

CHRISTMAS
REASONS TO BELIEVE THAT GOD BECAME MAN
LUKE 1:26-35; MATTHEW 1:18-21

INTRODUCTION

If Mary and Joseph were telling the truth, their baby, Jesus had no human father! Now to many people (especially unbelievers) that might sound fishy!

Nevertheless, though it may sound like something that a couple of young people might concoct to cover up what would have been an unacceptable happening in their time—that is, a pregnancy during the engagement period of their marriage—It nevertheless was and is true!

Mary claimed that an angel appeared to her, told her she would conceive a son by God’s Spirit, and that this child, whom she was to name Jesus, would be the Son of God!

Joseph also claimed that an angel appeared to him telling him the same story about Mary!

If Mary and Joseph were lying to cover up an act or acts of immorality, the night of Jesus’ birth was not holy, and the only thing that was silent about that night was the truth!

So, how can we know what to believe here? How can we take seriously the kind of story that usually deserves laughs of disbelief and/or raised eyebrows?

The answer is found in what happened both before and after the birth of Jesus the Christ!

If there were no evidence and no witnesses, then one could rightfully ignore both Joseph and Mary’s claims!

If their Son’s life was the same as any other life, their claim of a virgin birth would be the easiest of all stories to dismiss.

So, what are the reasons that should cause one to believe the Christmas story of the Savior’s birth into this world as the Emmanuel—God with us! We’re talking about **REASONS TO BELIEVE THAT GOD BECAME MAN!**

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I. ONE SHOULD BELIEVE BECAUSE OF THE PROPHECIES CONCERNING THIS GOD-MAN!

A. THERE IS THE PROPHECY CONCERNING THE VIRGIN BIRTH!

What we know is that in about 760 BC, the prophet Isaiah made some God given prophecies. These were predictions about a Servant of the LORD Who would rule the earth in the last days!

He described a day in *Isaiah 2* in which all of the earth would be at peace and all nations would go up to Jerusalem to worship God.

And then, in *Isaiah 7:14* God gave to Israel a prophecy concerning the virgin birth:

Isaiah 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.”

The use of the definite article “a”, is justified by the Hebrew original language and thus implies a very specific virgin!

As far as the Hebrew word for “*virgin*” is concerned, it means exactly what its King James translation suggests!

A *virgin* is one who is sexually pure! One who has had no sexual encounters of any kind!

B. THERE IS THE PROPHECY CONCERNING THE IDENTITY OF HIS PERSON!

In that same verse, the name “*Immanuel*” means “*God with us,*” and clearly refers to a supernatural birth in which God Himself would manifest Himself in flesh and become one of humankind!

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Isaiah 9:6 gives further light concerning this God-man.

*Isaiah 9:6—"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, **The mighty God**, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."*

C. THERE IS THE PROPHECY CONCERNING THE PLACE OF HIS BIRTH!

*Micah 5:2—"But thou, **Bethlehem Ephratah**, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."*

D. THERE IS THE PROPHECY CONCERNING THE STAR THAT APPEARED!

For hundreds of years Old Testament prophets had been speaking of "a Star" and "a Scepter" that would come out of Israel.

*Numbers 24:17—"I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: **there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.**"*

According to Matthew's Gospel, a light in the sky, a star that appeared, gave additional credibility to Joseph and Mary's story.

A group of Magi (Wise Men) from the East followed that special star that appeared to the Jewish town of Bethlehem!

What they found was a Child they believed to be the long-awaited Jewish Messiah! It is quite possible they came to know the prophecies concerning the Messiah from Daniel!

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E. THERE IS THE PROPHECY CONCERNING THE TIME OF THE MESSIAH'S BIRTH! (*Daniel 7:13-14; 9:24-27*)

While in exile in Babylon 400 years earlier, Daniel had a vision that allows for the calculation of the arrival of the Jewish Messiah!

According to Daniel's vision, from the command to rebuild the Temple, 69 weeks of years (483 years) would be followed by the arrival and then death of the Messiah!

This prophecy not only predicted His coming, but it predicted the exact number of days until Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem!

ONE SHOULD BELIEVE BECAUSE OF THE PROPHECIES CONCERNING THIS GOD-MAN!

II. ONE SHOULD BELIEVE BECAUSE OF THE PROCLAMATIONS CONCERNING THE GOD-MAN!

A. THERE IS THE PROCLAMATION OF THE ANGELS WHO ANNOUNCED MESSIAH'S BIRTH! (*Luke 2:8-14*)

In the shepherd's fields outside of Bethlehem, a group of witnesses formed a bridge between Isaiah's prophecy and Mary.

Terrified Jewish shepherds were visited by an angel who announced the birth of Israel's long-awaited Messiah.

B. THERE IS JESUS' PROCLAMATION OR CLAIM THAT HE WAS AND IS EQUAL WITH GOD. (*John 8:58*)

1. JESUS CLAIMED IT WITH HIS LIPS!

Some have suggested that Jesus never claimed for Himself what His followers claimed for Him! Yet the commotion that surrounded His life can best be explained by His repeated claim to be one with God!

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In *Exodus 3:14*, the name “**I AM**” was used by the LORD God to identify Himself to Moses!

John also quoted Jesus as saying in *John 10:30*–“*I and my Father are One*” and in *John 14:7*–“*If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also; and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him.*”

According to the Gospels, Jesus said that:

- 1) To love Him is to love the Father!
- 2) To hate Him is to hate the Father!
- 3) To receive Him is to receive the Father!
- 4) To reject Him is to reject the Father!

Jesus’ enemies accused Him of blasphemy!

The religious leaders of Israel were outraged to think that the same man Who accused them of being hypocritical, blind leaders of the blind, would also claim to be able to forgive sins, would speak of God as His Father, and would even say that He was one with God!

On more than one occasion those religious leaders picked up stones to kill Jesus! In *John 10:33*, they said, “*For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.*”

So, it is clear from what Jesus’ enemies said and their actions toward Him that Jesus claimed to be Deity!
JESUS CLAIMED IT WITH HIS LIPS!

2. JESUS CLAIMED IT WITH HIS LIFE!

Jesus’ miracles recorded in the New Testament were more than just wonders!

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They were signs! He did them to encourage men and women to believe on Him for everlasting life!

He forgave a crippled man of His sins and healed him to show His authority!

He fed 5000 at one time and 4000 at another time by multiplying a small amount of bread and fish, setting the stage for His claim to be the “*Bread of life!*”

He walked on water, stilled angry seas, healed the sick, gave sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, and raised the dead!

One reason Jesus performed miracles was to support His claim to be God!

John 20:30-31–“*And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*”

JESUS CLAIMED IT WITH HIS LIPS...HIS LIFE...

3. JESUS CLAIMED IT IN HIS DEATH!
(Luke 23:39-43)

4. JESUS SHOWED IT BY HIS RESURRECTION!

Many people down thru history have claimed to be gods and even messiahs. Yet only one man was ready, willing, and able to die for the sins of others!

And one and only one has risen from the dead to prove that He was and is indeed the very Son of God!

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Romans 1:4—"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:"

C. THERE ARE ALSO HIS FOLLOWERS WHO TESTIFIED HIM TO BE THE GOD-MAN!

When Thomas, one of Jesus' disciples, saw the resurrected Christ he called Him, "***My Lord and my God!***" in ***John 20:28***

Years later, another disciple and close friend of Jesus, John, wrote the Gospel according to John. (***Cf. John 1:1-3, 14***)

Jesus appeared in His resurrection body for a period of 40 days. According to the Apostle Paul, Jesus not only showed Himself alive to the Disciples that followed Him closely, but also to above 500 Brethren at one time! (***1 Corinthians 15:5-8***)

The eyewitnesses of His resurrection were so convinced by His resurrection that they were willing to suffer and die for their claims as they were obedient to the Great Commission that Christ had given them to preach the Gospel!

If there was anything that was greater than His arrival it was His departure. (***Acts 1:9-11***)

CONCLUSION

If you have mixed feelings when you think about the evidence surrounding the birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and soon coming again of Jesus, you are not alone.

But for those who will take the time to truly examine the evidence for these things, you will come to the same conclusion as others who sincerely took time to see and understand the proofs have! Jesus is God! He is Messiah!

How can someone reject Him knowing the consequences of their decision?