

## Virgin Birth Lecture - John Karmelich

1. Since it is Christmas time, I thought it would be fun to give a lecture on the "Virgin Birth".
  - a) Most of us think of the Virgin Birth as just another miracle to support the case for Jesus.
  - b) How many knew that the Virgin Birth was actually a requirement to prove Jesus as God?
    - i) If one reads most versions of the "Apostle's Creed", that creed lists "The Virgin Birth" as one of the things that Christians believe as part of our faith.
    - ii) Most Christians never give the Virgin Birth much thought and just accept it as a true event and part of the process of bringing Jesus into the world.
2. I want to pose a question for you to think about, and I'll answer it in this lecture:
  - a) How is Jesus the Son of Joseph?
  - b) We all know Jesus is the Son of Mary, but Matthew's Gospel lists Jesus is the Son of Joseph as proof of Jesus' Messiah-ship.
  - c) Again, how is Jesus the Son of Joseph, given the virgin birth?
    - i) My goal is to answer and biblically support this question in this lecture.
    - ii) Yes you can say by "Adoption", but does that make Jesus the "heir" to the throne of David when he is not the birth-son of Joseph?
    - iii) For what it's worth, I have a number of clients at my job who are Orthodox Jewish and on more than one occasion they have asked me this question.
3. If you are going to discuss the virgin birth, let's start with the most famous passage on this topic in the bible:
  - a) "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14 NKJV)
    - i) Isaiah made this statement to a King of Judah, named Ahaz. King Ahaz was listed as a wicked king in 2nd Kings, Chapter 16.
    - ii) The reason Isaiah stated this verse, is to show the King Ahaz that God was on the throne. Ahaz as a king, turned from God to idols.
    - iii) Isaiah wanted to prove to Ahaz that "God was God" and told Ahaz to ask God for some sort of miraculous sign.
    - iv) Ahaz refused to ask God for a sign so Isaiah said in effect, "OK, you won't ask God for a sign, then I'll give you a sign from God. Isaiah 7:14 is a prediction of a sign from God.
  - b) If one asks a knowledgeable religious Jew today what that sign means, they will argue this sign refers to an unsuccessful siege of Jerusalem by the two armies from the north. Isaiah 7:15-16 state that, by the time this child reaches the age of maturity, the kings of the two enemy nations will be gone, in fact, they will be killed. Two Biblical passages, 2 Kings 15:29-30 and 2 Kings 16:9, confirm that this prophecy was contemporaneously fulfilled when these two kings were assassinated. My problem with this theory is that there is no biblical mention of this "raised child" that affects the battle of the other two kings.
  - c) With that said, let's get back to the Isaiah 7:14 passage. I want to focus on the Hebrew word that is translated "virgin".
    - i) The Hebrew word translated virgin is "Almah" in the Hebrew.
      - a) That word "Almah" in Hebrew can mean either virgin or young maiden. Therefore, it is technically correct to say that any young woman giving birth is the "sign" to King Ahaz.
    - ii) If anyone owns a "NRSV" of the bible, the word "Almah" is translated "young maiden". While it is technical correct, it misses the point of the prophecy.

- iii) To me, a young maiden giving birth is not a sign from God. Let's face it, every day in hospitals, there are many young maidens giving birth. What sort of sign from God "is a young maiden giving birth"?
- iv) Now let me give you the Greek word that is translated from the word "almah". The Greek word is "parthenos". That Greek word definitely and only means virgin and does not just refer to "Young maidens".
- v) The reason I state the Greek translation is because 100-200 years before Jesus was born the entire Old Testament was translated into Greek. When the Greeks conquered the land of Israel, Greek eventually became the common language in Israel. Therefore, 70 Jewish scholars of that time created the first complete Old Testament written in the Greek language. If you have ever heard the term "Septuagint", it refers to this Greek translation. It is called "Septuagint" as it involved 70 scholars.
- vi) My point here is these Jewish scholars used the Greek word "parthenos" when they translated Isaiah 7:14 from the Hebrew to the Greek. So even 100-200 years before Jesus was born, Hebrew scholars believed that Isaiah was referring to a miraculous sign where a virgin would give birth.
- vii) In Matthew 1:23, he quotes Isaiah 7:14 as being proof of the virgin birth.
- viii) My whole point of this exercise is to show that when Isaiah said a sign from God is that a "virgin shall give birth", that is what Isaiah meant and it is a sign from God.

4. All of this leads to my second biblical reference to the virgin birth:

- a) This is a quote from Genesis 3:15:
- b) "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel." (Genesis 3:15 NKJV)
- c) In this verse, God is speaking to Satan Himself. Adam and Eve just sinned and God is dishes out the promises to Adam, Even and Satan Himself. Genesis 3:15 is part of God's planned punishment to Satan millenniums before it ever occurred.
- d) The first sentence says, "God will put enmity" between Satan's seed and Eve's seed.
  - i) The English word "enmity" is the same root word from which comes "enemy".
  - ii) God is saying in effect, "I'm declaring war between Satan and Eve and between Satan's seed (offspring) and Eve's seed (offspring)".
- e) Notice the second phrase says, "and between your seed and her Seed"
  - i) Here is where it gets interesting. Women don't have "seeds", they produce the eggs for the seeds. God said that He would put distance between Satan's "seed" and "Eve's seed".
  - ii) Genesis 3:15 said the seed belongs to "Eve".
  - iii) My point is Eve having her own "seed" is a reference to the virgin birth!
- f) Let's review sex education 101:
  - i) The "seed" is the single male sperm.
  - ii) It is the "x" chromosome.
  - iii) The seed, a.k.a., the "x" chromosome, only comes from a man, not a woman.
  - iv) Therefore, when God made this statement in Genesis 3:15, there is a clue of the virgin birth because the only time in human history a woman had her own seed is the Virgin Birth.
  - v) The related point is because Adam and Eve sinned, we all are born with this sin-disease that is past on from parent to child.
  - vi) How is it past on? By the male seed. That will become important later.
- g) When God is talking about the "offspring of the woman", He is not talking about all children born to Eve collectively. God is talking about a specific person that will come from Eve that will be the Savior for all of mankind. We know that because we are talking about a "seed" that belongs to a woman and not all the seeds that exist in all of mankind.

- h) Next, let's talk about the part of Genesis 3:15 that deals with the offspring of Satan.
- i) The verse says, " I (God) will put enmity (distance) between your (Satan's) seed and her (Eve's) Seed (i.e., Jesus).
  - ii) When God is talking about the "offspring of Satan", who is He talking about?
    - a) In general it could refer to everyone who rejects Jesus.
  - iii) In the Gospels, note what Jesus called some Pharisees: "You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do." (John 8:44, NKJV)
  - iv) When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the desert, here is what Satan said to Jesus: "Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." (Matthew 4:8-9 NKJV)
    - a) When Satan tempted Jesus, those temptations would not be valid unless it was true. If I offered to sell to you all the land of California, it would only be a temptation if you really believed I owned all that land.
  - v) The point is the "world" belongs to Satan. Satan offered the world to Jesus if He would bow to Satan. This would only be a real temptation to Jesus if Satan really owned the world.
    - a) This world, at least for the moment does belong to Satan.
    - b) When we are saved, God saves us out of the world.
  - vi) Which leads us back the "seed" or the offspring of Satan. In one sense it refers to all people who refuse the free gift of salvation from Jesus. It probably specifically refers to the Antichrist, but in a general sense, it is all that reject Jesus.
5. Now we can get back to this verse and finish it. Let's repeat Genesis 3:15 again:
- a) "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel." (Genesis 3:15 NKJV)
  - b) The second line says, "He shall bruise your head".
    - i) The word "He" refers to the seed of the woman.
    - ii) The He refers to Jesus, as the "He" is the son of Eve. This "He" will bruise your Head". The specific "Seed of Eve" will bruise Satan's Head
      - a) Revelation 13:3 and 13:12 speak of the Antichrist who's "Deadly head wound recovered".
      - b) Revelation 19:20 speaks of the Antichrist being thrown in the Lake of Fire. And Revelation 20:10 is about Satan Himself being cast in the same lake.
      - c) The idea is Eve's seed will be responsible for the head wound and death of Satan's "seed" as well as Satan himself one day.
      - d) The interesting thing is this prediction about the fall of Satan and "His Seed" does not happen until millenniums after the prediction was made.
    - iii) The last phrase says, "You shall bruise His heel."
      - a) To strike somebody on the heel causes pain, but one can recover from a heel injury and live.
      - b) I believe the idea of "Satan's seed hurting Eve's seed" refers to the crucifixion. The idea is Satan's seed hurts Eve's seed (Jesus), but not to a point where it purposely wounds Him.
  - c) Even if you think I'm way out in left field on the end time stuff being tied to Genesis 3:15, the one thing we do know for sure, is that this verse does speak of the virgin birth for no other reason, than we have the unique phrase of the "seed of the woman".
    - i) "And I (God) will put enmity between you (Satan) and the woman (Eve), And between your (Satan's) seed and her (Eve's seed); He (Eve's seed) shall bruise your (Satan's) head, And you (Satan) shall bruise His (Eve's seed) heel." Genesis 3:15 NKJV, text added.

6. Now that we know the bible predicts a virgin, birth let me now talk about why this was a necessity and not just a cute little miracle to validate Jesus as the Son of God.
  - a) First let's read a prediction about Jesus given to Mary before Jesus was born:
    - i) He (Jesus) will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. (Luke 1:32 NKJV).
    - ii) In this prediction, the angel is telling Mary that this baby in her tummy, among other things will one day sit on the throne of His ancestor, King David.
    - iii) Where is David's throne? In Jerusalem: David ruled from Jerusalem when Israel had kings that ruled over them.
    - iv) Right now, Jesus is at God's throne in heaven. One day, Jesus is to rule the earth from "David's throne", which is in Jerusalem.
  - b) Next, let's quickly review a promise given to David:
    - i) "When your (David's) days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." (2nd Samuel 7:12-13, NKJV)
    - ii) It is this verse that promises that a descendant of David will rule over Israel forever.
7. Now, let's get into a "problem":
  - a) There are 3 Gospels that give the genealogy of Jesus.
  - b) John's Gospel focuses on Jesus as God.
    - i) John's version of Jesus' genealogy is the first two verses of his gospel: " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God." (John 1:1-2, NKJV)
  - c) Mark's Gospel does not give a genealogy. Do you know why? Because Mark focuses on Jesus as a "servant" and a genealogy of a servant is not important.
  - d) Matthew's Gospel focuses on Jesus as the "Promised Messiah".
    - i) Matthew gives a genealogy in Chapter 1, but it goes through Jesus "step-father" Joseph. Matthew's gospel focuses on the line of kings from David and leads up to Joseph, the stepfather of Jesus. Therefore, Matthew is claiming that Jesus is the promised Messiah because of Joseph, not because of Mary.
    - ii) If you read Matthew's Gospel, it gives the genealogy from the first Jew (Abraham) to Jesus, through Joseph, the husband engaged to Jesus. Let's look at part of that genealogy:
      - iii) Matthew 1, Verse 11 says "and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon." In other words, the genealogy of Joseph includes Jeconiah. Jeconiah was one of the kings of the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
        - a) I'll discuss this fact more in a minute.
  - e) Now we get to Luke's Gospel. Luke focuses on Jesus as the "Son of Man". Chapter 3 gives the genealogy of Jesus from God to the first human (Adam) all the way to Mary.
    - i) King Jeconiah is not part of that genealogy.
    - ii) That is because Mary is a descendant of King David's son Nathan (Luke 3:31)
    - iii) Nathan is a brother or half-brother of David's son Solomon. (Don't get this Nathan mixed up with a prophet named Nathan who worked with David.) The son named Nathan is referenced in 2nd Samuel 5:14.
  - f) My point is Joseph (and not Mary) has King Jeconiah in his ancestry and Mary does not.
    - i) Mary is a descendant of David's son named Nathan
    - ii) And her husband to be, Joseph is a descendant of King David's son Solomon.

- g) OK, John, what's the big deal about Joseph having King Jeconiah as an ancestor?
- i) First, understand that "Coniah" and "Jeconiah" are the same person:
    - a) Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah (Jeremiah 22:23, NKJV)
    - b) Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah (Jeremiah 24:1, NKJV).
    - c) The NIV translation spells his name Jehoiachin just to make it more confusing.
    - d) In other words, "Coniah", Jeconiah and Jehoiachin are all the same person.
8. Now comes a key verse in this lesson:
- a) Jeremiah 22:28 to 30 says,
    - i) "Is this man Coniah a despised, broken idol — A vessel in which is no pleasure? Why are they cast out, he and his descendants, And cast into a land which they do not know? (Verse 29) O earth, earth, earth, Hear the word of the LORD!
    - ii) (Verse 30) Thus says the LORD: 'Write this man down as childless, A man who shall not prosper in his days; For none of his descendants shall prosper, Sitting on the throne of David, And ruling anymore in Judah.'
  - b) The point is God put this curse on this guy (Coniah) so his offspring can't ever sit on David's throne.
    - i) Therefore, no descendant of Coniah is allowed to sit on David's throne.
    - ii) If Jesus has been the biological son of Joseph, Jesus could not have been the promised King.
    - iii) This is because Joseph had this Coniah guy in his ancestral line.
    - iv) There is an old joke among bible teachers that Satan threw a party when God placed this curse on Coniah because now the Messiah can't be part of this family line. Little did Satan know about God performing a virgin birth!
9. Furthermore, since the sin nature is passed on from father to child (through the seed) and not from mother to child, any son of Joseph or any other human father would have inherited a sinful nature.
- a) Therefore, for two reasons Jesus had to be born of a virgin mother.
    - i) So that He would not inherit a sinful nature from his father.
    - ii) So He would not be barred from the curse of Coniah which was upon his step father Joseph
    - iii) The point is Jesus had to have been a virgin birth in order to get around this curse.
  - b) OK, so if Joseph is not Jesus legitimate father, we get back to my opening question:
    - i) How is it that Jesus is the promised Messiah both through the lineages of Mary (Luke Chapter 3) and through Joseph (Matthew Chapter 1)?
  - c) The answer comes from Numbers Chapter 36:
    - i) This is what the LORD commands concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, 'Let them marry whom they think best, but they may marry only within the family of their father's tribe.' So the inheritance of the children of Israel shall not change hands from tribe to tribe, for every one of the children of Israel shall keep the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. And every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel shall be the wife of one of the family of her father's tribe, so that the children of Israel each may possess the inheritance of his fathers. Thus no inheritance shall change hands from one tribe to another, but every tribe of the children of Israel shall keep its own inheritance." (Numbers 36:6-9, NKJV)
    - ii) God said the Israelites were to inherit the Promised Land tribe by tribe.
    - iii) Therefore, the tribe of Ephraim would get "x amount" of land based on the size of that tribe at the time they entered the land, the tribe of Judah would get "x amount" land based on the size of their tribe, etc. etc. through all 12 tribes.

- iv) The problem is if a Jewish man had only daughters, when they get married to men of other tribes, the inheritance of the family of one tribe will decrease and another tribe will increase.
  - v) For example, if a girl from the tribe of "Judah" gets married to a man of the tribe of say, "Reuben", then the inheritance decreases for the tribe of Judah and increases for the tribe of Reuben".
  - vi) In order to prevent this problem, God gave this command in Numbers 36. The law is essentially, a woman who possesses an inheritance shall only marry a man of the same tribe. That way the amount of land stays the same from tribe to tribe.
  - d) What does this have to do with Joseph and Mary?
    - i) Both Joseph and Mary were of the tribe of Judah.
    - ii) Mary had a "possession", being Jesus her son in her womb.
    - iii) When Joseph marries her, Joseph then "inherits" all of possessions.
    - iv) Cyrus Scofield was responsible for tying this verse to Jesus Birth. He was the one who is famous for organizing the [Scofield Reference Bible](#)
  - e) Think of it this way: If a guy marries a woman who already is pregnant, and the man knows it, lets' say the guy legally adopts the son.
    - i) Let's say the guy and girl then have sons together.
    - ii) So, is their "first born son" the adopted son, or their natural born son?
    - iii) By both Jewish law and Roman law, Joseph is now the legal father of Jesus by "Numbers" rule of 36: 6-9 and also by Roman law which says when a man marries a women, the man also gets all of her possessions.
    - iv) In other words, Joseph is still legally the father of Jesus.
    - v) Jesus is now part of the "kingly" line and at the same time gets around the curse.
    - vi) Jesus is legally Joseph's son based on God's "adoption" laws.
10. OK, John this is all very neat.
- a) You have just proved to me the virgin birth is not just a cute miracle, but it also was necessary in order to get around the curse in Joseph's ancestry.
  - b) What does any of this have to do with our lives today?
    - i) I already believe Jesus is the promised Messiah.
    - ii) What is the application to our life?
    - iii) Jesus is considered "Fully God and "Fully Man".
    - iv) He is a unique creation, just like Adam was a unique creation.
  - c) All of us people are the sons of Adam and Eve. We are not "unique" creations in the same way that Adam and Eve were direct creations of God.
    - i) We are human descendants of Adam and Eve.
    - ii) Just as sin entered the world through one man, another man (another unique creation) was needed to take away sin from the world. (See Romans 5:12).
    - iii) Jesus was unique in that he was a unique creation like Adam.
  - d) Since Jesus did not inherit the "Sin gene" of Joseph, was Jesus capable of sinning?
    - i) Think of it this way: Adam and Eve were not born with the "sin disease" that is past on from generation to generation, but despite that, they still sinned.
    - ii) Mark 1:13 says: "And He (Jesus) was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him. (NKJV)
    - iii) The same way Adam and Eve had "free will" and were capable of sinning, I believe Jesus had free will, but choose to do His father's will and didn't sin.

- e) Which leads to my last point: Jesus is a "unique creation" in that He is fully God and fully man.
  - i) We too, when we become born-again, also become "unique creations".
  - ii) We become a new physical creature with God living inside of us.
  - iii) "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2nd Corinthians 5:17)
    - a) We shall live forever as "new creatures".
- f) Which leads to the important question: If we are now new creatures how are we different?
  - i) Does that mean we no longer sin? No.
  - ii) Does that mean we are now perfect people? No.
  - iii) The answer is once we are born again as new creatures,
    - a) We now accept the Gospel message as fact and something we believe in.
    - b) We now care about pleasing God in all that we do.
    - c) We now accept the idea that our primary goal in life is to please God in all that we do and all that we are called to do.
    - d) We now trust in God more than ourselves to provide for us and guide us in all that we do in life.

Sources:

New King James Bible: " Scripture quotations marked NKJV are from The New King James Version, Copyright © 1982 Thomas Nelson, Inc.. Used by permission. All rights reserved."

Chuck Missler, "The Virgin Birth"; <http://www.khouse.org/articles/1998/73/>

Scotfield Bible: " Scripture quotations marked New Scotfield are from The New Scotfield Reference Bible, Copyright © 1967 Oxford University Press, Inc.

(Note- Scotfield is not a bible translation, but a set of notes that goes with the bible.)

My source on the "modern Jewish meaning of Isaiah 7:14: [www.messiahtruth.com/is714a.html](http://www.messiahtruth.com/is714a.html)