

Matthew 1:1-25**Parthenogenesis**

READ ALL -- Matt 1:18-25 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

A miraculous birth, no human explanation--a fulfillment of prophecy given by Isaiah over 700 years earlier 7:14...*the LORD Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a 'virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.'* Gk Parthenogenesis: Parthenos—virgin; Genesis—creation. Life from a virgin. Growth & development of an embryo w/o fertilization. Science now tells us, this exists in lower forms of life, certain rock lizards & the Brah-miny blind snake, some bees & other lower life-forms.

All other human pregnancies & births have a natural explanation, like the woman w/ 14 children, ages 1 thru 14 who was in divorce court suing her husband on grounds of **desertion**. The judge asked *'When did he desert you?'* She said *'Thirteen years ago.'* Puzzled the judge said *'If he left you 13 years ago, where did all these children come from?'* "Oh," said the woman, *'he kept coming back to say he was sorry....'*

Many legends surround counterfeit virgin births—Myths w/o verification.

Buddha whose mother, Maya, supposedly saw a great white elephant enter her belly. **Hinduism** claims that the divine Vishnu, after incarnations as a fish, tortoise, boar, & lion, descended into the womb of mythological mother Devaki giving birth to her son Krishna. **Alexander the Great**, virgin born by the power of lightening strike by Zeus came in form of a snake impregnating his mother, Olympias. **Genghis Khan**: A royal ancestor or queen conceived him when visited by a radiant spirit of light shining thru her tent roof. **Plato** His mother Perictione (perik-shon) conceived him by the god Apollo

Matthew 1:1-25**Parthenogenesis**

Liberal scholars have made shipwreck of churches & weak Christians by denying the virgin birth. Yet to deny the virgin birth is to deny the deity of Jesus Christ leaving us w/ a so-called savior who is a sinner.

A recent study of seminary students showed 56% of those going into ministry do not believe in the virgin birth. 60% of Methodist ministers, 49% of Presbyterian ministers, 44% Episcopalian ministers don't believe in the virgin birth. Matt Henry 'the mystery of Christ's incarnation is to be adored, not pried into.'

The first 17 vs declare the **Royal line** of Christ—legal descendant of Ab, David, Sol, thru Joseph. **Luke** traces the **Bloodline** from Adam, Ab, David, Nathan thru Eli (**Joseph's father in law**) – Pedigree is crucial to identify Messiah. **Saluki**. No where in any historical doc is a genealogical record as precise & accurate—Supernatural in its intent & preservation. Profane school of thought claims Christianity was taken from pre-existing Egyptian myths such as life giving sun worship known as God's sun, the light of the world..' Jesus solar-deity of the Gnostics

Genealogy given to guard against attacks. **Jesus humanity**—maligned (**born of fornication Jn 8:41**). **Deity**--opposed (**stone Him**) Jn 10:31-33. Incarnation is central to salvation. **God was in Christ (God/man) reconciling the world to Himself 2 Cor 5:19.**

Jewish marriages in three stages. **Arrangement**—Parents or match maker arranged the marriage at an early age. *'Marriage is far to serious a matter to be left to the whim of a youthful heart.'* Contract drawn up & sealed w/ dowry--**insurance** paid by the groom's family to offset wedding expenses. Also **alimony** in advance if the marriage didn't work out & the couple divorced.

Betrothal or espousal which ratified the engagement & made the relationship binding. A one year 'probation period' allowed couple to test fidelity of relationship (**disillusionment stage**). No sexual contact & only way to break off relationship was by divorce.

If a girl was betrothed & man dies during this period, she is known as 'a **virgin who is a widow**.' Finally the **marriage proper** at the end of one year when marriage was consummated thru the physical union.

Many Rabbis believed Messiah would come by means of an unearthly birth—He would be born mysteriously, not of an earthly father. By interpretation of *Jer 31:22 'How long will you go here and there, O faithless daughter? For the LORD has created a new thing in the earth—a woman will encompass a man.'*

:19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her, desired to put her away secretly.

Mary being w/ child, yet in **betrothal** stage of marriage made her appear a harlot in that culture. *With great honor comes great humiliation & bearing up under false accusations.* She was admired from heaven, but all thru her life she was branded a loose woman. *"Never was a daughter of Eve so dignified as the Virgin Mary was, yet in danger of falling under the imputation of one of the worse crimes."* *People can ruin your reputation but only you can ruin your character.*

Joseph assumes she cheated on him. His ideals shattered. We're hurt most by those we think most highly of. Trust crushed & heart is broken. Self worth shattered. Value he placed upon her tarnished. Jealousy & Love are the strongest of human emotions. *'who can stand before jealousy.'* *Pr 27:4*

Law provided for public humiliation & even stoning **Dt 22:23,24**. For Joseph, *mercy triumphs over judgment. Love covers a multitude of sins*. He decides to put her away privately, divorce her, out of the public eye.

Critics see Joseph as soft, wimpy. And yet **Pr 19:22** *What is desirable in a man is his kindness...* Those who treat others w/ gentleness & forgiveness recognize their own weaknesses & need of forgiveness. *When a person is under suspicion treat them w/ respect, hoping for the best from them.*

:20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

In times of uncertainty, wait upon the Lord for clarity. **Ps 40:1** *I waited patiently for the LORD; and He listened to me, and heard my cry.* Joseph is called '*son of David*' a reminder--a title rarely used by this poor, humble, construction worker.

God prepares him for his calling—*foster father to the Messiah, son of God*, descendant of David according to the flesh which is Joseph's genealogy--**Royal line**. Great honors are given to lowly recipients who have a tendency to shy away. God reminds them '*you are a valued instrument*' son of David. God's providence was working in Joseph's life all along.

Don't discount your future by consumed w/ your past. The Lord said to Joseph *don't fear to take Mary*....Don't let fear dominate you, assuming she is guilty. Do what is right in the eyes of the Lord. Emotions can drive us to make decisions contrary to God's will. *I'm angry so get a divorce!*
Angel appeared-- ministering spirits Heb 1:14 *Peter let out of jail Acts 12:7*...close call: rescued by an angel w/o realizing it. God can speak to you in dreams.

Pilate's wife *warned 'having nothing to do w/ R...I suffered...'Matt 27:19. Joe/Mary flee to Egypt....go back to land of Israel Matt 2:13-23.* Last days—dream, dreams Acts 2:17

:21 And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.'

Mary had been telling Joe about the angel & that her pregnancy is of the H.S. He's thinking '*she's in denial*'. Confirmation-God works on both sides

Jesus is the Hebrew for **Joshua** – Jehovah is Salvation. Name tells the mission **Lk 19:10** '**For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.**'

Two OT Joshuas both relate to Christ. 1. **Captain** of the LORD's host who led Israel into the promise land. **Josh 5 2**. The **HP** after the captivity & return to build the temple 'Satan accusing, the Lord interceding **Zec 3**

Jesus is both captain of our salvation & our HP interceding for us **Heb 3:1**
:22,23 Now all this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 'Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which translated means, 'God with us.'

Immanuel is not a proper name, like Jesus, but the child is to be known in the character of God incarnate among us. **John 1:1;14**

:24,25 And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took her as his wife, and kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a son; and he called His name Jesus.

Protestants can learn from Catholics in honoring **womanhood** by their esteem of Mary, the mother of Jesus. But Catholics learn from Protestants by setting aside the myths & traditions surrounding Mary that falsify her character. Such as perpetual virginity, co-redeemer, ascension, her virgin birth, worship of Mary.

Matt makes it clear she remained a virgin **until** after giving birth, implying she had normal marital relations after Jesus was born. This truth is made plain when scripture names Jesus' brothers & sisters **Mat 13:55,56; Mk 6:3** At least 7 siblings incl Jesus.

Those who say these where Jesus **cousins** by Joseph's first wife-add to scripture. In the Grk language only one word is used for the term **cousin Col 4:10** referring to Barnabas' cousin Mark. These were Jesus actual half brothers and sisters.

The focus of the bible never intended that Mary, wise men, shepherds or even the angel Gabriel who brought the announcements or any other bible character take away from the theme that *a savior is born this day*....one who will take away the sins of the world. **If worlds sins then my sins**. The barrier separating me from God is now removed in Christ...His birth, death, resurrection....But the gift of salvation like a package from a friend must be opened to benefit.....***If we confess w/ our mouth, Jesus is Lord and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead we shall be saved.***

