

**THE NECESSITY OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH**

- Is the virgin birth critical to the gospel message...or a take it or leave it aspect of faith?
  - You can't have the gospel (salvation) without it - can't be a Christian if you deny it
  - The "*round young virgin*"<sup>(round yon)</sup> is indeed necessary (I though it meant great with child)
- Prophecy
  - Genesis 3:15 proto-evangelium (first mention of the gospel)
    - Constellation Virgo (virgin hold grain / corn... child - Gen. 1:14 - signs)
    - TRADITION - Zoroaster was a student of Daniel and told when a star appeared in Coma (Virgo's house) the Messiah would have come
      - the Magi were looking for a star at a certain point of history
  - Isaiah 7:14
    - That sign was fulfilled - Matt. 1:22-23
    - Mary was not a perpetual virgin - Matt. 1:24-25 (until) Matt. 13:55-56
      - Babylon Bee Headline - "*...You're going to be a perpetual what??!!*"
- Theology
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam
    - Jesus is the NEW MAN but not taken from the OLD MAN (representative)
    - Totally human but a totally separate line - Jesus is the Head of a new race of men
  - Sinless
    - Everyone born from the 1<sup>st</sup> Adam is a sinner - sinner by birth and choice
    - If Jesus was not born of a virgin He could not be the Savior (inherit sin nature)

**WHY DECEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup>?**

- We don't know what day. Scripture doesn't say
  - It is dangerous to be an Advent date-setter (1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>) can be deceptive
  - The only hints are to the season of the year
    - Shepherds in field at night (spring or summer - probably not winter)
    - Roman census - (not scheduled when travel difficult) (2 Sam. 11:1)
- The theory of using pagan gods "birthdays" or days associated with them
  - A long list can be found - Horus, Osiris, Mithras, Buddha, Hercules, Tammuz, Adonis, Hermes, Prometheus ....Nimrod, Baal....
  - A long deep rabbit hole
    - I am skeptical that so many false gods have the same day/birthday
    - ?????? (this could very well be so, but it seems like a set up and straw man - too easy)
- Jewish history
  - Events surrounding Hanukkah
  - Antiochus Epiphanies desecrated the Temple on Dec. 25 (Apocrypha / Josephus / Henry)
    - offered a pig on the altar and set up image of Zeus....
    - forced celebration of Antiochus on 25<sup>th</sup> of every month (birthday)
    - Maccabean revolt - Temple cleansed and rededicated on 25th (3 yrs later)

- Abomination of Desolation and rededication on same day - 3 yrs apart - interesting coincidence
  - Hanukah - 14<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> (lights miraculously stayed lit for 8 days - no oil)
    - Jesus may have observed this - John 10:22-23
- Church history
  - First mention of a Date of Birth - 195 AD Clement - May 20/21 (or April 19/20)
    - He also said Jesus died on - 3/21....or....4/21....or..... 4/15
    - his claim was that the dates were carefully searched out
  - It wasn't until 400 years after His birth that December 25<sup>th</sup> was "settled upon"
    - 4<sup>th</sup> century addition / celebration / speculation / adaptation
    - When the Roman emperor Constantine "converted" Rome adapted
  - There are two main theories that I could corroborate from encyclopedias and from church history books/dictionaries
- Sol Invictus / Saturnalia / worship of unconquered sun / worship of Apollo
  - There was Roman festival that observed the winter solstice - December 17-23
    - days are the shortest and sun is lowest in the sky (winter)
    - when the sun is lowest (21<sup>st</sup> / 22<sup>nd</sup>) start of winter....about 3 days later the sun is observed to be rising in the sky (can't keep the sun down)
    - (shadow on north side of church big in winter....almost gone in summer)
  - Apollo was worshipped on this day - 25<sup>th</sup> - THE UNCONQUERED SUN
    - When Rome became "*Christian*" it just incorporated the old religious festivals and "*Christianized*" them (Constantine honored & emulated Apollo)
  - Ambrose (4<sup>th</sup> cen) "*Christ is the true sun that outshone the fallen gods of the old order*"
  - Dionysus "Christmas fell on the same day as Sol Invictus"
- Old Tradition that great men's conception and death were on the same day
  - Birthdays were generally not observed by holy men
  - Roman Historian Sextus Julius Africanus
    - Creation / Christ's conception / Death were on the same day - March 25<sup>th</sup>
    - 9 months after March 25<sup>th</sup> is....ta da! - December 25<sup>th</sup>
      - some say it was April 6 (9 months later = Jan. 6 - Eastern church)
        - 12 days of Christmas (?? Dec. 25 - Jan. 6 ??)
- We don't know when
  - The date 12/25 is a mixture of Roman Paganism, Roman Catholicism, superstition, tradition, adaptation, speculation, incorporation, duplication....
  - We could just as well say that Jesus was born under the sign Virgo and so He was born in August or September (but that would be superstitious)
- Beware of being an Advent Date- setter
  - It can be dangerous, deceptive and misleading
    - 1 Cor. 4:6 - *do not go beyond that which is written*
  - No one knows the day or the hour
  - The Holy Spirit didn't want us to know otherwise He would have told us
  - He recorded other specific days, months & years - but not with Jesus' birth
- Take advantage of the opportunity of people thinking about Jesus' coming