

Lesson 4: The Incarnation of Jesus Christ

Lesson Introduction

The Incarnation of Jesus Christ

The Fact of the Incarnation

The Testimony of the Incarnation

The Importance of the Incarnation

The Objective of the Incarnation

The Perpetuity of the Incarnation

The Proofs of the Incarnation

In this fourth lesson, we will study a miracle that is foundational to our faith – the miracle of the Incarnation. The very work of Jesus on the cross begins with the Incarnation, for if He were not conceived by the Holy Spirit, but by man, then He would not have been sinless. Therefore, His death on the cross could not have been atonement for our sins.

In Topic 1, we will look at some foundational truths regarding the Incarnation. In Topic 2, we will see that the Incarnation was a fact, not fiction. In Topic 3, we will examine the testimony of the people of Jesus' day, and see what they had to say regarding Jesus' birth. In Topic 4 we will look at the Importance of the Incarnation, and finally in Topic 5 we will see the objectives of the Incarnation.

Lesson Outline

Topic 1: Introduction

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Topic 1: Introduction

How did God become man? How did God, that created all of us and everything become one of us? We're going to talk about six aspects of the incarnation; the first is the fact of the incarnation. Like I said, I'm not going to be able to explain this fully to you so you can understand it but I will give you the facts. Once fact is this: to do away with the incarnation is to do away with Christianity. That's how pivotal and intricate this doctrine of God becoming man is. The word incarnation; it's not found in the scriptures. It's a word in Latin that means God being in flesh. IT's this whole idea of union, the hypostatic union it's been called, of God becoming literally becoming man. Its God manifest in the flesh. Sometimes you've heard the term of immaculate conception. Don't confuse that with this term of the incarnation. The Immaculate Conception is a Roman Catholic term that speaks of the perfectness of Mary, Mary was a good woman. We're going to start looking at her as a virgin, we're going to start looking how good she was; she was a good woman. But she wasn't a perfect woman. And the doctrine that is called the Immaculate Conception isn't true because Mary was a sinner just like you and me. She needed a savior just like you and me. Jesus rebuked her; you don't rebuke someone that is perfect. Therefore, Mary was not perfect. So don't confuse that other term, but think of the incarnation. God becoming man. And this is basically the conception and birth of Christ. This is an important doctrine. The fact of the incarnation is recorded in Matthew and

Luke, and we see it in some detail in these books. Remember, Matthew theme is Christ is the king. So the first thing you read about in Matthew is his genealogy, and the genealogy in Matthew traces the lineage of Christ back to David. Christ the King. Then we're going to see in Luke, Luke tracing Christ's lineage all the way back to Adam; why? Because Luke emphasizes Jesus as the Son of man. Capital Son of man.

QUESTION 1

To do away with the _____ is to do away with Christianity.

QUESTION 2

"Incarnation" has the meaning of God being in _____.

QUESTION 3

Mary was chosen to bear the Messiah but not because she was _____.

QUESTION 4

The Incarnation includes the _____ and birth of Christ.

Topic 2: The Facts of the Incarnation

The first fact we will look at is Mary's virginity. She was a virgin, she had not known man. Matthew 1:18, "now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise, when as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph..." This was kind of an engagement, a very serious thing, espoused or betrothed, a real serious promise, and then there was a waiting period after that to prove the faithfulness and purity of the two. Mary was espoused to Joseph; before they came together, "she was found with child of the holy Ghost." She had never known a man, and yet she was with child. There's a prophecy, and we'll get to that in a while, and the prophecy is that "behold a virgin shall conceive." That should blow our minds right then and there. We can't understand that. Because every other child that has been born on this earth has been of two people, a man and a woman coming together and a child being conceived. We can't even, pardon the pun, conceive of that notion, of a virgin conceiving. How is that possible? Well that is the fact; she was found with child before her and her spouse, her engaged and betrothed Joseph, came together. Then we'll skip to verse 24. "Then Joseph being raised up from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife..." In other words he thought about putting her away, but he said I truly believe that she has not been unfaithful, that she is still truly pure and a virgin, that she has known no man, yet she is with child. He was convinced of this because the angel of the Lord had told him this, and so he decided to continue on with that engagement. He took her, did not know her. Verse 25, "...He knew her not until she had brought forth her firstborn son and called his name Jesus." Therefore preserving her purity and virginity all the way through until birth. Luke 1, we'll look at the facts of her being a virgin in Luke 1:26, "In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto the city in Galilee named Nazareth..." This is where Mary and Joseph lived, "...to a virgin who was espoused to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgins name was Mary." So over and over in Scripture we see a fact emerging; this woman was pure, had never known a man, yet was pregnant. Luke 1:34, "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" This is beyond the scope of our understanding, this doesn't happen. Yet, here it was taking place. The angel answered and said unto her,

The holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee. Therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the son of God.” The incarnation of Christ begins with the virgin birth.

- Assignment:

Memorize Luke 1:26-27

QUESTION 5

The Bible makes it very _____ that Mary was a virgin.

QUESTION 6

The Old Testament prophesied that a _____ would conceive.

QUESTION 7

Mary’s own _____ was that she had never known man.

QUESTION 8

The Incarnation begins with the _____.

A Divine Paternity

The second thing we’ll look at, is that she discovered motherhood before marriage. Matthew 1, 18,19, and 20. “Now the birth of Jesus was on this wise, his mother Mary espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.” Before the marriage, before the consummation of that marriage, found with child. Then here’s her husband: “Joseph, being a just man, not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately.” This is what you would do, you would put her away if you were a righteous person. “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.” And then Luke 2:5 talks about how they were to be taxed...”with Mary his espoused wife being great with child.” So she was a virgin, and she was with child before marriage. We also see that the paternity was divine. The father was not Joseph, because he did not know her. These are very important truths, very important doctrines. Joseph was not the father of Jesus. God is the father. Luke 1:31, it says, “Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth the son, and shall call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. This is a divine paternity. John talks about the Word becoming flesh, the incarnation. “In the beginning was the Word...” the logos, the Word is who? Jesus. The second person of the trinity, always existent. The creator, Jesus Christ. “In the beginning was the Word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.” We see two of the trinity there. Skip down to 14 of John 1, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” That’s an incredible statement. The Word, this Jesus born of a virgin, would be made flesh, that’s the infleshment, or the incarnation of Jesus. Then “...he dwelt among us, we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” Then skip down to verse 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.” So if you want to know God, you know the Son. Joseph was not the father of Jesus, there was a divine paternity.

QUESTION 9

Joseph was _____ the human father of Jesus.

QUESTION 10

Jesus did not come into _____ at the Incarnation – He is eternal, always existent.

QUESTION 11

If you want to know God, you must know His _____.

Topic 3: The Testimony of the Incarnation

How about the testimony of the incarnation? Some of the things that the different writers said about it. There are skeptics of our day, in many of the liberal churches in what is called mainline Protestantism, a lot of the denominations will hold to these views, they will say that the birth of Christ was only the birth of another baby. “Higher critics”, those who have taken and looked at the manuscripts of the scriptures, and have been extremely critical, and take and pick apart the scriptures, say that Christ was the illegitimate child of a Roman soldier. Now that’s not something new, that’s not something that just started in the last century. Look at John 8; because of his virgin birth and the circumstances surrounding that, we see an implication of the religious people of the day in regard to Jesus being illegitimate. John 8:38, “I speak that which I have seen with my Father, and ye do that which you have seen with your father. They said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If you were Abrahams children, you would do the works of Abraham, but now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth which I have heard of God. This did not Abraham.” Boy, he sure had words, didn’t he? He was man that was willing to confront, wasn’t he? “Ye do the deeds of your father...” referring to their father the devil. “Then said they unto him, We be not born of fornication.” So that was the rumor surrounding Jesus, that he had been born of fornication; that was a put-down. Hey, we’re not born of fornication. So even though the “higher critics” are saying these things today, doesn’t mean that they are true, it just means it is a continuation of the same lie. Jesus was not born of a Roman soldier, he was not just another baby, he was and is the Son of God made flesh. We have the testimony of Matthew, let’s look at Matthew 1:16. We see the genealogy. It’s important to trace back and see the genealogy of Christ in Matthew 1:16, “Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.” So you see the genealogy, Josephs genealogy. If he’s not the father of Christ why do they show it? Because he is the legal father, and Jesus is the legitimate heir of the throne of David, and Mary as a matter of fact, but Joseph in particular. His right to the throne of David, came thru Joseph legally, and that’s why this is important. Christ was an actual son of David, he was really and truly a son of David in flesh because Mary also had her genealogical roots traceable to David. So both Mary and Joseph, he is the son of David literally, and he’s the legal heir to the throne of David by his legal father Joseph. We also see the testimony of the attitude of Joseph to the incarnation. Joseph believed that Mary was with child by God, or he would have put her away. If she had been unfaithful, if there had been another man, he would have put her away. He was a just man. But the very fact that first of all he was bothered, and second of all that he did take her to wife, proves that he believed that this was a miracle. This was beyond the realm of what we know and what we’ve ever experienced, the virgin birth. This was a great testimony through the attitude of Joseph.

QUESTION 12

The liberal _____ today, even those in many churches, will say that the birth of Christ was just the birth of another baby.

QUESTION 13

The accusation that Jesus was the illegitimate child of a Roman soldier is not a _____ thing.

QUESTION 14

Jesus' right to the throne of David comes legally through _____.

QUESTION 15

Joseph's _____ toward Mary and Jesus showed that he truly believed the miracle of the Incarnation.

Testimony of Wise Men and Angels

Then we see the worship of the wise men. The wise men were worshipping Christ, not just as any ordinary baby, but as divine. You can find that in Matthew 2:2 and 11. Matthew 2:11, talking about the wise men, "When they had come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother and worshipped him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh." So we see the worship, not just of a king, but of the king of kings and lord of lords; they worshipped this baby. Again, proving the incarnation. Proving that this is not just any ordinary baby born of flesh but a baby that was born miraculously through the incarnation. We also see the expressions used in this passage about Jesus and his mother. Look at Matthew 2:13, and when they were departed, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, take the young child and his mother flee into Egypt." Take the young child and his mother, that's an interesting thing to say to Joseph, if he was the father. Take the child and his mother, no, she was the mother, he was not the birth father. "Flee to Egypt, and be there until I bring thee word, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother by night and departed into Egypt." The expressions used that Joseph was not the birth father, but Mary was the birth mother. Matthew 2:15 pretty much says the same thing, Out of Egypt have I called my son. That's God speaking, Out of Egypt have I called my son. Then we see the testimony, not only in Matthew but in Luke, by Luke the physician. He records the annunciation of Zacharias, in Luke 1:13. The angel came to Zacharias and told him that there would be a son born to him, and that that son would prepare the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of who? The Lord. That's what John the Baptist did, he prepared the way of the Lord. The one that was born of Mary was the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the God-man. We also see this in the annunciation to Mary, by the angel saying you're going to have a son, but this again is testimony in Luke. We also see it in the praise of Elizabeth, called the song of Elizabeth. Luke 1:42, "She spake out with a loud voice and said, Blessed art thou among woman, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Who came to her? Her cousin Mary and mother of her Lord. By the way, verse 44 says "lo, for as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears..." in other words, when she first saw Mary, her baby leaped in her womb for joy. We have the song of Mary, she's talking about God my savior. This is this child that she would have, the song of Mary in Luke 1:46-55. This all is a testimony of the infleshment of God, God becoming flesh. We also see the prophecy of

Zacharias in Luke 1:76, talks about the child, the prophet of the highest, shall go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways. All of these things pointing to Jesus being God in the flesh. Then we see the experience of the shepherds; the angels came and announced in great fanfare that this child had been born, the son of God, the Savior of the world, in Bethlehem.

- Assignment:

Memorize Luke 1:46-48

QUESTION 16

The wise men _____ Christ as the King of Kings.

QUESTION 17

In Matthew 2:13-14, the angel gives _____ that Joseph is not the natural father of Jesus.

QUESTION 18

Mary's testimony in Luke 1:47 was that she _____ a Savior.

QUESTION 19

All of these things point to Jesus being _____ in the flesh.

Topic 4: The Importance of the Incarnation

So we see the testimony of the incarnation, we see the facts of the incarnation, and now we're going to see the importance of the incarnation. I've already alluded to the fact that there are scoffers today that say that Jesus is not the son of God. Many many people will say that; they'll say he was a good man, he was a prophet, he was a leader, religious person, good person, but they will stop short of saying he is God, he is the Son of God. They will not accept the doctrine of the incarnation or the virgin birth of Christ. That's why it's important, because if Jesus Christ was not conceived by the Holy Spirit, if he was not the son of God but an illegitimate son, or the son of Joseph, he is not the God-man who could perfectly resist sin. If he was not the God-man, he would be born in sin, he would exhibit sin, he could not resist sin, therefore his death would not be a substitutionary payment, as God demanded a perfect sacrifice. So if the incarnation is not true, then neither does the death or resurrection of Christ mean anything to us. So you see how important this doctrine is. If you're a son of Adam you've been born with debt. You've been born with sin debt. The moment you're born you're in debt. How do you like that? You've inherited something from Adam and it isn't good, it's called sin. Everybody that's born of Adam which according to scripture we're all born of Adam, we did not come about by evolutionary accident, we have something, we have sin. That is why it is so important that Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit, not of Joseph but of the Holy Spirit so that line was broken. He was not born in sin, he was not born with the debt of sin, but yet he was still fully man because he was born of Mary and he did not have any sin. He never sinned and therefore his death was substitutionary his death was in our place and his resurrection was also proves the incarnation. It is so important. Jesus was not the son of Adam, he did have the ability to pay for our sins, and if he was born of Adam, if the incarnation wasn't true, then he would not have the ability to pay for his own sins let alone for our sins. Why would it not have been sufficient for Christ to indwell an existing man? That's another question. Because that kind of arrangement would have only been an indwelling for

Christ would not have had his own human body, soul and spirit; to have these he had to be born. So again these are complicated truths but they are important truths.

QUESTION 20

The doctrine of the _____ is an important fundamental doctrine.

QUESTION 21

If Jesus was not God, He was born in sin and His death means _____.

QUESTION 22

Those who are born of Adam are _____ in Adam's sin.

QUESTION 23

Because Jesus was not _____ of man, Adam's line of sin was broken.

QUESTION 24

Jesus was still fully _____ because He was born of Mary.

Testimony of the New Testament

The critics say the New Testament doesn't talk about the incarnation. We just talked about the testimony in Matthew and Luke and some of the other places. The bible says in the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses shall every word be established. Luke and Matthew are witnesses, that Jesus was born in the flesh, the son of God, born in the flesh. The Gospel of Mark has indirect testimony; the theme of Mark presents Christ as the perfect servant. Mark begins with this: the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Is the New Testament silent? The New Testament is shouting about the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The Hebrews looked on the term Son of God as being equal with God. They were very upset that Jesus was claiming divinity as he was claiming to be the son of God. They said that's equal with God and therefore they were against that. John's testimony. John did not look at Jesus as being a mere man. Paul's testimony, in several places in his writings and the epistles, that he wrote in Colossians 1:15, Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: Galatians 4:4, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." So over and over again the New Testament is saying that this Jesus is not just a man, but yet he is God. And in order for him to be God, he had to be born of a woman, a virgin, the incarnation. The early church, the skeptics say, did not believe it. They sure did believe in the incarnation. The apostles creed in the second century says, "...born of the virgin Mary..." Second century, the early church did believe. The nicean creed in the fourth century, that was written to combat heresy that was taught by Arius, that Christ was a created being, no, Christ was born of the virgin Mary. He was eternal, he was forever the God-man. They say it's against the law of nature, and it sure is against the law of nature, but this is the only way that Christ could have his own body soul and spirit. The only way that God could come in the flesh. Yes, it's against nature, but think in your minds was there ever another time when there was a human that came on this earth that didn't have a father and a mother? Adam. Did Adam have a father or mother? Was that against

nature? Sure, God created him. And Eve was made without the aid of a woman, she was made of the rib of Adam. So making Jesus in his humanity without the aid of a man is not really a big deal for God. Yes it's against nature, but it's fine for God. So that argument is shot down. Some skeptics say it's too much like mythology. The idolatrous religions teach that their gods are the offspring of 2 other gods. That might be true, but this is not teaching that Jesus is the offspring of 2 other gods, this is teaching a virgin birth. These gods in Greek mythology and other myths had carnal relations with other gods to produce their offspring and this is nothing like Mary's conception of Jesus. The skeptics say this: in calling himself the son of man, Christ denied the virgin birth. Now we have to remember that Jesus was not just a son of man, the Son of man (Daniel 7:13-14). This is the future rule and reign of Christ, the Son of man. So that argument is shot down. They will also say that the need of purification, and Mary had to go through the rite of Jewish purification like every other woman did after birth, they say the need of purification proves that Jesus' birth was a natural one, not a supernatural one. Well, we have to think about the purpose of that law was actually hygienic, to save the woman's health, had nothing to do with purity or impurity or the sinlessness or sinfulness of the child. It's important that we hold to the doctrine of the incarnation of Christ.

- **Assignment:**

Memorize Galatians 4:4

QUESTION 25

_____ of the 4 Gospel writers give testimony that Jesus was the Son of God, born in the flesh.

QUESTION 26

Paul's _____ was that Jesus was made of a woman under the law.

QUESTION 27

The Incarnation goes against the laws of _____.

QUESTION 28

The Incarnation was _____ the first time a human had been formed without 2 human parents.

Topic 5: The Objective of the Incarnation

What is the objective of the incarnation? There are several different things that we are going to go through 1- to reveal the invisible God (Hebrews 1:1-3). If you really want to know God, know Jesus. To fulfill prophecy; by the way, these are not the main objective, I'm going to come to that, these are parts of the objective of the incarnation, to fulfill prophecy (Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14) these are all prophecies relating to the coming of Jesus. To fulfill the Davidic covenant; David was given a kingdom that would last forever, Jesus was born of Mary the son of David, and born as the legal son to Joseph, therefore fulfilling the Davidic covenant.(2 Samuel 7:12-16, Isaiah 11:1,10) Now this is the reason for the incarnation To provide a sacrifice for sin. He came to provide a sacrifice for sin (1 John 3:5) That's why

he came. The sacrifices of beasts never take away sin; Yom Kippur was a covering, the sacrifice had to be sinless, the sinless Passover lamb, the sacrifice had to be infinite, any mere man could not make an infinite sacrifice, only God, the God-man, the infinite God. Also, there are some other things: to provide the redeemed with a high priest, Hebrews 2:17, 3:1; 7:24-27. To show us how to live, that's a benefit of the incarnation, and to become the head of a new creation. The perpetuity of the incarnation; in other words, the incarnation doesn't just stop when he died and rose again, it continues on; he is always man, the God man. Even in Heaven, he will have a body. We will see the scars; no blood, his blood was shed for us on Calvary, we'll see his scars, he is one of us. The incarnation will continue. God will always be manifest in the flesh in the person of his son Jesus Christ. The perpetuity of the incarnation is essential to the integrity of the manhood of Jesus Christ; it's essential for Christ's high priesthood, he was made like unto his brethren, and it's essential for our Lord's return and millennial reign. He's going to come physically, he's going to step his feet down on the mount of olives. His feet; he's got a body, and he will rule and reign from the throne of David, physically present in his body. It all began at the incarnation. All of this goes back to the incarnation. The proofs of the incarnation are 2: number 1, Jesus was sinless; that proves that he was born of a virgin, by the spirit of God, the God-man, and number 2, his resurrection. People, just ordinary people, don't rise again. Only God can rise from the dead.

QUESTION 29

The main objective of the Incarnation was to provide a _____ for sin.

QUESTION 30

The _____ of the Incarnation means that God will always be manifest in the flesh in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ.

QUESTION 31

The proofs of the Incarnation are His _____ life and His _____.