The Virgin Birth

Intro: Rex Turner, Sr., said, “There are four cardinal doctrines of Christianity—the doctrine of the virgin birth, the doctrine of the vicarious death, the doctrine of the blood atonement, and the doctrine of the body resurrection of the Son of Man. On these four cardinal doctrines the system of Christianity rests, but the modernist denies all four of the doctrines....Of the four cardinal doctrines of Christianity, none draws a finer line of demarcation than the doctrine of the virgin birth.” Liberalism tries to undermine faith in the supernatural and substitute a rational explanation for every miraculous event. Liberalism has made great inroads into religion and sadly into the church. Sociologist Jeffrey Hadden conducted a poll of 7441 Protestant preachers on various Christian issues. Concerning the virgin birth of Christ when asked if they believed in the virgin birth of Jesus: 60% of Methodist, 44% of Episcopalians, 49% of Presbyterians, 34% of Baptist, 19% of American Lutherans, and 5% of Missouri Synod Lutherans said NO!

I. PROPHESIED.

A. **Gen. 3:15** “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

1. The seed is generally associated with the male, but here with the female.

2. It is also specified that the seed of woman would be a male.

3. Additional information is given.

   a. All nations will be blessed by the seed of Abraham.

      (1) God promised the seed to be through Isaac; Gen. 21:12 “And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.”

      (2) God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac

         (a) But the promise had not been fulfilled.

         (b) Heb. 11:17-19 “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: 19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.”

         (c) Abraham knew that God would be faithful to His promise.

   b. The Messiah would be of the tribe of Judah.

   c. The Savior would be from the house of David.

B. **Isa. 7:14** “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

1. Background.

   a. Rezin (king of Syria) and Pekah (king of Israel) had formed a pack to destroy Judah

      (1) In Ahaz’s first year they had attacked and killed 100,000 men and taken 200,000 captives.

      (2) In his second year they were again marching on Judah.

   b. God is warning Ahaz not to depend on Assyria for protection, instead rely on God.

   c. God urges Ahaz to ask for a sign as evidence of God’s deliverance: Ahaz refuses.

   d. Jehovah gives a sign to the house of David, a virgin will conceive and bear a son who will be Immanuel.

   e. Before the child reached the age of maturity (discernment) these nations would be without power.
f. This was positive assurance that Judah would not be destroyed for the promise was yet to be fulfilled through Judah (cf. Abraham’s faith concerning Isaac).

2. Sign.
   a. Sign indicates a miracle.
      (1) Isa. 7:11 “Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.”
         (a) Depth would be an earthquake, flood from the ground, water from rock, etc.
         (b) Height would be sudden storm, thunder and lightning, sun standing still or going backwards, etc.
      (2) Ahaz could not have tempted the Lord by asking for a non-miraculous sign.
      (3) How could God give a non-miraculous sign and anyone know that it is a sign.
   b. A woman giving birth to a son in a natural manner would not be a sign.
   c. If we remove the miraculous element the assurance that God is giving (the promise to be fulfilled through Judah) is eliminated.

3. Virgin.
   a. This is the Hebrew word almah and the etymological meaning is a sexually mature girl.
   b. The definite article is used, thus “the almah,” not just any almah but a specific almah.
   c. Every Old Testament occasion of this word refers to a virgin, and never used for anything other than a virgin.
      (1) Used 7 times in the feminine form.
      (2) Used 2 times in masculine form.
   d. Some state that if Isaiah wanted to show a virgin, he would have used the Hebrew bethulah.
      (1) If inherent in the word, why is there the need to add they had not known any man; Jud. 21:12 “And they found among the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead four hundred young virgins [bethulah], that had known no man by lying with any male; and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.”
      (2) It is used of a married woman; Joel 1:8 “Lament like a virgin [bethulah] girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth.”
   e. Matthew settles the question.
      (1) Mat. 1:22-23 “Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”
      (2) Matthew used ἄρτηγενος (parthenos) which can only mean a virgin.
      (3) Matthew says this is what Isaiah said.
   f. It is sad that the RSV translators perverted this passage to be “young woman.” They tried to destroy God’s powerful Word.

C. Jer. 31:22 “How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man.”
II. THE SAVIOR VIRGIN BORN.
   A. The account of Jesus birth.
      1. No involvement of a male in the birth of Christ; Mat. 1:16 “And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.”
      2. Before Mary and Joseph came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit; Mat. 1:18 “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.”
      3. Mary knew not man, but conceived when the Holy Spirit came upon her and she was overshadowed by the power of the Most High; Luke 1:34-35 “Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost 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 God.”
      4. Joseph was not willing to make her a public example instead was going to put her away privately; Mat. 1:19 “Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.”
      5. An angel appeared to Joseph reassuring him that that which was conceived in Mary was of the Holy Spirit; Mat. 1:20 “But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.”
      6. The angel announced that Mary would give birth to a son, His name would be Jesus because He would save His people from their sins; Mat. 1:21 “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”
      7. It is stated that this was being done to fulfill what Isaiah prophesied; Mat. 1:22-23 “Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”
      8. It is stated that Joseph did not know her till she had brought forth a son; Mat. 1:25 “And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.”
      9. Elisabeth was moved by the Holy Spirit to acknowledge the divine influence upon Mary; Luke 1:41-43 “And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: 42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. 43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”
     10. An angel announced the birth of Jesus as Savior; Luke 2:8-14 “And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”
     11. Luke connected Jesus with Joseph by saying “as was supposed” son of Joseph; Luke 3:23 “And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,”
     12. This makes it sufficiently clear that Jesus was virgin born.
   B. Expression “Son of God.”
      1. He claimed God as His Father in a unique way.
         a. John 2:16 “And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise.”
         b. John 5:17-47
         c. John 6:41-46 “The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. 42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father
and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? 43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. 44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. 46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.”

2. He is described as the “only begotten Son.”
   a. John 1:18 “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”
   b. John 3:16, 18 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life....18 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 God.”
   c. 1 John 4:9 “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.”

3. He was in the beginning, but became flesh and tabernacled among us; John 1:1, 14 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God....14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

4. If Jesus were naturally born, He could not be styled as the “only begotten Son” who “became” flesh.

C. The doctrine of the incarnation is connected to the virgin birth.
   1. Jesus became flesh.
   2. It would be impossible for Christ to be “made in the like of men” and be “found in fashion as a man” if He were only man and naturally born; Phi. 2:6-8 “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”
   3. Gal. 4:4 “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,”
      a. “Made of a woman”; cf. Mat. 1:16 “And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.”
      b. Made is from the Greek γίνομαι (ginomai) meaning “to become.”
      c. This is how He “became flesh” and was “found in fashion as a man.”

III. SOME IMPLICATIONS.
   A. The Authority of the Scriptures.
      1. The Scriptures clearly teach the virgin birth of Jesus.
      2. If He was not virgin born, then that implicates the trustworthiness of the Scriptures.
   B. The Deity of Christ.
      1. Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of God and identified Himself closely with the Father.
      2. The Father said that Jesus was His Son.
      3. If Jesus had a human father, He was not what He claimed.
   C. Important to the role of Christ as Savior.
      1. Mat. 1:21 “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”
      2. If He was nothing more than a man, He could not save others (there was no value to his death on the cross).
   D. The power of predictive prophesy.
      1. The Scriptures prophesy of the virgin birth of Jesus.
2. If the virgin birth is not true, the Bible is not God’s Word.

Conclusion: J. Oliver Buswell said, “If the Biblical doctrine of the virgin birth is not historically true, there is no room for holding the other evangelical doctrines, for the Bible must then be rejected as an authority for faith and life.”