

If I were to ask you on the test, “What is the method by which He becomes incarnate?” your answer is, “The virgin birth.” The virgin birth: I do not know of a subject that gets people so messed up as this. In 1952, there was an attempt by the Revised Standard Version to clear things up, but instead it caused more controversy than you can shake a stick at. In the Revised Standard Version, Old Testament edition that came out, they translated Isaiah 7:14 (which should say, “Therefore a virgin shall conceive,”) as “a young woman shall conceive.” Now the word does mean “a young woman.” A virgin is a young woman, but not all young women are virgins. The question is, “How do you answer this problem?”

First of all, I believe that the virgin birth is rooted in the prophecies that are in the Old Testament. It was not a last minute thing of Jesus and the Father saying, “You know, we really ought to have the virgin birth, because that would really seal this thing up pretty good.” No. It was a prophecy which He was going to fulfill. A prophecy that began in Genesis 3:15, “The seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent.” It was a prophecy that was in the time of Ahaz, in the prophet Isaiah (7:14), and that is the key passage. In Isaiah 9, it is also a prophecy that says, “Behold, a child is born and a son is given.” Make sure you know this, if you want to jot it down in the margin, the child is referring to His birth, and the son is referring to His adoption. The virgin birth is what created the fulfillment of Isaiah 9:6-7. How could one person be born a true son and be adopted as a son at the same time? The virgin birth provided the answer to Isaiah 9:6 as well.

The Hebrew word in Isaiah 7:14 is *almah*. The key that we believe (those of us who know the Bible to be Old Testament as well as New Testament) is that in Greek, the word *parthenos* does not have the variety of interpretation that *almah* does. *Parthenos* always means “virgin.” In Athens, when you look at the Acropolis, or if you ever see a picture of it, or see it in a movie, you will see the beautiful Parthenon, one of the most amazing buildings in the world, and one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It is called the Parthenon because it was a temple of prostitution using virgins. It means “virgin,” and it cannot mean anything else. Now the word *parthenos* is in Matthew 1:23, which quotes Isaiah 7:14. It is also in the Greek Old Testament translating Isaiah 7:14. It is the word *Parthenos*, it is not *a* virgin, it is *the* virgin. “Behold, the virgin is bearing a son, and she calls His name Emmanuel.” The word Emmanuel (“God with us”) brings us back to the question of deity. Jewish scholars list 456 references to the messiah, but Isaiah 7:14 is not one of them.

The problem that we have in the New Testament deals with the genealogies of Jesus Christ. I do not know how to approach this exactly except just to get in on it, and then wade through it. The greatest theological problem among the rabbis of Jesus’ day dealt with how in the world we could have a messiah from the line of David, since the line was cursed, that is, the kingly royal line through Solomon was cursed. It was cursed with the fact that a man/child would not be born of that line that would sit on the throne. Let us take a look at this prophecy. Beginning at Jeremiah 22:

As I live, saith the LORD, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim
king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I
pluck thee thence; And I will give thee into the hand of them that
seek thy life, and into the hand of them whose face thou fearest,

even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans. And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die. But to the land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return. Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah. (Jeremiah 22:24-30)

Jewish rabbis were debating, “How in the world can we ever have the messiah? The messiah has to be the son of David, but the curse is on the line, and none of the descendants could ever prosper and sit on the throne of David. What in the world are we going to do?” They would argue this every day, because, to them, there was no hope.

Listen carefully and do not go out here and mess it up or accuse me of something that I did not say. What happened was that they developed a concept called the “second messiah.” He is not the son of David but the son of Ephraim. He was the son of Joseph. Interestingly, in the Messiah’s discussions in rabbinical writings, the rabbis argued that this messiah was going to die. The son of Ephraim, the son of Joseph was going to die. Through his death, he will atone for the problem, and then we could have the true son of David, ruling and reigning. This concept of the two messiahs developed in the Judaism, and you will still find it in a lot of Jewish literature, though,

much of the modern rabbis discard it and do not even think about it. It was an attempt of the rabbis to solve some of the passages that look like Daniel 9, “the prince will be cut off,” or like Isaiah 53 “he was wounded,” or as in Zechariah, “one of his wounds in the hands of the messiah in his house that he received.” There are several passages that they tried to solve.

Now, the second messiah will not work and so we still have our problem. How could a messiah, even as the son of David, ever sit on that throne in the light of this curse. Look at Psalm 132:11, which says, “The Lord has sworn in truth to David, he will not turn from him. I will sit upon your throne the fruit of your body.” What an obvious contradiction. We are going to sit on the throne the fruit of David’s body, but the line is cursed. So what is the answer? The answer is the virgin birth. The problem is solved in the genealogies. In Matthew 1 we have the genealogy of Joseph, who is in the line of Solomon. In Luke 3, we have (by Luke the physician) the genealogy of Mary, who turns out is also in the line of David, though not through the cursed line of Solomon, but through David’s son Nathan, whom he named after the prophet who had confronted him. Mary is in that line. So was a child born of that line that it covers a fruit of a body through the descendants? Yes, and it also solves Isaiah 9:6, “Unto us a child is born.” That is Mary and her line. “Unto us a son is given,” that is adoption. When Joseph married Mary after the birth of Jesus, he adopts Jesus. Jesus becomes the legal heir to the throne of Solomon. That is why the virgin birth is God’s answer to the greatest theological problem to Israel. Everybody should be happy now. It is time to sing a Christmas carol, “Silent night... round yon virgin,” I used to think a virgin was fat when I sang that as I a kid.

“A virgin shall conceive and bear a son and call his name Emmanuel.” Now we have several proclamations about the virgin birth. We have, for instance, the fact that He is sinless. He is called, in Luke 1:35, “that holy thing.” 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “He hath made him to be sin for

us who knew no sin.” Did Jesus Christ ever sin? No. Could He have sinned? Many Christians say, “Yes.” The answer is no. It is what we call the impeccability of Christ. I have a whole doctoral dissertation from a hundred years ago, when men actually thought about these issues more than we do today, called “The Impeccability of Christ,” and all it does is discuss it. It is a phenomenal volume. Once you read it, your interest in salvation is far greater. Both your joy and your praising the Lord becomes greater. In Hebrews 4:15 it says, “He is without sin.” “He was tempted in all points like as we are yet without [literally ‘apart from’] sin.” Now, the sinlessness of Christ is a crucial issue to our salvation. If Christ had sinned, then He would have to pay for His own sin.

I am going to get into some very heavy things and I just want you to be patient because it might confuse you a little. It usually has confused people when I have taught it before. I am not intending to confuse, but what I am intending is to deal with some questions which are sometimes ignored by people. One day a cult just comes along and uses stuff against you, and you are not ready because you do not know this. What we are trying to do is to give you as much knowledge as we possibly can in the shortest amount of time so that you will have some figurative facts in dealing with a very serious issue.

If I asked you, “Do you have to believe in the virgin birth in order to be a true born-again child of God?” The answer is yes, even though when you received Christ you may not have understood it. The believing heart reading about it knows it had to be. Therefore, anybody who denies the virgin birth as a biological miracle, actively denies it upon hearing of the facts, is in fact, a non-believer.

I was preaching out in a conference in Iowa two years ago and a pastor kept jumping all over me every service about something. Do you ever get the idea that sometimes when people come up to

you and talk to you about something that they are not really asking you a question, but that they have a bad spirit, and are hostile. They want to make an issue, and they want to be heard or whatever. This was that kind of a guy. He just kept doing it, and I tried to be patient and talk to him, but he just kept doing it. He was there every meeting (morning, afternoon, and night).

I had spoken a little message which I had on the virgin birth. He came up to me right afterwards and said, “You’ve got to be kidding. You mean to tell me you actually believe that a biological miracle like the virgin birth occurred? That is a total scientific impossibility, and that is why a lot of people are turned off from the church. It is because of people like you.”

I should not have done it (I was carnal), but I said, “How many people come to hear you speak every Sunday?”

“I want you to know we have over a hundred every week.”

“That’s wonderful.” I wanted him to ask me the same question.

He said, “How many come to hear you speak?”

I said, “Well, anywhere from seven to ten thousand.”

He said, “Well, let me rephrase what I just said.”

It is as if attendance is somehow an issue. It means nothing! Whether there is one person or ten thousand people, it means nothing. The issue is, is it true or not?

He said, “I cannot believe that any thinking person would believe this.”

I said, “Well, I take it that you believe I don’t have all my marbles or I’m, you know, mentally deficient in some way? Or deranged? Or you are just convinced of an error and you just don’t have the courage and guts to admit that it could have happened? Well, let me tell you about what kind of courage and guts I have. On the basis of what you have just said, you are not a Christian.”

He flew into a rage, but the story has a happy ending. I led him to Christ before the week was over, he is now an independent Bible-teaching pastor who believes in the virgin birth. God can open your eyes.

Without the virgin birth, we cannot have a messiah. It is impossible. Show them the curse, and show them the passage. We have birth and adoption. Tell me who was born and adopted at the same time. This whole sinlessness of Christ was protected by the virgin birth. Why would His sinlessness be protected by the virgin birth? He did not have a sin nature. Where does a sin nature come from? The male. The girls are pure. Do you girls not like this discussion? The real problem is the man. Oh class, do I have interesting things for you today. Now let us keep talking. Wait a minute, “You’re telling me that because He did not have a human father, therefore He was sinless?” There are many Christians who say this, and it is wrong, that the virgin birth makes Christ sinless because He did not have a human father. This is wrong. He has always been sinless. Do you understand the danger here? No, He is the sinless son of God, regardless of whether He has been born of a virgin or not. So how is it protected? In Psalm 51:5 David said, “In sin did my mother conceive me.” Is sin present, therefore, at conception? Yes. That is what the Bible says.

So then He was sinless and He was protected. If, in fact, He had a male father with male sperm, He would have, in fact, inherited a sin nature.

I hope you are still thinking. Is the human body sinful? What verse would you use to prove the human body is sinful? Romans 7? I do not believe it says that at all. Is the physical body sinful? Is your hand sinful? Romans 6 says you can use the instruments of your body for sin, but it does not call it sin. You can use it for sinful purposes. You see it was also wrong theology in church history to believe the body was sinful. That is what caused the monks of the monasteries to use the scourging of themselves to drive sin out. That is what caused Origen (one of the greatest minds in the church history) to castrate himself to eliminate sexual sin only to discover that he still had sinful thoughts afterwards. That will cause you a thought or two. No, the body is not sinful. Where does sin come from? The heart of man. When does that get in there? Was sin present at conception? That is what it says. “In sin did my mother conceive me.” It either means that he is an illegitimate kid, or he had sin present the moment he was conceived. A lot of us choose, “Who knows?”

We got a problem here. First of all, it is a great argument against abortion. Why? Because the body is not sinful. That is exactly right; sin resides in the soul (your mind, emotion and will). You are created in the image of God after His likeness. That means the soul is present at conception. That means the baby growing in the womb is a real person. Therefore at any stage you are killing a real person when you abort the baby. Does it matter whether it is infanticide, meaning after it is born, or whether it is one month before, or whether it is in the first month after it is conceived. It is still a murder, because the soul is where sin resides. Not in the body. Therefore you have a real person; if sin is there at conception, you have to have a real person from the beginning. Stay with me, class. Remember that when God created man’s body out of the dust of the ground and

breathed into man's nostrils, physical nostrils, breathes in the breath of lives (plural) and then becomes a living soul, or creature. God says all souls are mine. It is only the soul that sins, that shall die. If that is true, then did God place the soul, breathe it into the conception of the egg and the sperm, breathe it in there at that moment, or is it transferred through the genetic code of the sperm?

I know this is heavy-duty, but listen to me, one of the greatest controversies of church history, "How was the soul transferred?" Does it come through the genetic code? Now some of us think that, because I will give you the question tomorrow but I need to finish the thoughts, when you look at somebody, do you not say, "You're acting just like your father," or "You really have a lot of the traits of your mother." They either mean that they physically look like them in some way or that somehow the soul is transferred. What is the next step that that leads to in terms of false teaching? Reincarnation. You see how difficult this is? You really have to think it through. Is the soul placed there at conception? If it is, therefore God is responsible for putting a sinful soul into the body. Now we have a problem.

According to the Bible, it is in Adam that all die. According to the Bible it says, "By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin so death passed on all men for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). Even from Adam to Moses death reigned even over those who did not commit the likeness of Adam's transgression, but they still showed they were sinners and they still died. I lean (when I say "leaned" that means I do not want to be dogmatic) towards the fact that the soul of man is transmitted through the male sperm. You say which genetic property is it? I do not know, but I lean that way. It is a mystery that we do not understand is passed all the way down the line from Adam to the present day. That is what I lean to, and therefore, Jesus, not having male sperm is a part of this conception and birth, even though we already assume this the virgin

birth did not make Him sinless, yet He was protected by the virgin birth so that no accusation could be given in the future of His having a sin nature or even participating in the sin of man. The impeccability of Christ is at stake. He is the sinless Son of God, and I will show you before we are through in our study that that is critical to believing that you are saved. You could not be saved apart from it.

Now, it was produced by the Holy Spirit. The Bible has that language, that He was conceived of the Holy Spirit. That actually happened, however, small the fetus can be at the moment of conception (some of you have been through this biologically, so just stay with me). I happened to have participated in what they call an “urban transplant.” A good friend of mine discussed the theological implications of it, he was the one who was involved with it when it first started, which they still do now. They have the ability to take human sperm and to match it with an egg outside of the womb, to produce a person and then place it back into the woman. I have seen that operation and so my mind is thinking of that also while we are talking.

I do not know, believe me, how this actually occurs, but I do know from what the Bible actually says, Jesus did not go through the process of sperm hitting the egg. This means that Jesus was able to take whatever moment after egg-sperm become life, and was able, without sperm, to place a physical body in the womb of Mary—at the moment of conception. If you understand that, you are more brilliant than I am. I do not understand it, and I have looked at it a dozen ways. I know it is absolutely essential to believe in order to know who He is and to know my own salvation. All the way through it I say, “This is a total, biological miracle, in more ways than one.”

We say that He is special, the Son of God, the Son of the Highest. Under the conditions of what we have in this biological miracle, we cannot have a son. I have verified this with medical

authorities, there is no exception to this whatsoever. There is especially no exception in the animal world, where these tests have been performed. The Bible says that He is the Son of God, not the daughter of God. According to genetic law, the virgin conception of Mary should have produced a daughter, not a son. The human male determines the sex of the offspring. His entrance into the unfertilized egg of Mary caused it to develop without the expected duplication of the female X chromosomes. You say, “Wow!” That is why I printed it out. Someday you will need this. When an unfertilized egg duplicates its chromosomes in response to artificial stimulation, which I have seen, the result is always female. There are no exceptions. There is no indication that God fertilized the egg of Mary through the work of either the Father or the Spirit. She conceived without human or divine fertilization when God the son entered not only her womb but also the egg in her womb under the superintending ministry of the Holy Spirit. Then, enter Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses and many other cults that would say, “Well, then how could He be the only begotten son of God?”

First of all, the words “only begotten” are used five times by John, all in reference to Jesus with no descriptive passages around there describing what it means. It is used in one other passage. Turn to Hebrews 11, because here is where we find out the answer. He is called the only begotten son of God five times by John. Once someone else is called an only begotten son.

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten [son], Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God [was] able to raise [him] up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.
(Hebrews 11:17-19)

In other words, he was a type of Jesus Christ. Now, did Abraham have other children? Yes, he had Ishmael and six sons by Keturah because his wife after Sarah died. He had a lot of other children, but in what sense was Isaac his only begotten, male sperm, only begotten son? In that he is unique. The one through whom the messiah would come. You see, every time it says Jesus is the only begotten Son of God it is like the New International Version, which tries to answer that, they call Him “the one and only.” He was the unique and special son of God. There is no other son like Him. He is a son to the Father, which no one else is.

Angels are called sons of God by creation in the Old Testament. Believers are called sons of God by adoption in the New Testament. Yet Jesus Christ is the Son of God by His eternal relationship to the Father.

[Amended June 25, 2004 and this section has been intentionally left blank.]

They are all eternal, for instance, the Father loves the Son from eternity past (before the foundation of the world says John 17). It does not say that the Father loves number two. It does not say God loves Himself, but it says the Father loves the Son. So is God the Father eternally God the Father? Yes. Is God the Son eternally God the Son? Yes. Is God the Holy Spirit eternally the Holy Spirit? Yes. That is why that issue is so mind-boggling when you keep walking through it.

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It is very important to say what God says. In order to fully understand what God said, you have to deal with that egg-sperm problem. You really do. You cannot walk away from it, because it is fundamental. It is a part of the problem that we have today, even understanding it ourselves. Understand that I was born in sin, that I had a sin nature from conception, and that I do not become a sinner from sinning, but I sin because I am a sinner. There is a lot of difference between that. That deals with the way we present the gospel (i.e., why we need a savior), and also in Romans 5, you will never understand it unless you see that (in Christ versus in Adam). Romans 5 discusses the federal headship of Christ and Adam, representing the old man and the new man. “By one disobedience and transgression, many are made sinners. But by the obedience of one, many are made righteous.” The way that is described

here is beautiful. When all said in done, I have to back up and say, “I’m trying the best I can with the facts I know in the Bible, but honestly, it’s a miracle, and I don’t understand it.”

I do not believe that Jesus Christ ever had to be spiritually born. He was God. What it talks about when He was conceived in the Holy Spirit is His physical body, never His divine person. Never. The Greeks actually have a word that also refers to some one into the womb, as well as when he is just born. A word called *brephos*. Remember in 2 Timothy 3:15, Paul said to Timothy, “From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures.” The Greek word for child is *brephos*, which means that from the time he was in the womb he knew the Holy Scriptures. Until recent times Christians used to laugh at that and say, “Well, what it means is a hyperbole, it’s an exaggerated statement. His parents taught him that, you know, whenever he was able to understand.” Now, scientifically we know that children are hearing it? We now know when a child is born, without any other input; it can detect who its mother is. Without even seeing her because it has heard it in the womb. Here is another thing we know by experimentation. We can play music during the pregnancy, then after the child is born, play another style of music, and find the child break out crying every time. We turn to the music it heard during pregnancy, and the child is at perfect peace. We now know that the baby in the womb is receiving information constantly (e.g., signals, hearing things, and feeling things). We know that more than ever.

I love what Sandra O’Conner said in a case, it went the wrong way, but she said this to the attorney that was arguing the case, “There is no way that we can reverse Wade vs. Roe decision until you men decide when human life begins.” You know, I wish some one had paid attention to that woman. She was absolutely right. The whole Wade vs. Roe ruling would be overturned if we would come out and deal with the issue that human life begins at conception. To give the proof of the fetus being an actual person, with its response factors, its feeling of pain, all of it, it could

easily be done and it has never been done to this day, because there is a massive bureaucracy who runs abortion to cover up a sinful lifestyle. That is what we are really up against. We are not up against medical facts. The judge is right. If in the Supreme Court we ever had the evidence that human life began at conception, they would have to, automatically, by law, overturn the Wade vs. Roe decision. Nobody wants to handle it, because we have already accepted the sinful lifestyle that is been created by it.

Father, thank You for your Word. Bless all the classes today and this week, Lord, that we may really grow in our knowledge of Jesus Christ. Thank you. In His precious name. Amen.