

IS JESUS GOD?

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IS JESUS GOD?

The question before us is, “Is Jesus God?” I have purposely worded the question that way. If I had asked, “Is Jesus the Son of God?”, many people would answer “YES.” But by their answer some would mean that He is “a son of God in the same way everyone else is.” They do not believe that He is the Son of God in a special way; in other words they do not believe that He is equal with God the Father.

In this booklet we would like to show that Jesus is God. First we will look at verses in the Bible that say so. Then we will see that there are many verses in Scripture that also show that Jesus is God without saying so plainly. Finally I would like to examine verses that people use to prove that Jesus is not God and show that these verses actually prove that He is.

Some verses say plainly that Jesus is God

Here then are some Scripture verses that say plainly that the Lord Jesus is God. The first one is John 1.1. Verse 14 of the same chapter shows clearly that the Word was the One who became a human being and lived among us. In other words the Word is the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 1.1 teaches us three things about Him. First, He was in the beginning. He Himself never did have a beginning. He already was in what we might call the beginning that did not have a beginning. Second, He was with God, that is, He was a separate Person, living with God the Father. Thirdly, we read that the Word was God. These things make it impossible to doubt that the Lord Jesus Christ was God.

I realize that a version of the Bible has been published in which the last part of verse 1 reads, “and the Word was a god.” But this is not a true translation of the language in which the New Testament was written.

John 5.23 is another verse which shows clearly that Jesus is God. This verse says that all will honour the Son in the same way as they honour the Father and that whoever does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent Him.

Here we see that the Son is to be worshipped and honoured in the same way and amount as the Father and that the person who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father either. This would be most unreasonable if Jesus were not God.

Sometimes men come to my house to present their false teaching. I like to ask these men: "Do you honour the Son as you honour the Father?" Usually they try to start talking about something else but I do not allow them to do so. It is useless to talk about any other subject if they do not accept the truth of this one.

The third verse I would like you to think about is John 10.30 where Jesus said, I and my Father are one. Those who do not believe that Christ is God explain this verse by saying that He and His Father were one in spirit, that they had the same thoughts about things and the same purpose, but the Jews who lived at the time when Jesus was here on earth knew better. They knew that Jesus meant that He was God, vs.31,32. If the Jews were wrong Jesus could have easily saved Himself by saying that it was all a misunderstanding. But He didn't say so because they had understood perfectly what He meant.

Now read John 14.8,9. Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father, but Jesus told him whoever had seen Him had seen the Father.

It would have been blasphemy for Jesus to say this if He had been only a man. But the truth is that the only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, made the Father known to men, John 1.18. People were looking at God in human form when they looked at the Lord Jesus Christ.

Next we shall think about Romans 9.5. Verses 4 and 5 tell about the great privileges which Israel had as a nation. They were God's chosen people and God shared His glory with them. He made His covenants with them and gave them the

law. They had the temple service and God's promises, and they were descended from the patriarchs. But greatest of all, the Messiah came from this nation, He who is over all, God blessed forever. This is a wonderful verse showing that our Saviour is both God and Man.

If you still have doubts as to whether Jesus is God, read Colossians 2.9. This verse tells us that the full content of divine nature lives in Christ, in His humanity. Notice with what care the Holy Spirit of God guards the deity of Christ. The full content of divine nature lives in Christ in His human body. These words teach plainly that the Lord Jesus is God in a body of flesh.

Another strong verse is Hebrews 1.8. Here we read what the Father said to the Son. He called the Son God and told Him that His throne would last for ever and ever and that He would rule His kingdom with righteousness. In this verse God the Father talked to the Son as God, and in verses 10 to 12 of the same chapter God the Father said that the Son created all things, that He is eternal and will never change.

Finally, let us read 1 John 5.20. This verse tells us that our lives are in the true God, that is, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

John wrote this verse at a time when some people denied that Christ was God. He wrote it to warn his readers of such teaching, and we should do the same today.

Many verses show indirectly that Jesus is God

The verses we have mentioned say clearly that Christ is God. There are also many other verses which show this to us in a less direct way.

For an example of this read Ephesians 1.2. Here Paul prays that the believers might receive grace and truth from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The Father and the Son would not be able to give the same things if they were not equal. See also Philippians 1.2; 2 Thessalonians 1.2; 1 Timothy 1.2.

In Ephesians 1.3 God is described as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. As a Man Jesus recognized God as

His God. As God, the Lord Jesus said that God was His Father in a way that is not true of anyone else. See also 1 Thessalonians 3.11; 2 Thessalonians 2.16,17.

In John 15.24 Jesus put Himself on the same level as God the Father when He said that the people had seen and hated both Him and His Father. See also Matthew 28.19; John 5.17,18; 16.15.

In Titus 2.13, the correct translation is, “the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ” (RSV). The writer is not talking about two different Persons. Our great God is the same One who is also our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Jesus allowed people to worship Him as God, Matthew 14.33; 28.9,17; Luke 24.52; John 20.28,29. In doing so He would have been breaking the law if He were not God, Exodus 20.3; Luke 4.8. But the New Testament teaches that Jesus should be worshipped, 1 Corinthians 1.2; Philippians 2.9-11; Hebrews 1.6; Revelation 1.5,6,13-18.

Many verses show that the same things are true about God and about Jesus. For example, John 1.18 shows that Jesus is everywhere. He was on earth when John spoke these words, but He was also at the Father’s side. See also Matthew 18.20 and 28.20.

The Lord Jesus had all power. This can be seen in Matthew 8.26 when He gave a command to the wind and the waves, and there was a great calm. Read also Matthew 28.18 and Philippians 3.21.

We can see in the Gospels again and again that Christ knows everything. He knew what people were thinking even when they did not say anything. In Luke 5.22, for example, He knew what the Pharisees were thinking and in Matthew 16.8 He knew the thoughts of the disciples. See also John 11.13,14; 16.39; 21.17.

Read John 1.1; Colossians 1.17a; Hebrews 1.8-12; Revelation 1.8, and you will see that the Lord Jesus Christ is eternal, without beginning or end.

Let us also think about the miracles of the Lord Jesus. He

did miracles that no one else had ever done, John 15.24, and He also gave others the power to do miracles, Matthew 10.8. However, the fact that Jesus did miracles does not prove that He is God. Miracles only show that some power greater than man is at work. That power may be God - or it may be the Devil. There are two reasons why the miracles of Jesus prove that He is God:

(1) The writers of the Scriptures prophesied that the Messiah would do these miracles and they also said that the Messiah. would be God. See Isaiah 9.6 - "His name shall be called.....Mighty God."

(2) Only God would do this kind of miracle. The Devil would have been defeating his own purpose if he had done them. Jesus did the following works of God:

Creating, John 1.3,10; Colossians 1.16; Hebrews 1.2.

Sustaining the universe, Hebrews 1.3.

Forgiving sins, Mark 2.5-7.

Raising the dead, John 5.21; 6.40,54.

Raising Himself from the dead, John 2.19,21; 10.18.

Saving, compare Isaiah 43.11 with Matthew 1.21;

1 Timothy 1.15.

Some verses refer to God in the Old Testament and to Christ in the New Testament

There is another way to prove that Jesus is God. Some verses that refer to God in the Old Testament refer to Christ in the New Testament. In Isaiah 44.6, for example, Jehovah speaks of Himself as the first and the last; in Revelation 1.17 the Lord Jesus speaks of Himself in the same way. In Isaiah 6 the prophet saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up. Verse 3 says, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord (Jehovah) of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory." The apostle John tells us that this Person is Jesus, John 12.41.

Is Jesus God? – TEST 1 – pages 3-7

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. John 1:1 teaches that
 - a. Jesus is God.
 - b. Jesus is a God.
 - c. Jesus is a son of God.

2. When Jesus said 'I and My Father are ONE', He meant
 - a. that He and His Father were one in spirit.
 - b. that He and His Father had the same purpose.
 - c. that He was God.

3. We read that God said that the Son created all things, is eternal and will never change in
 - a. Hebrews 1:6.
 - b. Hebrews 1:8.
 - c. Hebrews 1:10-12.

4. Jesus
 - a. never allowed people to worship Him.
 - b. allowed people to worship Him.
 - c. should not be worshipped.

5. Isaiah 9:6 we read that 'His Name shall be called'
 - a. Emmanuel'.
 - b. Christ'.
 - c. Mighty God'.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. Some verses in Scripture state plainly that Jesus is God.
7. John 5:23 says that the Son should not be honoured in the same way as the Father.
8. The Jews did not understand what Jesus meant when He said 'I and My Father are ONE'.
9. The Lord Jesus had all power.
10. Only God could raise Himself from the dead.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Why does it matter whether or not we believe that Jesus is God?

Also compare

Isaiah 8.13,14	with	1 Peter 2.8; 3.14,15
Isaiah 40.3	with	Matthew 3.3
Isaiah 48.12	with	Revelation 22.13
Malachi 3.1	with	Mark 1.2

Jesus called Himself by one of the Old Testament names of God, the I AM, several times in John's Gospel: see 4.26; 6.20; 8.24,28,58; 13.19; 18.5-8.

Verses which are used to deny that Christ is God

Finally, we want to examine some of the verses that are used by false teachers to deny that Christ is God. One of their favourite verses is John 5.19. Here Christ said that the Son cannot do anything on His own. They say, "See! That proves that Christ could not do everything. He Himself said that He cannot do anything on His own. He is just a man like ourselves." Is this true?

First of all, none of us can truthfully say that we can do nothing on our own. We can wander away from God, we can disobey Him, we can do what we ourselves want to do and we can even deny Him. But Jesus couldn't. He was so morally perfect and so yielded to God that He could not do anything except what the Father instructed Him to do. Then the verse goes on to show that He is God by saying that He does what the Father does. So this verse is really one of the strong statements in the Bible that Jesus is equal with God the Father.

John 5.30 is another verse used by those who say Christ is not God. Here the Lord Jesus said again that He could do nothing on His own. Does this prove that He is not God? No, it proves that He is perfect and not able to sin or do anything which is different from His Father's will.

In John 14.28 Jesus said that the Father was greater than He. Again, the false teachers say this verse proves without leaving any room for doubt that Jesus is not God. But they try to explain this part of the verse without thinking about the

rest of the verse, and therefore cannot understand what it really means. Read the whole verse yourself.

Jesus spoke these words while He was on earth and was being persecuted by sinful men. God the Father was in Heaven where no creature could ever spit on Him or crucify Him. If the disciples loved Jesus they would rejoice that He was soon going back to Heaven where men would never be able to beat or slap Him again. As long as Jesus was on earth the Father was greater than He - that is, greater in His position, but not greater in His Person. The Father was no longer greater than He after Jesus went back to Heaven.

John 10.32-36 is another difficult portion. Read it in your Bible. The Lord Jesus takes His enemies back to Psalm 82.6 where God spoke to the judges of Israel as gods or mighty ones. The judges were only men and the best that could be said about any of them is that God's message was given to them. Yet God called them gods. Much more can be said about the Son of God. The Father chose Him and sent Him into the world. This means that He existed with God the Father in Heaven, before He came to this earth. Now if God called the judges by the name of gods, how much more worthy is Jesus to be called God!

Colossians 1.15 is a favourite verse of those who deny that Jesus is God. Here our Lord is called in some Bibles, "the first-born of every creature." They understand this to mean that Jesus was created just as we were. How do we answer them?

First of all, these words should probably be translated **The firstborn of all creation**, (RSVP. That word **firstborn** is used in two different ways in the Bible. Sometimes it means first in time; for instance, Jesus was the firstborn child of Mary, Matthew 1.25. It is also used to show that someone is first in position. This is seen where God said of David, "**I will make him my firstborn**, higher than the kings of the earth." Jesus is the firstborn of all creation in this latter sense. God has given Him a place over all creation but verse 16 of Colossians 1 shows clearly that He Himself is not a part of that

creation. This verse tells us that all things were created by Him and for Him.

In Revelation 3.14, the Lord Jesus speaks of Himself as the beginning of the creation of God. Some teachers say this means that he was the first created Being, but it should really be translated, **who is the origin of all that God created** and means the One who started creation, who brought the worlds into being.

There is very much evidence that Christ is God and those who try to deny it are in a terrible position. They have to change the translations of verses in the Bible to fit in with what they want to teach, and explain certain verses in a way that does not agree with the teaching of the rest of the Bible. They have to make this choice: either the Bible is true and Jesus is God or the Bible is not God's Word and Jesus is not who He says He is.

The Word of God teaches again and again that the Lord Jesus Christ is God and became Man while continuing to be God, and that He is equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Let us praise God for our wonderful Saviour!

Is Jesus God? – TEST 2 – pages 7-10

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. 'I am the first and I am the last.'
This statement is made
 - a. only by Jehovah.
 - b. only by Christ.
 - c. by Jehovah and by the Lord Jesus Christ .

2. John 14:28 proves
 - a. that Christ is perfect and not able to sin.
 - b. that Christ is not God.
 - c. Jesus seeks to please Himself.

3. The Jews wanted to stone Jesus because He
 - a. He claimed to be God.
 - b. He ate with sinners.
 - c. They hated Him.

4. In Psalm 89:27 God calls David his **firstborn** meaning that David
 - a. was the oldest son in his family.
 - b. was His favourite.
 - c. was to be first in position.

5. The Word of God teaches that
 - a. the Lord Jesus Christ is God.
 - b. the Lord Jesus Christ is equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.
 - c. a. and b.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. Some verses that refer to God in the Old Testament refer to Christ in the New Testament.
7. The claim 'I am the first and the last' is found in Matthew 3:3 and in Isaiah 40:3.
8. John 5:19 confirms that Jesus is equal with God the Father.
9. While Jesus was on earth God was greater in His position but not greater in His Person.
10. The word **firstborn** in the Bible always means first in time.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

What convinces you that Jesus is God?

Was the Lord Jesus Born of a Virgin ?

The most wonderful thing that ever happened is that the Lord from heaven has come to earth; the One who is called the Father of eternity has been born in this world. The bright dawn of salvation has shined from heaven on all those who live in the dark shadow of death. The eternal divine Word who created everything became a human being and lived among us, John 1.1,14.

But how? How could God become also a real Man, while remaining for ever God? How could the Eternal One become a being of this earth, a being of time? Even the wisest men have not been able to answer these questions. But there is an answer! The answer to the problem is that the Lord Jesus was born of a young woman, a virgin who had never been with a man.

Satan always has been, and still is, attacking the Christian faith. We are not surprised that he often tries to raise doubts in people's minds about the fact that the Lord Jesus was born of a virgin. This is because so much depends on this fact. Also it is very easy to attack this doctrine because the matter of birth is very private. As far as men are concerned we have the testimony of only one person - Mary, the virgin mother. Regarding the resurrection over 500 witnesses could have been called, 1 Corinthians 15.6.

There are three important questions that people must ask if they wish to attack this doctrine or defend it:

1. Was it possible for the Lord Jesus to be born of a virgin?
2. Does the Scripture teach it?
3. Was it necessary?

1. Was it possible for the Lord Jesus to be born of a virgin?

Was it possible for Him to be born without a human father? Scientists say it is not possible and it has never happened.

God knew that Mary would wonder how she could give birth to a son without having been with a man, Luke 1.34, so He sent an angel to her with the only possible answer, **There is nothing that God cannot do**, Luke 1.37. God had to do a miracle in order that both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ might be born although the miracle was completely different in each case. In Luke 1.35 God explained to Mary through the angel what would happen. **The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God.**

Here, truly is a great mystery - and a great miracle. **The mystery of godliness is great. He appeared in human form**, 1 Timothy 3.16. The Lord Jesus was born of a virgin through a miracle done by the Holy Spirit. Through this miracle the Eternal Son of God became also a man with a human nature. No new person was created when the Lord Jesus was born. The Lord Jesus was never created but always was. He was with God in the beginning, John 1.1. At His birth He began a new kind of life. This was possible only through a miracle.

We cannot possibly expect to understand with our human minds the mystery of how the Lord Jesus was born by a virgin. Nor can we understand the miraculous life of this One who was born by a virgin, but we believe He was **a man proved to you by God by the miracles, wonders and signs which God did through Him**, Acts 2.22. We believe too that He was raised from death through a miracle which God did by His divine power, Acts 2.24, and this also we cannot understand. The One who was born in Bethlehem was different from everyone else - different in every way, in His life, death, and resurrection. We are therefore not surprised that He was different also in the way He was born.

2. Do the Scriptures teach it?

Do the Scriptures teach that the Lord Jesus was born of a

virgin? This question is really unnecessary for those who read with faith the first chapters of Matthew and Luke, without any doubts in their minds. Do we believe that Matthew 1.18-25 and Luke 1.26-38 are part of Scripture? Then there is no doubt that the Scriptures teach that the Lord Jesus was born of a virgin. However we must think about this matter because there are some who do not believe this truth. They say that

- (a) Only two of all the writers of the Scriptures refer to the virgin birth. “Why,” they ask, “are all the others silent?”
- (b) The verses in Matthew and Luke telling about the Lord Jesus as a baby were not part of their original writings.
- (c) Luke first wrote that Jesus was born of a virgin, but then mentioned Jesus’ “parents” and called Joseph His “father”.

Let us examine each of these statements:

(a) It is true that Matthew and Luke are the only writers of Scripture who wrote plainly that the Lord Jesus was born of a virgin. This was enough to show that this is a Scriptural truth. We would be satisfied if only one inspired writer had declared this truth if we believe that all Scripture is inspired by God, 2 Timothy 3.16. Yet two men have written about it, Matthew with respect to Joseph and Luke with respect to Mary. The two accounts are very simple and agree perfectly although each one was written separately from the other. Even these things bear witness to the fact that they are true. Is it necessary to have more than two plain records of the virgin birth – or any other subject – in the Bible before we can believe it? How often is it necessary to say a thing before it becomes true? Two quite dependable witnesses bear testimony which agrees in every important point. The matter is upheld by the testimony of two or three witnesses, Matthew 18.16.

The rest of Scripture neither directly nor indirectly denies the accounts of Matthew and Luke. Whatever we read about the coming of the Son of God into the world agrees with His

Born of a Virgin? – TEST 3 – pages 11-13

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. Which of the following is true?
 - a. God became man by ceasing to be God.
 - b. God became man by being born of a virgin.
 - c. God never became man.

2. The Virgin birth
 - a. is a mystery and a miracle.
 - b. is easily understood.
 - c. was not necessary.

3. The fact that the Jesus was born of a virgin
 - a. is not taught in Scripture.
 - b. is taught in the gospels of Matthew and Luke.
 - c. is taught in the gospels of Mark and John.

4. The two accounts of the virgin birth
 - a. do not agree.
 - b. were a combined record.
 - c. agree perfectly.

5. The gospel accounts of the virgin birth are
 - a. neither directly or indirectly denied by the rest of Scripture.
 - b. directly denied by the rest of Scripture.
 - c. indirectly denied by the rest of Scripture.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. The eternal divine Word Who created everything became a human being and lived among us.
7. There are many witnesses to the fact that Mary was a virgin.
8. Nothing is impossible with God.
9. Joseph is called Jesus' father in Matthew's gospel.
10. Whatever we read about the coming of the Son of Man into the world agrees with His virgin birth.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Why is the virgin birth important?

virgin birth, and there are some verses which make us think about it.

Isaiah wrote about the birth of “Immanuel” - God with us - in 7.14 where he prophesied that the Lord Jesus would be born into this world. The word for “virgin” in this verse is “almah” which really means a young woman old enough to be married, whether actually a virgin or not. However in seven other Old Testament verses it usually means virgin, see Genesis 24.43; Exodus 2.8; Psalm 68.25; Proverbs 30.19; Song of Solomon 1.3; 6.8; Isaiah 7.14. The Greek version of the Old Testament - the Septuagint - translates “almah” in Isaiah 7.14 by “parthenos” and Matthew uses the same word in Matthew 1.23 where he repeats part of that prophecy. The word “parthenos” definitely means **virgin**.

Mark wrote only about the work of the Lord Jesus here on earth, beginning with His baptism; he had no reason to tell how He came into the world. However in the first verse he called his Gospel the Gospel of **Jesus Christ**, (referring to Him as a Man), **the Son of God** (referring to Him as God). Thus the verse agrees perfectly with the virgin birth.

John wrote his Gospel after the other three had written theirs and so did not need to repeat what people already knew. He said that **The Word became a human being and lived among us**, 1.14, but he did not explain this miracle.

Paul does not plainly mention the virgin birth, but what he said in Galatians 4.4 about Christ becoming a Man makes us think about it. **God sent His own Son... the Son of a human mother**. Paul’s teaching about Christ agrees with the virgin birth even though he does not teach it plainly in his letters.

(b) People have tried to remove the evidence of Matthew and Luke by saying that the records of the Lord’s birth were added to their writings later on, or that at least certain verses were added at a later date. Scholars have carefully examined these chapters in Matthew and Luke and conclude that they were not added later on but are part of the gospels as they were originally written by these two writers.

(c) Some say that the words “parents” (Luke 2.41) and

“father” (Luke 2.48) would not have been used if the Lord Jesus had been born by a virgin. We might ask however how Mary could have spoken of Joseph to her Son without calling him “your father,” because Joseph acted as the father in the home. Notice, the Lord Jesus’ answer in 2.49: I had to be in My Father’s house, referring to His true, heavenly Father. Today some husbands and wives adopt children. They are called “parents” although they are not related by blood to these children. Among the Jews a man would accept a child born to his wife through another man as his own son. If the virgin birth is true, then Jesus was much closer to Joseph than would have been possible if Joseph had adopted Him in the ordinary way. As Jesus had no human father no one but Joseph could act as a father with respect to this child.

In 3.23 of his gospel Luke added three little words so that people would not get the wrong idea regarding the relationship of Jesus to Joseph: “Jesus was the son, **so people thought**, of Joseph.” How important these three little words are!

We have seen then that the teaching of the virgin birth of our Lord is indeed Scriptural. Matthew and Luke each give different details and the other writers agree with their records even though they do not teach it plainly.

3. Was the virgin birth necessary?

Does it really matter whether the Lord Jesus had an earthly father or not? Is the virgin birth a necessary part of the Christian faith? Would we deny any important doctrine if we do not believe that Christ was born of a virgin?

We must accept the virgin birth if we believe that the Scriptures are inspired by God and without error; that Jesus is the Son of God, our Saviour; and that His sacrifice was sufficient for our salvation.

1. **The Scriptures.** The Scriptures clearly teach that we must believe the virgin birth. If the Lord Jesus was not born of a virgin, then the Bible is wrong in this point; perhaps it is wrong about other things also? Can we really accept it as the Word of God - whose **word is truth**, John 17.17?

2. The Son of God. The Lord Jesus would have been the same as all other men, and no more than a man if He had been born in the usual way and had a father and mother. But He was born by Mary through the Holy Spirit, as the angel told both Joseph and Mary, Matthew 1.20; Luke 1.35, and He is the Son of God **and** Son of Man. The Lord Jesus made such statements as **The living Father sent me**, John 6.57; **My Father works always, and I too must work**, John 5.17; **The Father and I are one**, John 10.30; **Whoever has seen me has seen the Father**, John 14.9. It would have been very wrong for Him to say these things if Joseph was His father. The Lord Jesus spoke of His Father, God, many times, and every time He did so He was denying that He had an earthly father.

The virgin birth explains why the Lord Jesus was sinless. He would have inherited a sinful nature if He had been born in the same way as other men are born. But Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit, Matthew 1.20.

What do you think about the Person and work of Christ? Your answer will depend on what you think about the virgin birth. Those who reject the virgin birth do not honour Christ as they should, or completely deny that He is God.

3. Salvation. The virgin birth is necessary for our salvation. The Lord Jesus would have inherited a sinful nature from Adam if He had been born as other men, Romans 5.12, and He would have needed a Saviour Himself. He would not have been qualified to be our Saviour, and we would have been lost for ever. Only One who had no sin could be made sin for us, 2 Corinthians 5.21. Only One who is righteous Himself can plead for us with the Father, 1 John 2.1,2. Only One who is good could die for evil men, in order to lead them to God, 1 Peter 3.18.

We have seen how much depends on the doctrine of the virgin birth. Let us therefore firmly believe in it.

Born of a Virgin? – TEST 4 – pages 14-16

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. Mark called his gospel
 - a. the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
 - b. the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - c. the gospel of the Son of God.

2. Paul in his teaching
 - a. does not mention the virgin birth of Christ
 - b. agrees with the virgin birth.
 - c. does not make us think about the virgin birth.

3. If Jesus had been born in the usual way as we are
 - a. He could still claim equality with God
 - b. He could still be our Saviour.
 - c. He would have inherited a sinful nature.

4. The Lord Jesus spoke of God as His Father
 - a. on only one occasion.
 - b. on a few occasions.
 - c. on many occasions.

5. The virgin birth
 - a. is necessary for our salvation.
 - b. is not necessary for our salvation.
 - c. is unimportant.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. In Matthew 1:23 Matthew uses the Greek word 'parthenos' which means virgin.
7. John was the first gospel to be written.
8. In Luke 3:23 Luke emphasises the virgin birth with the words 'so people thought'.
9. The virgin birth explains why the Lord Jesus was sinless.
10. Very little about our faith depends on the doctrine of the virgin birth.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Do you believe in the virgin birth. In what way has this study confirmed (or otherwise) your faith?

The Temptation of Christ

As we consider the Temptation of our Lord, it will help us to remember what had happened just before. The Lord Jesus was baptized shortly before He was tempted and we should know just what happened at that time in order to help us to understand the Temptation better.

John Baptist, our Lord's messenger, was baptizing people in the river Jordan. Many people came from Jerusalem and all over Judea to hear John preach. John spoke very severely to them all, the Pharisees, Sadducees, tax-collectors, soldiers and ordinary people. He showed them their sins and told them to repent. Those who were baptized in the river Jordan showed that they had repented. So this baptism was a baptism unto repentance.

Then the Lord Jesus came and wanted John to baptize Him. We are not surprised to see that the Baptist did not want to do this. Never had such a Person stood before him. John must have known that the Lord Jesus was much holier than he. He felt that Christ should baptize him rather than that he should baptize the Lord.

But the Lord Jesus told him to let it be this way for now because He wanted to do all that God required. So our Lord was baptized in the Jordan. But His baptism was different from that of the people. They were baptized **confessing their sins** but He was baptized while He was **praying**, Luke 3.21. Our holy Lord had no sins to confess.

The Lord Jesus shared with sinners when He was baptized in the Jordan. This baptism was a picture of a greater baptism He would be baptized with later - the baptism of God's judgment when He was made sin for us on the cross. His baptism in Jordan, or that of the people, could never take

away sin, but all true believers receive forgiveness and peace through this other baptism, that is, Christ's death at Calvary.

The Lord Jesus Christ's baptism showed that He would devote Himself to do the work which His Father had given Him to do. The voice from heaven announced, **You are my dear Son. I am pleased with you**, because He had obeyed His heavenly Father for thirty years in Nazareth and because He was willing to do the great work which the Father had given Him to do. But someone soon questioned whether these words from heaven were really true. A voice from hell followed the one from heaven and Satan asked the Lord Jesus, "**If you are God's Son...**"

The Lord Jesus became a man for several reasons which are stated in the Scriptures. One of these reasons was so that He might destroy the Devil's works, 1 John 3.8. Did Satan know this? Did he understand that his own head would be crushed as a result of the struggle between him and this One who was bor. of a woman? If Satan was not able to lead the Lord into sin there in the desert, he himself would be completely defeated at the cross. So Satan tried very hard to win the victory over Christ.

We read that the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the Devil. Through this testing, God would show the complete sinlessness of His beloved Son. Thus, right at the beginning of our Lord's public ministry, we see that He was morally qualified to redeem men. The only Man who could put away the sin of the world was the One who had been proven to be sinless and perfect. At the trial in the desert, we begin to see how morally perfect God's sinless Son was.

If you are God's Son... ! Surely He would have all authority if He were God's Son. Could He not make bread from stones? Was it not right for Him to have something to eat after He had not eaten any food for forty days? This is what we would think. Often we do not see the real issues of the Lord's trial, but He knew them all because He knows everything. Also He was God's Son and as such He would not (and could not) do anything that might not be His Father's will.

Yes, our Lord did not fail when tried in the desert or at any other time, but we should remember not only that He **did not** fail, but that He **could not** fail. He is holy with no fault or sin in Him, and has been set apart from sinful men, Hebrews 7.26. He was tempted in every way that we are, yet was without sin, Hebrews 4.15. He knew no sin, He did no sin, in Him was no sin, 2 Corinthians 5.21; 1 Peter 2.22; 1 John 3.5.

Sometimes, people say that the temptation was not real because our Lord Jesus is perfect and so could withstand any attack but this is not the right way to think of this. Suppose there were a great storm which knocked down every tree in the forest except one. Which tree felt the force of the storm most? Not the trees that fell down - they went down before the storm reached full force. The tree that stood felt the pressure of the storm more than the others. No one among men has experienced the full force of the trial as our Lord did.

Men test gold with acid to see if it is pure gold. The acid will not affect pure gold but that does not mean that the test is not real. It was the same with the trial of our Lord in the desert. The trial was real and it proves to men that He is holy and without sin.

Let us think further about this matter. The Lord Jesus Christ is God. If He can sin, this would mean that God can sin. To say such things is to speak evil of God and we hesitate to even write them down. Let us also think of the verse in Hebrews 13.8, **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.** If He could sin when He was on earth, this would mean that He can also sin now in heaven. Those who love the Lord cannot possibly accept such thoughts.

He suffered when He was tempted, Hebrews 2.18. The trial was real to Him and His suffering in the trial was also real. It is not difficult for us to realize that this Holy One would suffer as He saw men's sins. The just One would suffer when He saw men's unjust actions and was judged unjustly Himself. Any person who lives a clean, godly life suffers when exposed to the evil talk and actions of other people. It could not be otherwise. If this is so, how much our

The Temptation of Christ – TEST 5 – pages 17-19

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

The Baptism of John the Baptist

- a. resulted in the forgiveness of sins.
 - b. was a baptism of repentance.
 - c. was just a ritual of the Pharisees.
2. John the Baptist
- a. expected to baptise Jesus.
 - b. refused to baptise Jesus.
 - c. knew that Jesus was much greater than he.
3. Jesus' baptism is a picture of
- a. His obedience
 - b. our baptism.
 - c. His resurrection.
4. Jesus
- a. could have sinned.
 - b. is God and cannot sin.
 - c. did not suffer when He was tempted.
5. 1 John 3:5 teaches that
- a. Jesus knew no sin.
 - b. Jesus did no sin.
 - c. Jesus has no sin in Him.
 - d. all the above

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. The Lord Jesus was baptised shortly before He was tempted.
7. John was very gentle with those who came to hear him.
8. The Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness.
9. Jesus would not (and could not) do anything that was not His Father's will.
10. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Have you obeyed the Lord in baptism?

How does our baptism differ from John's baptism?

Holy Lord must have suffered while He was here on earth! The trial in the desert was only the **first** attack of the Devil. The final and greatest attack came at the cross.

The ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me, John 14.30. It was always so. Man has a sinful nature and therefore responds to the temptations of the Devil but this is not true of Christ. He was without sin. There was nothing in Him that could respond to evil: He was absolutely holy. The seraphim in Isaiah 6 spoke of Christ when they said, **Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts** (see John 12.41). Let us remember that holiness is more than sinlessness. Adam was sinless in the garden when he was first created but after awhile he sinned. Christ is **that holy One born** of the virgin mother and it was impossible for Him to fall into sin. The ruler of this world had no power over Him.

Of what practical value is it to us to read about our Lord's temptation in the desert? One value is that the Lord's temptation teaches us how to use Scripture when we are tempted by the Devil. The Lord Jesus Christ used the Word of God when He answered Satan's suggestions. Each time Satan tried to make Him sin, He answered with **It is written**. We may use the Word of God in the same way, Psalm 119.11.

Our Lord answered Satan's first suggestion with these words, **Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God**. What a blessing it would be if we really understood the meaning of these words! Our nation and even Christians love money and possessions much too much. We say that the important things in life are spiritual, but the way we live shows that we do not really believe this. Our blessed Lord was able to supply food for His hungry body but He could not **live** by doing this. His food was to do the will of His Father, John 4.34. The Holy Spirit had led Him into the desert. He was there because it was God's will for Him to be there and He would not finish the trial until it was God's will for it to be finished. God's will was the most important thing to Him. How this rebukes our love for the things of this world!

The Devil tried to tempt the Lord Jesus a second time by

making Him stand on the highest point of the temple, and telling Him to throw Himself down if He were the Son of God. As a reason for this he quoted, wrongly, a verse from the Bible, Psalm 91.11,12. The Devil is especially dangerous when he uses the Word of God! He has probably done more harm through 'religious' leaders than in any other way. Many people think that Satan is at work mostly in places where strong drink is sold and people commit all kinds of sins of the flesh but the false teaching given forth in many churches is much worse than what goes on in these places. Practically every false teaching that has hurt the church of God all through history is the result of people using and explaining Scripture verses in the wrong way.

"It is written" said the Devil, but he used the Scripture in the wrong way. How did the Lord answer him? Simply by saying, **It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'** The people of Israel would have saved themselves a lot of sorrow during their journey through the desert if they had remembered this command! Paul wrote that we should not test the Lord as the people of Israel did, and were killed by snakes, 1 Corinthians 10.9. God will punish us if we choose to do what is wrong, and we also lose the joy that we have when we obey Him. How much we need to be guided by what is written in the Word of God!

Finally, **the Devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, in all their greatness,** Matthew 4.8. What a sight this must have been! Other great leaders of the past would have gladly taken these kingdoms if they had been offered to them but the Lord Jesus refused them and we are not surprised that He did so. After all, what did He see? A broken, bleeding world! It was very different from the way He had made it, and very different from what it will be when the new earth appears.

For the third time, the Lord Jesus answered, **It is written.** You and I may well follow Him in the way He used the Scripture. Satan was offering Him all earth's kingdoms if He would only worship him but the Lord answered, **Worship the Lord and serve Him only.** We will have to reject the things of

the world if we really want to serve God. Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees when God called Him, and Moses left Egypt for better things.

Our Lord came down from that high mountain and started into His life work which could only end with the death on the Cross. He had said three times in the desert, **It is written**, and finally on the Cross He said, **It is finished**. He had won the victory in the desert and won a much greater victory on the Cross. We are redeemed because of this victory, and because of it a new heaven and a new earth will show forever the glories of our holy Lord. Hallelujah! What a Saviour!

The Temptation of Christ – TEST 6 – pages 20-22

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. Jesus answered Satan's temptations with
 - a. His supernatural power.
 - b. Scripture.
 - c. a resource not available to us.

2. The devil
 - a. has no power over religious people.
 - b. only works in irreligious places.
 - c. has hurt the church of God through false teaching.

3. Israel
 - a. always obeyed God's commandments.
 - b. were punished because of their disobedience.
 - c. were not punished because they were God's chosen people.

4. The Bible
 - a. is the Word of God and is our guide today.
 - b. is the Word of God but is out of date.
 - c. is not the Word of God.

5. To worship the Lord and serve Him only
 - a. means a rejection of the things of the world.
 - b. is easy.
 - c. is only for the very religious.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. Holiness is more than sinlessness.
7. The devil correctly quoted a verse from the Bible.
8. We may follow Jesus in the way He used Scripture.
9. We will suffer loss if we choose to do what is wrong.
10. Jesus greatest victory was on the cross.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Getting to know God's Word is very important to our Christian walk.
In what ways could you prioritise it more?

