

The Virgin Birth – Is it Important?

Background

Statements supporting the virgin birth:

- Matt. 1:18, 25
- Luke 1:27, 34, 35

The important point is not what Mary and/or Joseph had or had not done, but that God was at work. The entrance of the **supernatural** into natural, ordinary, human life

The History of Israel

The virgin birth did not happen 'out-of-the-blue'

Luke and Matthew set the birth of Jesus in the context of entire history of Israel. They:

- Quote OT prophecies
- Trace genealogies
- Report ancient Jewish rituals still taking place

God had sometimes worked in surprising ways in their history.

- Think of Isaac born to Sarah when she was aged 90 – Gen. 17:17; 21:1-2
- Or Hannah who was thought to be barren – 1 Sam. 1:5-6, 19-20

Examples in the Old Testament of remarkable births:

- Old age (Sarah - Isaac) or barrenness (Hannah - Samuel)

Jews bel. G. is always present...

- ...and at work, often in surprising ways

Isaiah's Prophecy – Is. 7:14

It was given as a sign to an unbelieving king

God was still sovereign. He never deserts his people, even in the darkest times. He would be with them in a new/unique way.

Do not know if there was any fulfilment in King Ahaz time.

Matthew interprets it as a prophecy of Jesus birth – Matt. 1:22-23

Can we believe it?

1. *Did he come from David's line, fulfilling the ancient prophecies?*

Matthew traces Jesus human ancestry to David through Joseph – Matt. 1:1-17

- Joseph was Jesus father legally, socially and personally
 - By marrying Mary, he became the legal adoptive father of Jesus
- Luke gives a different ancestry, also thru David – Luke 3:23-38
 - Is this Mary's lineage?

2. *Was he fully human?*

Do not believe all you sing in the carols!

The gospel writers make it clear that he lived and died as a fully human person

- He got tired, hungry, thirsty, felt pain, felt deep emotion, etc.

He fully entered into our human experience

3. *Was he was fully God?*

Luke connects the virgin birth with Jesus divinity – Luke 1:35

No description given as to the physiology of it, only the fact is stated

If Jesus had had two human parents, how would he have been fully God?

- He would have been just like us

How could God die? Death is punishment for sin and God is sinless

- He had to become human to die

Yet how could a sinful human bear the punishment for the sin of the world? Psalm 49:7

- He must remain fully God

In this 'Holy Child' the chain of sin since Adam was broken

In this perfect God-man was the answer we needed

4. Does science disprove the virgin birth?

Science deals with the general laws based on observation

- Proving a theory by replicating it
- This was a unique event – the only one in history
- Can't be repeated experimentally

Ultimately it depends on whether you believe that God can act like that...

- ...would act like that
- Indeed, the credibility of the Bible rests on it

See Luke 1:37 - Do you believe that?

Is it Important?

For all the reasons above, the virgin birth goes to the very heart of who Jesus is and is key to him being our saviour.

Jesus, we see a new kind of humanity

G. was at work, restoring what had been damaged by sin

It was the starting point for all that followed