Lk. 1:31
Zachariah responded to the angel by stating his wife’s old age – Lk. 1:18	Mary responded by saying she had never had sexual relations – Lk. 1:34
Elizabeth’s child would be in the spirit/power of Elijah – Lk. 1:17	Mary’s child would be called the Son of the Almighty – Lk. 1:35
We thus see that the miracle of Elizabeth’s birth was that she (and her husband) was passed the age of child-bearing.	We thus see that the miracle of Mary’s birth was that she would not have sexual relations with a man before conceiving and birthing Messiah, the Son of Yahweh.

Though some people have claimed that certain phrases in Luke chapter one are not authentic, (in reference to Mary’s words) there arguments need not be rebutted for they have no textual variants here to go by, they are only holding on to a hypothesis.

Conclusion

Luke’s narrative greatly compliments Matthew’s and further proves the precious doctrine of the virgin birth of the Messiah; going verse by verse in Luke 1:26-38 shows this. The rebuttal of the word *shall* in these verses is a premature argument when based

mute. Therefore, the word *shall*, could simply have been a reference to seconds in the future, but still a reference to a time in the future. This sheds a completely different light on the use of the word *shall* by Gabriel in reference to those things which happened to Mary and her future child.

At this point, it is fitting for us to consider other passages in Scripture of the English word shall to see that the future can be immediately following the declaration.

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. [Genesis 2:23]

I [Samuel] will call unto Yahweh, and he shall send thunder and rain... So Samuel called unto Yahweh; and Yahweh sent thunder and rain that day... [I Samuel 11:17-18]

Then Peter said to her... behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then she fell down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. [Acts 5:9-10]

Each use of the word shall here is a reference to something that happened no later than the day the statement was made. Thus the use of the word shall in Luke 1:31-35 does entirely nothing to disprove a virgin birth.

CHAPTER THREE

Matthew 1 & 2 Are They Authentic?

This is the bottom line: if the first two chapters of Matthew are authentic, this issue comes to a screeching halt for non-virgin birth proponents. In my opinion, it would not be a consequence of the virgin birth doctrine if Matthew 1-2 was not originally in Scripture. Luke's account of the virgin birth would be sufficient. Nevertheless, for most non-virgin birth proponents, Luke is not enough, but Matthew most assuredly is. This is why they go to great lengths to discredit the first two chapters in Matthew's evangel. They realize that it presents an insurmountable obstacle to their doctrine. Therefore it is a must to examine the validity for those two chapters in Scripture. In doing this we must familiarize our selves with a term used in New Testament criticism called textual variants.

An opening description of textual variants can be found in Dr. James R. White's, *The King James Only Controversy: Can You Trust the Modern Translations?*

You may hear someone speaking of the thousands of variants in the manuscripts of the Bible, and in one sense, they are speaking the truth, as there are thousands of variants. One number that appears often in this context is 200,000 variants in the New Testament alone! But just as it is wise to listen closely to what a politician

is saying, it is wise to look closely at this claim as well. If you put ten people in a room and asked them all to copy the first five chapters of the Gospel of John, you would end up with ten “different” copies of John. In other words, no two handwritten copies would be absolutely identical to each other. Someone would skip a word that everyone else has. One person would misspell that one word that they can never get right. Someone would probably skip a line, or even a verse, especially if there were similar words at the beginning or end of the verse before and the verse after. So you would end up with a lot of variants. But would you have ten copies of the same book? Yes, you would, and by comparing all the copies you could rather easily reproduce the text of the original, because when one person makes a mistake, the other nine are not likely to do so at the very same spot.²⁷

There are roughly 5,300 manuscripts of the New Covenant Scriptures alone. Within these manuscripts there are several variants. Most are of no serious significance at all, few do call out to our attention. For the person interested in studying this issue in its entirety, you should consult a more scholarly person than I. There are several good books out there which deal with the subject.

My concern in this chapter is the following: are there any textual variants in the 5,300 plus manuscripts of the New Covenant Scriptures available, in the first two chapters of Matthew? Or more precisely are these two chapters missing from

²⁷ *The King James Only Controversy: Can You Trust the Modern Translations?* By Dr. James R. White, pg. 39. Published by Bethany House Publishers, 1995.

course of Abiah.⁶⁹ We must now ask the question as to how long Zechariah was serving in this course. The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible is of help to us at this point.

COURSE OF PRIESTS AND LEVITES.

Because of the great increase in the number of priests, David divided them into twenty-four relays (1 Chron 24:1-19). The priests were expected to serve from twenty years of age (1 Chron 23:6, 27). Sixteen courses were allotted the descendants of Eleazar and eight to those of Ithamar, his brother. Apart from the main festivals, when all the courses were active, each course ministered for a week, changes being made on the Sabbath before the evening sacrifice (2 Kings 11:5, 9). Courses were determined by casting lots.⁷⁰

We see here that the longest Zachariah could have been serving was for the space of one week.⁷¹ Therefore the angel’s proclamation that he would be dumb and unable to speak came to pass, yes, in the future, but at the most part, one week into the future. We may also add that according to the context, Zechariah may have been struck with dumbness immediately after Gabriel spoke his words in Luke 1:20. This is seen by the use of the phrase, “...until the day that these things shall be performed.” This sentence implies that from the point Gabriel spoke until the day of the naming of the child,⁷² Zechariah would suffer as a

⁶⁹ Luke 1:5

⁷⁰ *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Copyright 1975 by Zondervan, Volume 1, pg. 994.

⁷¹ Luke 1:21-22 does imply that the people were waiting in one day’s time, not for over one day or the space of a week. Therefore it is most likely that they waited no longer than a portion of one day for Zachariah.

⁷² Luke 1:57-64

showing him the greatness his son would bring, Zachariah replied immediately in the following manner:

And Zechariah said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of [the] Almighty; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. [Luke 1:18-20]

Please notice the underlined sentence. Because of Zachariah's unbelief of what Gabriel had spoken, the angel proclaimed to him, "thou *shalt* be dumb." This is strikingly similar to what Gabriel told Mary in Luke 1:31 when he stated, "And behold, thou *shalt* conceive in thy womb." No one can deny that when Gabriel spoke the above words to Zechariah they were used to refer to something in the future because of the use of the future tense word shall or shalt. Nevertheless, how far in the future did this occur? Reading further gives us the answer.

And the people waited for Zechariah, and marveled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. [Luke 1:21-22]

We see here that Zechariah was speechless at his coming out of the temple which was for the sake of his service in the priestly

any genuine manuscript? The answer to this question is a very emphatic NO. Even the very oldest Greek New Covenant manuscripts contain the first two chapters of the book of Matthew. Believe me, if two chapters of Matthew were missing in a manuscript, it would cause quite a stir amongst biblical scholars.

For instance, Mark 16:9-20 is not found in the two oldest manuscripts available, Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus. The issue of the missing text is spoken of in every scholarly book I have seen, that deals with the subject of textual variants. This variant is usually referred to as the "king" of all variants, in that it is the longest textual variant known. However, one scholarly author had this to say on the questionable passage:

Whatever the correct view, it is important to note that the truthfulness of this passage is not in dispute. The main events of Mark 16:9-20 are recorded elsewhere, so at any rate we are not in danger of forfeiting heavenly treasure.²⁸

We see here that the author, even when discussing the most controversial textual variant, shows that it is not as big a deal as some would have us to believe. It would, however, be quite an issue if two entire chapters were missing from certain manuscripts, but the fact remains that not one single Greek New Covenant manuscript²⁹ is missing the first two chapters of Matthew's evangel. Therefore for someone to just make a claim that two entire chapters are not original, without a shred of evidence to prove it, should not concern us one iota.

²⁸ *How We Got the Bible*, by Neil R. Lightfoot, pg. 102-103. Published by Baker Books, 2003.

²⁹ I should also mention the *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*, translated by Professor George Howard. This gospel is held to be "top notch" among the Hebrew translations of Matthew by many Messianic groups. This gospel also contains the virgin birth account.

The 1966 Jerusalem Bible

There are a few non-virgin birth writings I have come across which use a preface out of the 1966 edition of the Jerusalem Bible to state their claim concerning the un-authenticity of Matthew 1 & 2. After quoting a portion of this 1966 edition's Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels, one non-virgin birth author had this to say:

To summarize, the Catholics admitted in their own Bible that a person other than the original writer of the Book of Matthew inserted the first two Chapters and that the Catholics have deemed this addition as "inspired" and worthy of admission into the canon of the Bible. I, for one, have a serious problem with their actions. It is important to note that in subsequent versions of the Jerusalem Bible, the Catholics omitted this information. It is only present in versions prior to 1968.³⁰

First, are we going to believe a Catholic preface over a total agreement of all New Covenant Scripture manuscripts? Even if the Catholics did make this admission, where is their proof? They've yet to produce the manuscript which omits these first two chapters, and until they do we have no reason to believe the chapters to be unauthentic.

Secondly, this is not what the Catholic preface claims at all. A cursory examination of the preface will cause one to glean this meaning, but examining its entirety allows one to see the true intent of placing the Introduction to the Synoptic Gospel's before the Gospel's them selves. The preface concerns itself with an attempt to theorize the origin of the Gospel's, seeing they are parallel in numerous places. Did one writer pen an account, and

- The angel did not say: "Yahweh Elohim has just given to him the throne of his father David..."
- The angel did not say: "and He is now beginning to reign over the house of Jacob forever..."

No, the angel told Miriam these were things to happen in the future.⁶⁷

I agree completely that each of the uses of the word *shall* by Gabriel, in reference to Mary and her child, were definitely references that applied to the future. However, what this author and every other author I've seen to make this claim have failed to do is ask themselves the question, "Just how far into the future?" The word *shall* can be used in a sentence to imply a future happening, but we must understand that even one minute afterward is recognized as the future, rather than the present or the past. This is seen clearly just a few verses back in the first chapter of Luke.

In the beginning verses of Luke chapter one, we find the story of Zachariah and Elizabeth. They were a couple who were earnest in their service to Yahweh's commandments, not to mention Zachariah being a priest which offered incense for a specific course in Yahweh's temple.⁶⁸ We will examine Elizabeth's miraculous birth a little later in this chapter, but for now let us look to the response of Zachariah when he was told by the angel of Yahweh that his elderly, barren wife would conceive and bear him a son. As the angel spoke these words to Zachariah while

³⁰ *The Virgin Birth – 21 Points*, by Jon Francis, Feb. 2001, pg. 11.

⁶⁷ *The Virgin Birth – 21 Points*, by Jon Francis.

⁶⁸ Luke 1:5-10

What's The Problem?

For those reading the text from Luke I've just commented on, who have never encountered non-virgin birth material, you're probably immediately asking the question, "What is the problem? I don't see anything suggesting a non-virgin birth in the text." This question comes from those who are seeking to accept what the Bible very plainly says, means, and teaches. Nevertheless, we shall endeavor to answer the objection that has been given to Luke's narrative, and see if the objection given stands the test of close examination.

The Word *Shall*

The most common objection given to the passage in Luke is the use of the word shall.⁶⁶ They reason that those things promised to Mary by Yahweh, through the angel Gabriel, were things that *shall* happen, that is, future tense. The things were not said to have happened immediately, but at a future time. One author put it like this:

Please notice Luke Chapter 1 when the angel appeared to Miriam. Please notice that the angel, in every single case, spoke in the FUTURE tense.

Notice what he DID NOT say to Miriam:

- The angel did not say: "you have just conceived..."

⁶⁶ It is my understanding that the Greek text (from which the King James Version was translated from) does not literally contain an underlying Greek word for the English word shall in these particular Lukan cases, but is used because of implication. Nevertheless, I will use the term shall in answering their objection seeing that they have used it for the objection to begin with.

the others just borrow from him? This is the assumption many have made in the past, and this is the issue in the Jerusalem Bible's preface. They state on page five of the New Testament section of the Bible that:

It is necessary to say something about the problem of the literary relations between these gospels, i.e. 'The Synoptic Problem'. All the many solutions offered so far prove inadequate if taken separately, though each contributes an element of truth to the complete solution. In the first place it is highly probable, even certain, that a common oral tradition was committed to writing by each of the three Synoptics independently, and consequently with variations.³¹

They begin here by stating that they are perplexed as to why there are so many similarities with the evangels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. These evangels are termed synoptic, meaning "with one eye". Notice that they do give as a plausible answer the probability of a common oral tradition. This would mean that each author simply recorded what they saw or heard took place. Many of the events were seen by multiple authors, thus causing many similarities in each respective evangel. I, for one, believe that this is the case with the three authors at hand. For many, however, this just does not cut it. Many have theorized over how these similarities came to be. It is this theorizing that brings on the statement in this preface, which is mentioned by many non-virgin proponents as proof that the first two chapters of Matthew are not Scripture.

In stating their theory they claim the first gospel to be written was Matthew Aramaic. Mark then took this gospel and made a

³¹ *The 1966 Jerusalem Bible*: Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels, pg. 5.

Greek translation. They claim that Mark shortened or omitted certain things in this Gospel of which he wasn't aware. Then along comes an author known as Matthew Greek. This is what they say about him.

An anonymous editor, Matthew Greek, decided to rewrite the first Aramaic gospel, which was known to him in one of its Greek translations. This he filled out and made more detailed, using for his narrative parts of the word of Mark his predecessor, to which he added one thing only of importance, i.e. the two chapters of the infancy narrative. In general Matthew Greek corrected and followed Mark's text, but at times he went back to the earlier gospel and on these occasions his style, unlike anything in Mark, becomes both original and archaic. For the Sayings, he referred to the earlier gospel in order to record many that Mark omitted.³²

Hopefully you caught the true intent of the sentence. The issue is that the author of this Catholic preface is attempting to concoct a story of how the Gospel's were originally written. In doing so he assumes that "Matthew Greek" used Mark's Gospel as his guide, but found that Mark chose not to mention the infancy narrative. Matthew decided to include it in his Gospel seeing that he not only borrowed from Mark's writings, but also the earlier Gospel of Matthew Aramaic. I personally believe in the common oral tradition myself, but hopefully you can see that this preface is not at all claiming and interpolation of Matthew 1 and 2 into Scripture.

³² Ibid, pg. 8

that Elizabeth simply had also conceived. This shows that at the time this statement was made by Gabriel, the Messiah had been produced.

37. For with [the] Almighty nothing shall be impossible.

This verse is showing that Yahweh is capable of allowing a virgin to conceive and is also capable of allowing an elderly woman to conceive. These are two actions which do not generally happen. It would make absolutely no sense for Yahweh to say this in reference to Mary's birth, if it was to be a birth consisting of relations with her and Joseph; they would already know that this was possible.

38. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Master; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Mary accepts the assignment Yahweh has given, and Gabriel then departs.

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- Mary is mentioned in the writings of Ignatius, who was Bishop of Antioch from AD 69 until he was taken to Rome and fed to the lions in 115. At some time during his ministry, he wrote to John the Apostle: "There are also many of our women here, who are desirous to see Mary [the mother] of Jesus, and wish day by day to run off from us to you, that they may meet with her..." (Epistle of Ignatius to St. John the Apostle). If Mary was still alive in AD 69 or after wards, she must have been very young when she gave birth to Yeshua...

that her conception would be a miraculous conception. Yahweh's spirit would come upon her and overshadow her, and she would produce a child.

36. And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

This verse proves that while Gabriel was speaking to Mary she must have conceived, seeing that He said that her cousin Elizabeth had also conceived. This is not meant to be taken as though Mary was also elderly⁶⁵ and barren in her womb, but rather

⁶⁵Mike Gascoigne writes in his article *Virgin Birth, Jewish Adoption and Genealogy of Yeshua*, pg. 8-9 the following (taken from www.write-on.co.uk/vbirth.htm):

There are good reasons to believe that Mary was young:

- She was espoused to Joseph (Matt. 1:18, Luke 1:27). As far as we know, she became the first and only wife of Joseph. If Joseph had already been married and had children from other wives, they would have accompanied him to Bethlehem. It is very unlikely that a man with no children would marry a woman who was past childbearing age. (Talmud Mas. Yevamoth 61b)
- Yeshua was Mary's firstborn son (Luke 2:7) and she had other children, both sons and daughters. (Matt. 12:46, Matt. 13:55-56)
- Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem every year at Passover and continued to do so until Yeshua was at least twelve years old. (Luke 2:41-42) If Mary was old, she would not have undertaken the arduous journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem, probably having to travel on a donkey.

The Nazarenes Copy of Matthew's Evangel

Did the early 1st century group known by the name of the Nazarenes use a copy of Matthew that did not contain the first two chapters? At least one non-virgin birth author would have us to believe just that.

If these two chapters are valid writings of Matthew, then I have no argument, I would be forced to accept the virgin birth teaching. However, it has been learned that early, first century believers known as "Nazarenes" (see Acts 24:5) had a copy of Matthew that was written in Hebrew, and it did NOT contain the first two chapters as we now know them, but rather began with chapter 3.³³

Is this statement concerning the Nazarenes true? According to the studies I have done on this group, this statement has no basis in any way. For instance the historian Epiphanius³⁴ in his *Panarion 29*, states the following concerning the Nazarenes:

³³ *Do You Believe Moses?* The Liberty Newsletter, No. 11, November 1981, By Richard H. Francis Jr.

³⁴ EPIPHANIUS (c. 315–403) *Metropolitan bishop of Salamis* / Born near Eleutheropolis in Judea, Palestine, as a young man Epiphanius became a monk and about the year 335 founded a monastery near his home. He achieved such fame as a monkish ascetic that in 367 he was elected by the bishops of Cyprus to be the Metropolitan bishop of Salamis (Constantia)... His best known work, the *Panarion* (374–376), described and attacked virtually every heresy that had emerged in Christian history. In 382 he joined St. Jerome in Rome in opposing Origenism, and in 394 he visited Jerome in Jerusalem to promote this campaign; but in the course of his visit he became embroiled in a controversy with Bishop John of Jerusalem. In 402 Epiphanius went to Constantinople at the instigation of Bishop Theophilus of Alexandria to arrange for the expulsion of certain Origenist monks. When he realized that he was being used as a pawn in the power struggle between Theophilus and Bishop John Chrysostom of Constantinople, he embarked for home, but died at sea before he reached there.

...they have the Good News according to Matthew in its entirety in Hebrew. For it is clear that they still preserve this, in the Hebrew alphabet, as it was originally written.

What exactly did Epiphanius mean when he penned the words "...in its entirety..."? Obviously this was a reference to an agreement between himself and the Nazarenes gospel of Matthew. Nothing differed, including the first two chapters, i.e. the infancy narrative. As a matter of fact Epiphanius does mention a sect known as the Ebionites which did possess a version of Matthew while at the same time rejecting the virgin birth. Epiphanius (Panarion 30-13-2) considered the Ebionites version as "...not wholly complete but falsified and mutilated."

One author I am aware of has done an excellent job in describing what Epiphanius meant in mentioning the Nazarenes possessing the entirety of Matthew's gospel.

...certainly part of what he meant was that the Nazarenes were NOT like the Ebionites in that they used the entire NT including a Matthew which was complete and contained the first two chapters (and therefore the virgin birth account). Epiphanius's book Panarian is a list of groups which Rome had labeled apostate. In this book Epiphanius seeks to discredit each of these groups. One issue that comes up frequently is that Epiphanius does not hesitate to attack groups for rejecting all or parts of the books he... regarded as canon, or for accepting the books that he... regarded as apostate or questionable. He even

[Taken from Who's Who in Christian History, Tyndale House Publisher, Inc. Wheaton, Illinois.]

32. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and Yahweh Almighty shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

This son will be one out of the ordinary, he will be referred to as the Son of the Highest, obviously differently than other were referred to as sons of Yahweh. Yahweh would also grant him David, his fathers (ancestors) throne.

33. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

This Son will rule over the house of Jacob/Israel for all time in an endless kingdom.

34. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

This is the death blow to the non-virgin birth proponents. We very clearly see here that Mary had not had sexual relations and thus wondered how she was going to conceive; she had not known (had sexual relations) with a man. Notice also that her response was not just one towards the greatness of her son, but also towards the conception of her son.

35. And the angel answered and said unto her, 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 [the] Almighty.

Take note of the angel's answer to Mary's question of verse thirty-four. Gabriel did not say, "You will be married to Joseph and then after you will naturally have this child." Gabriel told her

word *parthenos* is used in Deuteronomy 22:23 in the Septuagint to refer to a sexually pure virgin betrothed or espoused to a husband.

28. And the angel came in unto her, and said,
Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Master is
with thee; blessed art thou among women.

We find here that Mary had been elected by Yahweh for a specific purpose, and she was considered blessed among the women of her time.

29. And when she saw him she was troubled at
his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of
salutation this should be.

She was most likely perplexed as to why she had been chosen for an angelic visitation.

30. And the angel said unto her, Fear not,
Mary: for thou hast found favor with [the]
Almighty.

This is simply a repeat of what was proclaimed in verse 28. The angel comforts her fear, and tells her that she should not be troubled because his visit is a positive one.

31. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy
womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his
name Yeshua.

The angel tells her that she will conceive in her womb, and she will give birth to a son. He then tells her the appropriate name for the child.

questions the Nazarenes for using the “Old Testament” right along side of the “New Testament”. If the Nazarenes rejected all or parts of what Epiphanius knew as the “New Testament” then Epiphanius would not have hesitated to make this clear in his attack on them... if we determine the NT canon Epiphanius understood as canonical, we would seem to also know what books the Nazarenes used as NT canon.³⁵

This article goes on to show that Epiphanius basically used the same New Covenant Scriptures we are accustomed to today. Therefore, the Nazarenes also used the same New Covenant Scriptures we are accustomed to today. We can now conclude that they would have considered Matthew and Luke’s accounts of the virgin birth as canonical and authentic.

Even more interesting is the other doctrinal beliefs behind this group known as the Nazarenes. Apart from being mentioned in the book of Acts in Scripture,³⁶ they were described in quite an

³⁵ *Isaiah 7:14 and the Virgin Birth of the Messiah*, by James Trimm, taken from www.hebrewroots.org/hebrewrootsarchive/0102/010218_d.html

³⁶ Acts 24:5 states:

For we have found this man [Apostle Paul] a real pest and a fellow who stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.

I might add that some references I’ve checked say that the Nazarenes did not regard Paul as an apostle, but this verse proves otherwise. I should also mention an Encyclopedia reference taken from <http://18.1911encyclopedia.org/N/NA/NAZARENES.htm> which states:

They [Nazarenes] used the Aramaic recension of the Gospel according to Matthew, which they called the Gospel to the Hebrews, but, while adhering as far as possible to the Mosaic

honorable fashion by Epiphanius at one point in his writings. I should note that I consider the description to be honorable, while Epiphanius considered it heretical.

The Nazarenes do not differ in any essential thing from them [Jews], since they practice the custom and doctrines prescribed by the Jewish law, except that they believe in Christ. They believe in the resurrection of the dead and that the universe was created by God. They preach that God is one and that Jesus Christ is his Son. They are very learned in the Hebrew language. They read the law... Therefore they differ both from the Jews and from the Christians; from the former, because they believe in Christ; from the true Christians because they fulfill till now Jewish rites as Circumcision, the Sabbath and others.³⁷

If you will recall your attention to chapter two of this work concerning the emphasis I wanted to bring upon the belief that the Messiah was the Son of Yahweh. Here, Epiphanius describes the Nazarenes as accepting the Messiah as just that, the Son of the Almighty. Without a doubt, Epiphanius held to the doctrine of the virgin birth, so for him to describe the Nazarenes as believing in the Son of Yahweh would also mean that they too acknowledged and accepted the doctrine of the virgin birth. Thus we have a very strict torah [law]-observant group of individuals

economy as regarded circumcision, sabbaths, foods and the like, they did not refuse to recognize the apostolicity of Paul or the rights of heathen Christians (Jerome, Comm. In Isa., ix. I)

³⁷ *From Sabbath to Sunday*, by Samuel Bacchiocchi, quoting EAH 29, 7, PG 41, 402

CHAPTER SEVEN

What About Luke?

Believe it or not, I have read and heard several non-virgin birth proponents also dance around Luke's narrative of the virgin birth. They do not go so far as to discredit the authenticity of the text (for the most part) but instead attempt to manipulate and distort the actual, intended meaning of the passage. We shall now go verse by verse, from Luke 1:26-38, commenting on each passage before examining the contentions given concerning the text.

Commentary on Luke 1:26-38

26. And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth...

This verse shows that Yahweh had sent an angel to the city of Nazareth. The sixth month refers to the sixth month of Elizabeth's (Mary's cousin) pregnancy.

27. To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

The angel Gabriel was sent to Mary, who in this verse is referred to by the Greek word *parthenos* (virgin) twice. Notice that Mary was only espoused or engaged to Joseph, the marriage had not yet been consummated. Keep in mind that the Greek

Conclusion

The claim that the Hebrew word *almah* is not an appropriate word for a true virgin is nothing more than spurious. The word of a surety can mean a woman who has never had sexual relations with a man. Even Martin Luther once made the statement that:

If a Jew or a Christian can prove to me that in any other passage of Scripture *almah* means a married woman, I will give him a hundred florins, although God alone knows where I may find them.⁶⁴

How far will the non-virgin birth proponents go in an attempt to prove their sacred doctrine? Is it just too difficult to bow to Yahweh's word and accept the clear teaching of Matthew 1:25?

And [Joseph] knew her not [kept her a virgin] till she had brought forth her first-born son...

We might also add that just as we saw a singular prophecy have different fulfillment qualities in chapter five with the passages of Psalm 41:7-9 and John 13:16-18, likewise the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 was fulfilled first by a sexual virgin who then knew a man before birthing a son, but the secondary fulfillment is found in a sexual virgin who had not known a man before birthing the Son of Yahweh.

⁶⁴ Taken from the book *The Incomparable Christ*, by J. Oswald Sanders, copyright 1971, Moody Press – Chicago, 1971.

who accepted what Matthew and Luke plainly recorded concerning the virgin birth in each of their accounts of the infancy narrative.

On top of all this is the fact that although the group mentioned before, under the name Ebionites, did not hold to a virgin birth, there may have possibly been two sects of Ebionites; those who accepted the virgin birth and those who rejected the virgin birth. One reference work tells us the following:

Origen and Jerome both notify the fact that the Ebionites translated [*almah*] “young woman” (it is rendered “virgin” in the King James Version and the Revised Version (British and American)). This translation, so far as the mere word is concerned, is indubitably correct. There is another point in which both afford us information. The first says (*Contra Celsum*, v.61) that there are two classes of Ebionites, one of which denies the miraculous conception and birth of our Lord, the other of which affirms it. Jerome, in his letter to Augustine, not only asserts the same thing but calls the one class, those affirming the miraculous birth, Nazareans, and the other Ebionites.³⁸

Here we see that Origen describes two classes of Ebionites, however, one of those classes may have very well been the Nazarenes. This could be explained by realizing that both classes were torah-observant, that is, they believed in obedience to the law of Yahweh. Origen may have described the Nazarenes as Ebionites simply because of some similarities between the two. We do seem to find Jerome giving agreements to Origen's

³⁸ ISBE, under the heading Ebionites

statement, but in Jerome's writings on this, he says something quite interesting.

What shall I say of the Ebionites who pretend to be Christians? To-day there still exists among the Jews in all the synagogues of the East a heresy which is called that of the Minaeans, and which is still condemned by the Pharisees; [its followers] are ordinarily called 'Nazarenes'; they believe that Christ, the son of God, was born of the Virgin Mary, and they hold him to be the one who suffered under Pontius Pilate and ascended to heaven, and in whom we also believe. But while they pretend to be both Jews and Christians, they are neither.³⁹

Jerome here expresses that indeed the Nazarenes, who were a strict torah-observant group, held to the doctrine of the virgin birth of the Messiah.

Conclusion

The textual evidence for the first two chapters of Matthew is overwhelming. Only a supposed copy of Matthew, held by the Ebionites seems to oppose the infancy narrative. This copy, however, could not have been held by the Nazarenes as authoritative, seeing all evidence shows that they held a belief in the virgin birth of the Messiah.

The fact that the Nazarenes kept the Sabbath, festivals, circumcision, dietary laws, and such like, yet still believed in the doctrine of the virgin birth, is strong historical evidence that this doctrine was and is indeed true. For one to deny the first two

³⁹ Jerome's *Epistle 70 to Augustine*, taken from www.jewishencyclopedia.com, under Nazarenes.

This is the word which Yahweh has spoken against him; The virgin daughter of Sion has made light of thee, and mocked thee; the daughter of Jerusalem has shaken her head at thee. [IV Kings 19:21]

This is the word which [the] Almighty has spoken concerning him; The virgin daughter of Sion has despised thee, and mocked thee; the daughter of Jerusalem has shaken her head at thee. [Isaiah 37:22]

Come down, sit on the ground, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and luxurious. [Isaiah 47:1]

Will a bride forget her ornaments, or a virgin her girdle... [Jeremiah 2:32]

Therefore thus saith Yahweh; Enquire now among the nations, who has heard such very horrible things as the virgin of Israel has done? [Jeremiah 18:13]

...who shall save and comfort thee o virgin daughter of Sion? [Lamentations 2:13]

The virgin of Israel has fallen upon his land; there is none that shall raise her up. [Amos 5:2]

You should now be able to very clearly see that the word *parthenos*, much like the Hebrew word *almah*, can indeed refer to a sexually pure virgin.

woman.” The Greek word “parthenos” clearly refers to a virgin, whereas *neanis* doesn’t necessarily convey the concept of virginity.⁶²

This shows us that the word *parthenos* must have had strong connotations of a sexually pure virgin, or else Aquila would not have bothered pulling a “switch-a-roo” in the text. This word *parthenos* is used in such New Testament texts as 1 Corinthians 7:28 where it states in part, “...and if a virgin marry...” and 2 Corinthians 11:2 where the assembly is typified as “...a chaste virgin to [the] Messiah...” It is also used in reference to the Messiah’s mother at Matthew 1:23 and Luke 1:27. The Septuagint texts which use the word *parthenos* are as follows:⁶³

And if there be a young damsel espoused to a man, and a man should have found her in the city and have lain with her... [Deuteronomy 22:23]

Behold; my daughter a virgin, and the man’s concubine: I will bring them out, and humble ye them, and do to them that which is good in your eyes; but to this man do not this folly. [Judges 19:24]

And Amnon was distressed even to sickness, because of Thamar his sister; for she was a virgin, and it seemed very difficult for Amnon to do anything to her. [II Samuel 13:2]

⁶² *Facing The Pentecost Controversy*, by Larry and June Acheson, first printing, July 31, 2002, revision, July 23, 2003, pg. 36.

⁶³ One additional passage, which I’ve already discussed, uses *parthenos* as well. This is Genesis 24:14,16,43, and 55.

chapters of Matthew as Scripture without any concrete evidence at all, is not only illogical, but is tantamount to blasphemy against the word of Yahweh.

Septuagint text dates its beginning to approximately the 3rd century B.C. and thus is an appropriate text to look at, seeing it will show the thoughts of the translators who penned the Greek words at that time. Proof in point can be found by one author who commented on the use of parthenos at Isaiah 7:14 in the Septuagint.

Not only does Unger's Bible Dictionary reveal how widely used the Septuagint was, but it also points out that it was used by Messianic believers in their arguments with the Jews... since the Messianic believers were so successful in proving Yeshua to be the promised Messiah, their rival Jews found it necessary to put out another Greek translation that would make things more difficult for those who believed and professed faith in Yeshua to win their arguments.

A primary example of this involves the translation of Isaiah 7:14. In the Septuagint version we read, "Behold, a virgin [parthenos] shall conceive in the womb, and shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Emmanuel." The Greek word "parthenos" is the word meaning "virgin," and this is the word that is found in the Septuagint. However, when Messianic believers began using Isaiah 7:14 to prove that Yeshua is the son of the Almighty, born of a virgin, the Jews decided that it was time for a new version, and that is where Aquila comes in. Aquila did not consider Yeshua to be the Messiah, nor did he believe that He was born of a virgin. Therefore, in his version, when he came to the word "parthenos," he simply rendered it *neanis*, which simply means "young

of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid.
[Proverbs 30:19]

I would say that this verse implies a sexually pure virgin by way of the final expression.

Because of the savor of thy good ointments
thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do
the virgins love thee. [Song of Solomon 1:3]

This verse would definitely imply a love by non-married, sexually chaste women to the man who is being described in verse two.

There are threescore queens, and fourscore
concubines, and virgins without number. [Song of
Solomon 6:8]

I can see this usage going either way; virgin or non-virgin. This concludes the uses of *almah* in the Hebrew text, with the admission of the verse we looked at in the previous chapter, Isaiah 7:14. I personally believe that the immediate fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 was with a woman who did in fact have sexual relations to produce a child.⁶¹ However, the dual fulfillment takes place with a sexually pure *almah*, and we have seen that the word *almah* can refer to such a woman.

The Septuagint at Isaiah 7:14

Not only can the Hebrew word *almah* refer to a sexually pure virgin, but this is also true for the Greek word *parthenos*. “What’s the big deal about *parthenos*?” you might ask. This is the Greek word used in the Septuagint translation of Isaiah 7:14. The

⁶¹ Isaiah 8:1-3

CHAPTER FOUR

“Problems” with Matthew 1 & 2

Seeing that non-virgin birth proponents remove the first two chapters of Matthew from the Scriptures, they go to great lengths to discredit what these chapters say. In an attempt to make the Messiah be born from a non-virgin, Matthew 1 and 2 is misunderstood and manipulated. They then reason that we cannot trust this account as an authentic story of what really happened at the birth of the Messiah. The problem with their reasoning is two-fold. (1) I have already shown that Matthew 1 and 2 is genuine and thus Scripture. Therefore for anyone to reject it, they must reject Scripture. (2) Proponents of a non-virgin birth try to understand these chapters with their own limited and finite understanding instead of allowing the Scriptures to interpret their selves, instead of relying on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. However, in order to fully deal with the subject, I need to effectively show that each of these “problems” are not problems at all. If we allow the Bible to speak and interpret itself we have no reason to reject Matthew 1 and 2 as Scripture.

“Problem” #1

One non-virgin birth author wrote the following:

...the wise men from the east. These men (as Matt. Records) were magicians or sorcerers (Strong’s #3097). Yahweh forbids sorcery.

Would Yahweh reveal, by a star, the Messiah's birth to a heathen and not reveal it to one (or some) of his holy people? I think not! "Surely Lord Yahweh will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7)⁴⁰

First of all, this is what the inspired account in Matthew says. It does not matter what we think or fathom about the wise men. They saw the star and came, this is an absolute.

Secondly, most people believe that the study of the stars is a pagan practice. On the contrary, Yahweh mentions the stars several times in Scripture, as well as mentioning constellations. Job 9:9 says, "Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south." These names represent constellations or clusters of stars.

Thirdly, this non-virgin birth author correctly points out that the Greek word for wise men can mean sorcerer. However, he incorrectly states that SEC defines this word as only a magician or sorcerer. Notice SEC's definition.

G3097 / mag'-os / Of foreign origin [H7248]; a Magian, that is, Oriental scientist; by implication a magician:—sorcerer, wise man.

As you can see, SEC gives as one of its definitions, a Magian. Magian is defined by Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary of the English Language as follows:

One of the sect of the Persian Magi, who hold that there are two principles, one the cause of good, the other of evil. The knowledge of these

her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink... [Genesis 24:43]

In this passage the word virgin is the Hebrew word *almah*. Now I ask you, was Rebekah a sexually pure virgin? Do you think that the servant would bring Abraham's son a woman who was unchaste? At the same time, do you agree that this sexually pure virgin was referred to both as an *almah* and as a *bethulah*? Your answer will have to be a hearty yes. Thus we see here that the word *almah* is used as a parallel to the word *bethulah*, and that the word *almah* can indeed refer to a sexually pure virgin.

Almah in Scripture

Let's now examine and comment on other uses of the word *almah* in the Hebrew text of Scripture. The emboldened word will be taken from *almah*.

And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. [Exodus 2:8]

Would you not agree that Moses' older sister Miriam was a sexually pure virgin?

The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were the damsels playing with timbrels. [Psalms 68:25]

Nothing can be shown in this place by the context whether or not the damsels were virgins or non-virgins. It could go either way.

The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst

⁴⁰ *What Think Ye of Messiah? Whose Son is He?* By Raymond Yakley, pg. 4

be very easily proven. Why non-virgin birth proponents have not diligently studied the Hebrew word *almah* in all of its uses is beyond me.

Genesis 24:16, 43

In the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis we find the account of Abraham’s servant being commanded to go find a wife for Isaac, Abraham’s son. In reading verses 1-15 we see that 1) instructions were given by Abraham, 2) the servant began on the journey to the land of Abraham’s relatives, and 3) the servant prayed that the girl who would offer he and his camels water to drink at the well would be the girl meant for Isaac.

In verse 15-16 we find that Bethuel’s daughter Rebekah approached the well even before Abraham’s servant had finished his prayer. In verse 16 she is described in this manner:

And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

The word *virgin* here is the Hebrew word *bethulah*, defined by SEC as “...to separate; a virgin (from her privacy); sometimes (by continuation) a bride; also (fig.) a city or state...” It is this Hebrew word that is heralded by non-virgin birth proponents to be the technical Hebrew term for a sexually pure virgin. Do I agree? I do believe the word *bethulah* can apply to a sexually pure virgin, but what is interesting to note is what other word is applied to the girl Rebekah just a few verses later.

Behold, I [Abraham’s servant] stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw water, and I say to

philosophers was deemed by the vulgar to be supernatural...

We can thus see that the Greek word *magos* does not always have negative connotations. As a matter of fact one Encyclopedia of the Bible stated the following under the heading *Magi*:

...a proper noun with no recognized intrinsic meaning. In Hel. and Rom. Times it was corrupted into a common noun meaning ‘magician’ or ‘sorcerer’.⁴¹

There is no reason for us not to believe that the wise men in Matthew 2:1 were magi in the positive sense of the word. As the apologetic book *Hard Sayings of the Bible* pointed out:

The fact is that the Bible is quite unapologetic not only about these magi, but also about Daniel, who was more learned than all of the magi of Babylon (Dan 1:17, 20), having been trained as a Chaldean or astrologer-priest (Dan 1:4, compare Dan 2:2). Likewise, a Jewish contemporary of Matthew viewed Balaam as a magi who had received true revelation from God (Philo *On the Life of Moses* I, 50 [I, 276-77]). However, neither Philo writing about Balaam nor the writer of Daniel believed that divine revelation came to their respective subjects through astrology, but that the fact that the person was an astrologer did not seem to hinder God from giving them his prophetic Spirit. In the case of Matthew it is different, for the

⁴¹ *Zondervan’s Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, general editor Merrill C. Tenney, Vol. IV, pg. 31

revelation of the birth of Jesus comes to them through their astrological observations.⁴²

Furthermore, let us consider a bit of evidence from the Cinquarbes text of the New Covenant Scriptures. Dr. James S. Trimm comments on this text of Matthew 2 in this fashion.

The account of the visit of the wise men in Matthew 2 has long presented a "problem". The Greek text of Matthew calls these visitors to Messiah "Magi" as does the Aramaic text of Matthew (both the Old Syriac and the Peshitta).

The Aramaic uses the word M'GUSHAI which refers to a follower of the Magian religion or to sorcerers. Now the DuTillet and Munster Hebrew texts have the word M'KASH'FIM (from the same root as Strong's 3784-3786) meaning "magician" and the Shem Tob Text has "star gazers" in 2:1 and in 2:7 has KUSEMIM (from the same root as Strong's 7080-7081 meaning "sorcerer". These Hebrew texts of Matthew seem to have been influenced by the Greek and/or Aramaic which have an Aramaic word which can refer to a "sorcerer" or to a follower of the Magian religion in general. Now an endorsement of Yeshua as the Messiah by Magi, sorcerers or magicians is certainly a dubious distinction and one that anti-missionaries have not hesitated to lampoon. However the newly uncovered Cinquarbes text of Hebrew Matthew has an alternate reading of

⁴² *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, ed. 2, One-volume edition © 1996 by Walter C. Kaiser Jr., Peter H. Davids, F. F. Bruce and Manfred T. Brauch.

CHAPTER SIX

Almah & Parthenos

“Okay, okay...” a non-virgin birth proponent might now say, “I can see the issue of a dual fulfillment, but what are you going to do with the Hebrew word *almah* in Isaiah 7:14?” This question may be asked because in their minds the Hebrew text of Scripture uses the word *almah* in reference to simply a young woman without reference to her virginity, in contrast to another Hebrew word *bethulah*, which is a technical term for a sexual virgin. Is this the case?

The word *almah*, used in Isaiah 7:14, is defined by SEC as follows:

H5959 / *almah* / al-maw' / Feminine of H5958; a lass (as veiled or private): - damsel, maid, virgin

Notice the information given in the definition which states that this word *almah* is the feminine form of H5958 in SEC. This word is defined by SEC as follows:

H5958 / *elem* / eh'-lem / From H5956; properly something kept out of sight (compare H5959), that is, a lad: - young man, stripling.

With the definitions provided here (lass, veiled, private, kept out of sight, lad, etc.) we can begin to see that the word *almah* (and its masculine form *elem*) should clearly be able to be used in Scripture to refer to a sexual virgin. As a matter of fact, this can

tales together. I do however accept all of these happenings, because of their being mentioned in Scripture. Scripture which I have chosen to accept as the rulebook for my life.

I might also add that if there was an example in Scripture of triple or quadruple fulfillment, as mentioned earlier by a non-virgin birth author, I would have no problem accepting that either. Nevertheless, I've not found one to date, but I have found many, including the Isaiah and Matthew example, showing dual fulfillment.

MAH'NIM "believers" in this account. Now this is very important because these visitors are said in Matthew 2:1 to have come "from the east". Now in the Tanak ("Old Testament") the term "Land of the East" is often a euphemism for Babylon (see Gen. 29:1; Judges 6:3). During this time period the worlds largest Jewish population was located in the land of Babylon where many of them had remained since the time of the Babylonian captivity. This was the region from which the "Babylonian Talmud" had originated and which Kefa later visited (1 Peter 5:13). Many Jewish sages hailed from this region at this time. Yeshua was not being visited and endorsed by pagans or sorcerers but by BELIEVERS FROM THE EAST... Jewish sages from the region of Babylon who had come to pay tribute to the newly born Messiah. And this wonderful truth has been preserved for us in the Cinquarbres text of Hebrew Matthew which preserves the original reading of Hebrew Matthew in this passage.⁴³

Therefore, the original text may have read believers instead of wise men. However, either way has a legitimate and logical explanation behind it.

Last, but not least, Yahweh did reveal this happening to His servants the prophets; most apparently in the great prophecies of Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2. However, non-virgin birth proponents, reject Yahweh's revelation on these prophecies and their reference to the Messiah.

⁴³ Taken from an e-mail to sanj-update@yahoogroups.com, on Thursday, March 25th, 2004, from Dr. James S. Trimm.

“Problem” #2

One non-virgin birth author wrote the following:

There is no record in history of Herod’s slaughter [Matthew 2:16] of the infant children.⁴⁴

Is not the Scriptural account history? Of course it is, and it is inspired history at that. Therefore, the Scripture (history) does mention the edict of King Herod, and there is no reason for us to doubt the account recorded by Matthew, unless we feel we are more knowledgeable than Yahweh’s own inspiration. Secondly, we should notice Mr. Albert Barnes in his notes on Matthew 2:16.

This destruction of the infants of Bethlehem is not mentioned by Josephus, but for this omission three reasons may be given:

1. Josephus, a Jewish historian and a Jew, would not be likely to record anything that would appear to confirm the truth of Christianity.

2. This act of Herod was really so small, compared with his other crimes, that the historian might not think it worthy of record. Bethlehem was a small and obscure village, and the other crimes of Herod were so great and so public, that it is not to be wondered at that the Jewish historian has passed over this.

3. The order was probably given in secret, and might not have been known to Josephus. It pertained to the Christian history; and if the evangelists had not recorded it, it might have been unknown or forgotten. Besides, no argument can be drawn from the silence of the Jewish historian.

⁴⁴ *What Think Ye of Messiah? Whose Son is He?* By Raymond Yakley, pg. 4

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. [John 13:16-18]

This dual fulfillment is quite interesting in that the immediate context has the one making the statement a sinner,⁵⁹ yet the Messiah indeed did or knew no sin.⁶⁰ The reason this is of interest is it shows that one prophecy can refer to two completely different things, that is, if we are willing to accept the testimony of Scripture. For example, the virgin in Isaiah 8 did have sexual relations with the prophet before birthing Mahershalalhashbaz, whereas the virgin of Luke 1:34-35 did not; she had never known a man.

Conclusion

It was shown earlier that one non-virgin birth proponent asked for one example of a dual fulfillment (which he termed dual prophecy) in Scripture. I have given three, and there are many more as well. Will he and others of the same persuasion be willing to accept Yahweh’s Word? Sometimes we attempt to understand Scripture with our own finite mind and in doing so take away from the original intent of Yahweh. We should instead seek to believe what Yahweh has stated in His word, whether we can understand it or not. I cannot understand how water could be parted, how a donkey could talk, or how a man could tie 300 fox

⁵⁹ Psalm 41:4

⁶⁰ Though at least some non-virgin proponents teach the Messiah to have committed sin, the Scripture says completely the opposite: 2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 4:15, Hebrews 7:26, and 1 Peter 2:21-22.

position. However, the inspiration of Yahweh places a dual fulfillment on both of these prophecies in the book of Acts 1:16-20.

Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Yeshua. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishopric let another take.

My third and final example of dual fulfillment is found in prophecy in Psalm 41:7-9.

All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt. An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him: and now that he lieth he shall rise up no more. Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

This passage is once again immediately applied to the enemies of the Psalmist. It was David’s own familiar friend who turned on him for evil. In spite of this, we find a dual fulfillment in John 13:18.

No reason can be given why Matthew should not be considered to be as fully entitled to credit as Josephus. Yet there is no improbability in the account given by Matthew.⁴⁵

There are many others who have answered the objection concerning the lack of a historical account for Matthew 2:16. Take as one last support the *New Commentary on the Whole Bible*:

Why, ask skeptics and skeptical critics, is not this massacre, if it really occurred, recorded by Josephus, who was usually thorough in detailing the cruelties of Herod? To this the answer is not difficult. If we consider how small a town Bethlehem was, it is not likely there would be many male children in it of two years old and under; and when we think of the number of fouler atrocities that Josephus has recorded of Herod (e.g., he murdered some of his own children and some of his wives because he thought they were plotting against him), it is unreasonable to make anything of his silence on this.⁴⁶

“Problem” #3

One non-virgin birth author wrote the following:

Matt. 2:22-23 reads as if Joseph settled in Nazareth more or less by accident after returning

⁴⁵ *Barnes Notes on the New Testament*, by Albert Barnes, Electronic Edition Step files, comment on Matthew 2:16.

⁴⁶ *New Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Based on the Classic Commentary of Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, General Editor: J.D. Douglas, New Testament Editor Philip W. Comfort, comment on Matthew 2:16

from Egypt. Luke 2:4 & 39 records Nazareth as Joseph's home town, to which they returned soon after Yahoshua's birth.⁴⁷

This argument is nothing more than someone making an attempt to find any little "discrepancy" possible. Consider both passages given by the above author.

But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into parts of Galilee: And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene. [Matthew 2:22-23]

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David... And when they had performed all things according to the law of Yahweh, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. [Luke 2:4, 39]

Anyone not making an attempt to discredit Scripture should clearly see that this is two writers recording the same happening in different ways. We see different styles for each writer. Matthew wants to emphasize the fact of dwelling in Nazareth fulfilling prophecy, while Luke mentions that Nazareth was their hometown. Matthew's narrative does not imply an accidental settling at all.

⁴⁷ *What Think Ye of Messiah? Whose Son is He?* By Raymond Yakley, pg. 4.

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Master; And he shall send Yeshua [the] Messiah, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which [the] Almighty hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall Yahweh your Almighty raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

Here is a very obvious example of a singular prophecy with a dual fulfillment. This is the dual fulfillment example non-virgin birth proponents are looking for; will they accept it?

My second example of a dual fulfillment is found in prophecy in Psalm 69:25 and Psalm 109:7-8.

Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents.

When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few; and let another take his office.

The immediate context of both prophecies concerns itself with people of that particular time. Psalm 69:22-25 has the Psalmist asking for deliverance from his personal enemies. The same is true with Psalm 109:1-8. David asks for those who have lied against him to be condemned and removed from their

unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. [Deuteronomy 18:15-19]⁵⁸

In this passage we have Moses relaying Yahweh’s will to the people of Israel. Israel had previously requested that they not hear the voice of Yahweh again, and here Moses states that Yahweh will raise up a prophet liken unto him that they will here. Notice this prophet was to be specifically for those people of that time; nothing whatsoever, in the immediate context, is seen to apply to someone that the people who were standing by would not hear.

There is good reason to believe that the prophet spoken of here was the man Joshua. Joshua 1:1, 5-7 show that Joshua was indeed a prophet liken to Moses, and indeed the people standing by in Deuteronomy 18:15-19 would hear him. However, we see that the inspiration of the Holy Spirit applies this prophecy of Moses to Yeshua the Messiah, most specifically in Acts 3:19-23.

⁵⁸ One non-virgin birth proponent had a few comments to say concerning these verses.

Let us notice again the straight forward, plain words of Moses, “...FROM THE MIDST OF THEE, OF THY BRETHREN, LIKE UNTO ME.” Moses did not say, “FROM THE MIDST OF HEAVEN, OF ANGELS, LIKE UNTO THE ALMIGHTY,” nevertheless, that is just what may would have us to believe. [*Do You Believe Moses?*, by Richard H. Francis Jr., The Liberty Newsletter, No. 11, pg. 1]

First of all, is the author accepting a dual fulfillment of the Deuteronomy passage? Secondly, Moses definitely did not mean the prophet would be identical to him in every aspect. For instance, Moses was a Levite (Exodus 2:1-3), but the Messiah was a Judahite (Hebrews 7:14). The passage is simply stating that just as Yahweh used Moses as a type of mediator between Him and Israel, so too the Messiah would be a mediator for Yahweh’s people, but on a much greater scale (Hebrews 3:1-6).

“Problem” #4

On the heels of “problem” #3 is this statement: Matthew 2:23’s mention of prophecy fulfillment is in actuality nowhere mentioned in the prophets. They claim that the prophets never speak of Yeshua being called a Nazarene. This claim is quite easily solved when one looks to the reference of Isaiah 11:1. Isaiah being a prophet.

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. [Isaiah 11:1]

One can examine the underlying Hebrew word translated branch in this passage, and find that it is the Hebrew word *netser*, defined by SEC as “...from 5341 in the sense of greenness as a striking color; a shoot; fig., a descendant...” This *netser* is the root word of Nazarene. Rather than giving my comments, one pro-virgin birth article I have in my possession comments nicely on this Isaiah passage in this fashion:

The interesting thing about this word branch (*nezer*) is that it is #5342 in Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance which is defined as a shoot or a descendant which is what YAHshua was. It comes from #5341 (*natsar/nazar*) which is defined as a prim. root; to guard, in a good sense (to protect, maintain, obey, etc.) or a bad one (to conceal, etc.) [Note: a study of Scripture reveals that there is the good Branch which is highly spoken of and a bad branch which is ill spoken of, fulfilling this definition] He (YAHshua) was a shoot or descendant (*nezer*) of David the rod (*choter*) of Jesse spoken of in Isa. 11:1... YAHshua proclaimed, "I am the Root and Offspring

(branch/nezer) of David, the bright and morning star," Rev. 22:16.⁴⁸

If we take the position that Matthew 2:23 was indeed inspired by Yahweh (which we have no reason not to believe) then we must agree with the interpretation that Matthew 2:23 was prophesied about in Isaiah 11:1

“Problem” #5

One non-virgin birth author wrote the following:

Another problem for the writer of Matthew 1:23 is that Yahshua was NEVER called Emmanuel. It isn't recorded that His parents named Him that. They never referred to Him as Emmanuel. In fact, the writer of Matthew 1 contradicts himself in verse 21 where he specifically says that the Angel of Yahweh told Miriam to name Him "Yahshua". Luke 2:21 confirms the naming of the child as "Yahshua". Now, if an Angel of Yahweh came down and told the parents to name the baby "Emmanuel", why is it that Joseph and Miriam didn't follow that command? By which name only can we be saved? Yahshua, Emmanuel, Wonderful counselor... Which is it?⁴⁹

The contention here is this: since the text in Matthew plainly says the child's name would be Emmanuel, and that the child was never called Emmanuel, then Matthew 1:23 must be spurious. Is there, however, another option? Consider the first fulfillment of

⁴⁸ Elder/Evangelist Jerry Healen COMMENTS in response to the following article which denies the virgin birth of YAHshua our Messiah, pg. 10.

⁴⁹ *The Virgin Birth – 21 Points*, by Jon Francis, pg. 6.

New Covenant Scriptures as referring to the Messiah.⁵⁷ Isaiah 9:6 is not quoted in the New Covenant Scriptures as referring to the Messiah, but seeing that Isaiah 9:1-2 is we can be assured that Isaiah 9:6 does indeed refer to the Messiah. Please take note that this is the same child as mentioned in Isaiah 7:14, a verse quoted in the New Covenant Scriptures at Matthew 1:23 as referring to the Messiah.

Since non-virgin birth proponents will not accept the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 as having a dual fulfillment, even though the inspired author of Matthew shows otherwise, I will now give other examples of dual fulfillments in Scripture. It will then be up to these proponents to decide whether they will accept the inspiration of Scripture, or their own sacred doctrine.

Three Dual Fulfillment Examples

Yahweh thy Almighty will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of Yahweh thy Almighty in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of Yahweh my Almighty, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And Yahweh said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken

⁵⁷ The quotation is found in Matthew 4:12-17

to avoid the questions about how the Prophecy relates to King Ahaz and his two enemies.⁵³

First of all, although others may have in the past, I do not have any problem with recognizing the immediate fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14. The question is this: do non-virgin birth proponents have a problem with accepting Yahweh’s inspiration on a dual fulfillment?

What do I mean by dual fulfillment? Well, let’s first examine the book of Isaiah, in its eighth and ninth chapters, for I feel that they will be a “launching pad” to showing the proper dual fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 in Matthew 1:23.

Chapter eight of Isaiah shows that the immediate fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 happened with the birth of Isaiah’s son.⁵⁴ Notice that here although the woman was described as a virgin, (Hebrew = almah) the context suggests that the woman did have sexual relations with the prophet Isaiah.⁵⁵ However, we must notice that a child is spoken of in Isaiah 9:6, and this prophecy is contextually seen to be involved within the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14.⁵⁶ Isaiah nine is a continuation of the destruction which would come upon the house of Israel. For instance, Rezin is mentioned in both Isaiah 7:1 and Isaiah 9:11. The remainder of the chapter deals with the destruction of Israel. Even Isaiah ten is a chapter which concerns itself with how Yahweh used Assyria as the rod of His anger against the nation of Israel.

The child of Isaiah 9:6 is definitely the Messiah. I do not think anyone will argue this. Isaiah 9:1-2 is even quoted in the

⁵³ *The Virgin Birth: 21 Points*, by Jon Francis, Feb. 2001, pgs. 10-11.

⁵⁴ Isaiah 8:1-5

⁵⁵ Isaiah 8:3, 16-18.

⁵⁶ Although this prophecy is in the context of Isaiah 7 & 8, I do not feel it has a dual fulfillment, for I cannot see how Isaiah 9:6 refers to Mahershalalhashbaz.

the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. There was a child born at that time for the immediate fulfillment during the days of Ahaz. Was this child’s name Emmanuel? Absolutely not, it was rather Mahershalalhashbaz.⁵⁰ Yet, in Isaiah 8:8, 10 we find that Emmanuel was to be understood in a prophetic sense as a secondary name for this child, not in a literal sense as a primary name

Conclusion

We have examined five supposed problems with the text of Matthew chapters 1 and 2, and have seen logical, alternate interpretations of the passages which lead one to accept Matthew’s inspiration, rather than reject it. It seems in studying this issue that non-virgin birth proponents are seeking to critique the Scriptures rather than allow them to successfully harmonize. There are other “problems” people attempt to point out in the book of Matthew, particularly in regards to the prophetic fulfillments mentioned by Matthew himself. The problem is solved quite simply when one understands that a dual fulfillment of a singular prophecy is of a surety a Scriptural teaching. Matthew 2:15 and Matthew 2:17-18 are both fulfillments of Hosea 11:1 and Jeremiah 31:15, that is, if we accept what Matthew was inspired to write. However, non-virgin birth proponents often mock at the notion of a dual fulfillment, they say that such a teaching is not found in the Bible, and that those proposing a dual fulfillment are simply making an attempt to bypass the clear teaching of Scripture. This is definitely a bold assertion on their part, but is it a contention which is based on the Scriptures or one merely based on their own biases and prejudices? Maybe they are right after all, I mean, can we find such a thing as a dual fulfillment of a singular prophecy in Yahweh’s inspired word?

⁵⁰ Isaiah 8:1-3

Verse fourteen shows what Yahweh's sign to Ahaz will be. A virgin will conceive and bear a son, and she will call him Emmanuel. Verses fifteen through sixteen show that the child will eat butter and honey, prior to his cognizance of good and evil. Butter and honey is symbolic of Judah receiving deliverance from Yahweh, and Rezin and Pekah being forsaken. Thus we see that the immediate context of Isaiah 7:1-16 is in reference to a sign that was given to the man Ahaz. Ahaz undoubtedly lived in the days of Isaiah the prophet of Yahweh.

Matthew 1:22-23 & Isaiah 7:14

Isaiah 7:14 definitely refers to a sign given to the man Ahaz in the time period of the literal life of Isaiah, but is there any possibility that the prophecy could also be referring to a future Messiah? Did Matthew have a brain lapse when he penned Matthew 1:22-23? One non-virgin birth author had this to say concerning the issue of a dual-fulfillment, which he terms as dual prophecy.

Another catch all problem eliminator is the "Dual Prophecy" theory. Again, I would ask for one example in the Bible to give justification for using the "Dual Prophecy" tool. If "Dual Prophecy" is a legitimate way to interpret the Bible, why not Triple or Quadruple Prophecy? In my experience, I have noticed that with regard to Matthew 1 & 2, the same people who want to employ "Dual Prophecy" are the same ones who want to disregard or seriously downplay the first application of the Prophecy. For example, "Dual Prophecy" adherents are quick to say that Isaiah 7 was fulfilled in Yahshua. However, they are quick

Moreover Yahweh spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of Yahweh thy Almighty; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. [Isaiah 7:10-11]

Verses ten through eleven have Yahweh speaking again (through Isaiah) to Ahaz, and telling him to ask for a sign for himself from Yahweh. This is presumably for his assurance that Yahweh will deliver him in the attack against Judah.

But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt Yahweh. [Isaiah 7:12]

Verse twelve has Ahaz almost rebuking Yahweh by stating that he will not so much as even ask Yahweh for he sees this as testing or tempting Yahweh.

And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my Almighty also? [Isaiah 7:13]

Verse thirteen has Yahweh answering through Isaiah (“my Almighty”), that Ahaz will try the patience of men, but he has a problem trying the patience of Yahweh. Ahaz is therefore inconsistent in his practices.

Therefore Yahweh himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings. [Isaiah 7:14-16]

CHAPTER FIVE

The Prophecy of Isaiah 7:14

There is NOTHING in the Hebrew Scriptures that REQUIRES Messiah be born to a virgin. The passage many messianically apply to this claim (Isaiah 7:14) does NOT necessarily refer to a “virgin” woman, despite the deceitful claims by preachers. Furthermore, a fact those promoting the virgin birth hate to have attention focused upon is that when the context of Isaiah 7:14 is considered the verse is easily proven to NOT even be Messianic passage!⁵¹

The problem is that the prophecy in Isaiah 7 has nothing whatever to do with saving people from their sins. The Hebrew word for sexual virgin (Bethulah) was NOT used. Instead, the word Almah was used. It means “young woman of marriageable age”. An Almah could indeed be a Bethulah. However, not all Almah’s were sexual virgins.⁵²

⁵¹ *How the “virgin birth” doctrine weakens Yahshua’s claim to being Messiah*, pg.6, taken from www.TorahofMessiah.com.

⁵² *The Virgin Birth – 21 Points*, by Jon Francis, Feb. 2001, pg. 6. The issue between the words *almah* and *bethulah* will not be dealt with in this chapter. In chapter six we will take a detailed look at both words.

These are a few comments that are usually seen amongst non-virgin birth material. The issue of the prophecy of Isaiah 7 is paramount to them, seeing that they teach the immediate context to be referring to a happening other than the birth of the Messiah. Are they correct in their assessment?

Let's consider the context of the first fourteen verses in Isaiah 7 by looking at each verse and commenting on the meaning as we go along. Hopefully you will begin to see that you must accept the immediate fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. Hopefully, non-virgin birth proponents will see that this does not negate Isaiah 7:14 from also referring to the Messiah.

Commentary on Isaiah 7:1-14

And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it. [Isaiah 7:1]

This verse shows the time frame in which Isaiah 7 takes place. In addition to mentioning Ahaz, the verse also mentions Jotham and Uzziah. Jotham being Uzziah's son, Uzziah being defined as King of Israel. Here, both Rezin and Pekah waged war against Judah. A summary of this can also be found in 2 Kings 5:32-33, 37.

And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. [Isaiah 7:2]

This verse shows that when the house of David (house of Judah) heard of the "up and coming" attack from Israel, Ahaz's heart, as well as the heart of all the people in the kingdom of Judah were sore afraid.

Then said Yahweh unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field; ⁴And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah. Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying, Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal: Thus saith the Master Yahweh, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin; and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people. And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established. [Isaiah 7:3-9]

Verses three through nine have Yahweh assigning Isaiah and son (Shear-jashub) to take word to Ahaz and tell him to not be afraid but remain calm, even though the attack is coming from Rezin and Pekah. Verse seven specifically states that the plans of Rezin and Pekah will not stand, but verse nine is a warning to Ahaz to believe what Yahweh's prophet has spoken, or he will not stand firm and be established.