

- tives of the Virgin Birth given by Matthew and Luke?
55. What is the designation given by the Apostle Paul to the One who was thus begotten by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary?

**Lesson One-Hundred**  
**THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD**

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Scripture Reading: Matt. 1: 18-25, Luke 1: 26-38.

Scriptures to Memorize: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us" (Matt. 1:23).

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56. Q. On what grounds do we accept as true the story of the Virgin Birth of Jesus, as presented in the narratives of Matthew and Luke?

A. We accept the story of the Virgin Birth, on the following grounds:

(1) On the ground of the *genuineness* of the Christian Documents as a whole. "These chapters containing the narratives of the Virgin Birth are attested by all available evidence as indubitably genuine parts of their respective Gospels" (Orr, *Virgin Birth*, p. 39). (2) On the ground of the *trustworthiness* of the New Testament writers. These men were not dreamers, visionaries, overwrought enthusiasts, or anything of the kind. Matthew was originally a tax-collector—certainly a practical profession requiring a practical man. Luke was a physician, and therefore in a position to understand this unusual case from his own professional viewpoint; hence, in his narrative, he gives the most minute details. Why discredit the testimony of these men who lived at the proper time to obtain accurate information, and accept the speculations

of so-called "scholars" who are removed some two thousand years from the events upon which they seek to cast suspicion? (3) On the ground of *corroborative statements in the writings of John and Paul*. John 1:14—"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth." Rom. 8:3—"God, *sending* his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Phil. 2:7—"emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made [literally, becoming] in the likeness of men," etc. Gal. 4:4—"But when the fulness of the time came, God *sent forth* His Son, born of a woman," etc. (literally, *become* of a woman, or *become flesh* of a woman). I Tim. 3:16—"Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: *He who was manifested in the flesh,*" etc. I John 4:2—"Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ *is come in the flesh* is of God," etc. (4) On the ground of *the attitude of Jesus Himself with respect to Joseph and Mary*. In no instance did He recognize Joseph or any other human being as His father. He always, without exception, claimed Almighty God as His Father (Cf. Luke 2:49, Matt. 12:47-50, John 17:1, Luke 23:46, etc., etc.). Nor did He manifest towards Mary the attitude of an ordinary son to an ordinary human mother (Cf. John 2:4, 19:26, etc.). It is obvious from His teaching and conduct that *this Son was superior to all human relationships*; that He considered it His mission to reveal those higher spiritual relationships which existed between Himself and the Father in heaven, and which exist also between God and His covenant people in Christ. (5) On the ground of *the close relation between the Virgin Birth and the other facts about our Lord's Person*, such as His perfect teaching, the faultlessness of His character and life, the superiority of His claims, His fulfilment of Old Testament prediction, and especially His resurrection from the dead. For, if there was a *resurrection* at the close of His earthly ministry, there can be nothing incredible

about a *virgin birth* at the beginning of it; and, further, in view of the fact that there was a perfect teaching and life in between, there can be nothing incredible about either a virgin birth or a resurrection. These various facts are all mutually corroborative and complementary. (6) Finally, on the ground of *the historicity of the doctrine*. The Virgin Birth has been held inviolate by the Church since the very beginning of the Christian era; and has never been challenged within the Church, until in recent years, except by the small Ebionitic faction of the first two centuries which was too insignificant to make any lasting impression upon Christian thought. We have every reason, therefore, for adhering to the Virgin Birth as one of the established fundamentals of the Christian faith, but no reason whatever of any real validity for questioning it.

**57. Q. What is clearly implied in the miracle of Incarnation wrought in the womb of the Virgin by the agency of the Holy Spirit?**

**A. It is clearly implied that the body (or physical nature) of Jesus was created in the womb of the Virgin by the agency of the Holy Spirit.**

(1) Heb. 10:5—"a body didst thou prepare for me." That is, God specially prepared a physical body for occupancy by The Word; a body that was *human* of course, and consequently subject to the infirmities of the flesh, yet one that was free from inherited corruption and the consequences of sin; therefore a body fit for our great High Priest to offer as a propitiation for the sins of the world.

(2) Cf. Heb. 2:14—"Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same," etc. Heb. 4:15—"one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 9:26—"now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb. 7:28—"for such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners." I Pet. 2:24—"who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree." Heb.

10:20—"by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." (3) In short by the miracle of Incarnation, God renewed in His Son the physical vigor and beauty of the first man, Adam. So far as His spiritual nature is concerned He is generically Deity. But His body, or physical nature, was specially prepared for Him by divine begetting in the womb of the Virgin; and the Holy Spirit by this creative operation renewed in Him the original beauty and vigor of our human nature. Though His body was subject to the frailties of the flesh, such as hunger, thirst, fatigue, and even mortality; yet it was not weakened in any respect by the inroads of sin and its consequences. This explains the Man, Christ Jesus, and accounts for His remarkable personality.

**58. Q. What, then, is the only adequate explanation of the Person of Christ?**

**A. The Incarnation is the only adequate explanation of the Person of Christ.**

(1) *It is the only adequate explanation of His personality.* I reject, as utterly misrepresentative and unworthy, the conceptions of Jesus which have come down to us from medieval literature and art, in which He is represented as a Person of melancholy countenance and languid demeanor, one who would apparently welcome death as a much-desired release from the vicissitudes of living. I do not believe, speaking from the human point of view, that He was that kind of a Man. A man who could meet another on the highway and say to him, "Follow me," with the result that the one so commanded would forsake his books and accounts on the spot to become a disciple, must have possessed a charming and forceful personality. Yet this is just what Jesus did. He could summon plain fishermen from their daily tasks by merely saying to them, "Come with me, and I will make you fishers of men." That was all that was needed. They would at once forsake their

boats and nets, to enter upon a career of discipleship and sacrificial service, terminating in martyrdom. He would weave a bundle of cords into a whip, and, with flashing eyes and mighty strokes of His arm, drive the hypocrites and money-changers from the Temple, without their so much as lifting a finger in defiance of His righteous indignation! When the Temple police were sent by their superiors to apprehend Him, they returned empty-handed exclaiming, "Never man so spake!" He must have had a wonderful personality, and a correspondingly remarkable physique! Physically, we believe, He was perfect. He was indeed the Second Adam, the Son of Man, and The Head of the New Creation. (2) *It is the only adequate explanation of His perfect character and life.* If He was just a man, conceived and born as other children of the flesh, how is His perfect Life to be explained? No matter how bitterly the skeptics and agnostics of our day may rail at the Church, they find no fault in Him. No one has ever pointed out a single flaw in His character. How is this to be explained, if He was entirely man? Why does He stand alone among the countless millions of humankind as the only Person who ever gave to the world a Perfect Example of life and conduct? If His reception of the Holy Spirit at His baptism was the incident in which He became filled with divinity, as some contend, how does it happen that other men have not opened their hearts to receive the Holy Spirit in the same measure? How does it happen that He alone, of all humankind, possessed the Holy Spirit without measure or limitation? Besides, as stated heretofore, it is evident from the Scriptures that the coming of the Spirit upon Him at His baptism was not for the purpose of clothing Him with a divine nature—for that He already possessed. It was for the purpose of *officially* setting Him apart as the great Prophet, Priest and King of His people, The Anointed One of God. (3) *The Incarnation is the only adequate explanation of the Person and*

*work of Christ.* While in the flesh He was Immanuel, God With Us, the God-Man. Now a God-Man cannot be produced by ordinary generation, for the simple reason that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh" (John 3:6). That which is inherently Deity, will always be Deity, even as the Word continued to be Deity when in the flesh. Deity and humanity may become perfectly united, as indeed they were in the Person of Christ, but it would be impossible for either Deity to transform itself into humanity, or humanity into Deity. They are of a different order, rank and kind. Cf. I Cor. 15:47—"The first man is of the earth, earthy [as indeed are all his offspring, the entire human race]; the second man is of heaven." The miracle of the Incarnation is the only ground on which we can account satisfactorily for the Man Christ Jesus.

**59. Q.** Then when and how did the Person whom we know as Jesus, who was eternally The Word of God, become the Son of God?

**A.** He became the Son of God upon, and in consequence of, His divine begetting and birth.

(1) Luke 1:35—"The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: *wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God.*" Luke 1:31, 32—"Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High." (2) It will thus be seen that His eternal relations with the Father are indicated by the name, The Word of God. Further, that His relation to the Father which began at Bethlehem, through the instrumentality of Mary, is described by such names as the Son of God, the Only Begotten from the Father, Immanuel, God With Us, etc. John 1:14—"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the Only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth."

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON  
ONE-HUNDRED

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57. What is clearly implied in the miracle of Incarnation wrought in the womb of the Virgin by the agency of the Holy Spirit?
58. What, then, is the only adequate explanation of the Person of Christ?
59. Then when and how did the Person whom we know as Jesus, who was eternally the Word of God, become the Son of God?

**Lesson One-Hundred One**

**THE CONDESCENSION AND HUMILIATION  
OF THE WORD**

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Scripture Reading: Phil. 2:1-11, Heb. 2:9-18

Scriptures to Memorize: "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:5-8). "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:14-15).

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60. Q. What is the first great truth involved in the mystery of the Incarnation?  
A. The first great truth involved in the mystery of the