

Reading Response:

Jesus' Birth

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Th 231 The Holy Spirit in the New Testament

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This week's reading was fascinating. In *The Holy Spirit In the New Testament*, H.B. Swete, it seemed as though the author's purpose seemed to be to compare other miraculous births as well as births of prominent figures in the Bible to that of the birth of Jesus. Some of the births in the Scripture have similarities, and others have differences, but what is present in all the comparisons is the presence of the Holy Spirit at work. This chapter displays the Holy Spirit at work in the New Testament and how He has formed and shaped History. In addition to that, it introduces and illustrates the presence and working of the Holy Spirit and how instrumental He was to the first generation of believers.

One thing that was a highlight of chapter two was the similarities between John's birth and Jesus' birth. I have read these scriptures multiple times; however, I never realized until now how similar they were. Some of those comparisons were: the angel Gabriel appeared to both Zechariah and Mary to tell of a miraculous birth. The angel tells Zechariah, Zechariah, do not be afraid, for your prayer has been heard, and tells Mary, Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favor. Gabriel then gives a birth announcement of sorts. He says to Zechariah, the name of the child,... and you shall name him John and to Mary... and you must name him Jesus. Then the angel states the mission of both children. He asserts to Zechariah; He will be great. He goes further and says more to Mary by saying He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob forever, and his reign will have no end. These resemblances line up with the Scripture.

As I reflect on this chapter, I would say that I do not have an issue with the author's point of view. A vast amount of this division was scriptures. Swete used Biblical references to back up his perspective as it pertains to the birth of Jesus and other figures in the Bible. In Jesus' case, the

Holy Spirit prompted Mary and dwelled with her and Jesus. The author penned this chapter in a way that made me want to go deeper into the Holy Spirit's role in the New Testament. This section opened my eyes to how significant the role of the Holy Spirit was in the new testament, and this function extended to the lineage of Jesus. I think the writer intended to point this out, and if it was; in my opinion, he accomplished his goal.

Bibliography

Swete, Henry Barclay. *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament*. Eugene, Or.: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1998.