

OPEN DOOR FAMILY FELLOWSHIP

The Promise

A Study of the Virgin Birth of Jesus
Christ

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The Promise (the virgin birth)

A good Bible study to do as we move into the Christmas time is to study the virgin birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, many who call themselves 'Christians' in our day doubt the virgin birth of Christ. However, as we study together, we will see that you cannot be a Christian unless you believe that Christ is virgin-born. Not only that, but salvation would not be possible if Jesus Christ is not virgin-born!

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Jesus is Eternal

John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

Many people think that Jesus was a good man and a spiritual teacher. Some would even agree that he was a healer and a holy man. However, the passage of scripture above tells us that Jesus is God. There are three important truths here:

1. The Word was in the beginning
2. The Word was with God
3. The Word was God

Who is the Word? John the Baptist will answer the question for us:

John 1:14-17 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the Word of God that was in the beginning with God and He is God! What a wonderful truth! Jesus Christ is God. The fact that the Bible calls Jesus the Word is very important to our study. We use words to communicate. God, who is Holy and distinct from His creation wanted to communicate with his creation. He did this by sending His Son, Jesus Christ in the flesh to dwell among humans. God wants us to know him and he revealed himself to us in Jesus Christ who came in the flesh. This is the message of Christmas. The fact that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory!

I will never forget teaching a young adult Sunday School class and having a young lady raise her hand as this truth dawned on her. She exclaimed, "You mean Jesus did not have his beginning in the manger in Bethlehem?" I was able to help her understand that Jesus was in the beginning with God and that he is God!

One of the accusations that the religious leaders of Jesus' day brought against him was the charge of blasphemy. Once, when he healed a man sick of the palsy he also told him that his sins were forgiven. The religious leaders knew that this was a claim of his godhood. *Mark 2:7 Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?* Another time, the religious leaders were accusing him of being possessed by a devil. His answer is amazing:

John 8:54-59 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

What did he mean by saying, before Abraham was, I am? He meant that he was around before Abraham. Not only that but let's remember how God revealed himself to Moses.

Exodus 3:14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

Jesus is using the name of God for himself! That is why they took up stones to cast at him. Jesus claimed to be God. He claimed to be older

than Abraham. He claimed that he could forgive sins! These are all things that only God can do. The New Testament affirms the preexistence of Jesus Christ and his deity.

Colossians 1:15-17 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

The apostle Paul tells us three very important things about the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Jesus is the image of the invisible God
2. By Jesus all things were created
3. By Jesus all things consist

Jesus is the image of the invisible God. In other words, as Jesus said in *John 12:45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me*. Not only that, but as John told us earlier, Jesus created all things. That means that he is before all things and that he is the creator! Not only did he create all things, but by him all things consist. To consist means to be supported and maintained. Jesus holds the entire creation together!

Before Jesus was crucified, he prayed what we call his high priestly prayer. This prayer is found in John 17. One part of that prayer is very significant for our study.

John 17:5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

Jesus was with the Father before the world was. He was living in a perfect communion with the Father in a glorious relationship. Now that he is about to go to the cross, he is praying that he will be restored to the glory he had with the Father before the world was even created!

When we celebrate Christmas, remember it is the time when:

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

However, the manger in Bethlehem was not the beginning of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is! He has no beginning and no ending. Jesus himself says:

Revelation 1:8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet and Omega is the last. Jesus has always been and he will always be. He is (that is present tense). He was (that is past tense). He is to come (that is future tense). He is the Almighty – Worship HIM!

The Promise to Eve

Why did Jesus have to come in the flesh? Why couldn't God reveal himself to mankind some other way? We have to go all the way back to the garden of Eden to begin to answer that question. If you remember, Adam and Eve disobeyed God when they were tempted by the Serpent and they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When this happened, they immediately began to hide from God, and be afraid of him. (*Genesis 3:8-10 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*) They also began to experience shame as they realized they were naked. Then the blame game began. When confronted by God, the man blamed God. God then confronted the woman and she blamed the serpent. Then God address the serpent and cursed him. Then he says something amazing:

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

There are four things that God says will happen between the woman, Eve and the serpent.

1. God himself would put enmity between the serpent and the woman
2. God would put enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman
3. The seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head
4. The serpent would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman

The first of these is not hard to understand. Because he duped her, Eve would hate the Serpent and she now realized that he hated her and

wanted her to die. That is why he lied to her. This was the beginning of a spiritual warfare that will last until Satan is cast into the lake of fire.

The second of these is very interesting. God put enmity (hatred) between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. The devil will have those who are considered his children. (*John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*) These will hate the seed of the woman. Interestingly, women do not have seeds. However, this is the very first promise of a virgin – born Jesus. He is the seed of the woman.

Galatians 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

The promise made here is a promise of victory for the seed of the woman, Jesus, as he bruises the head of the serpent. This would be a mortal wound. However, Jesus will suffer a non-mortal wound from the serpent as he bruises his heel. This was the wound of the cross. Satan did his worst, and Jesus came away victorious!

This verse also helps us to understand a verse in the New Testament that is sometimes considered hard to understand. *1 Timothy 2:14-15 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.* She shall be saved in childbearing is referring to the promise to Eve made by God in the garden. Eve was saved in the sense that generations later, God would use a virgin girl named Mary to bear the child, Jesus. She was a woman of faith, charity, holiness and sobriety and God's Holy Spirit came upon her and enabled her to conceive even though she had never known a man!

Think of the magnificent grace of God. Adam and Eve disobey and immediately, God promises a victory through a child that would come. I am sure when Eve had Cain that she thought he was the promised one. Matter of fact, every Israelite mother thought her boy might be the one to bruise the serpent's head. But it was not until Jesus that the promise was fulfilled!

The Prophecies in the Old Testament

We have studied one prophecy already – the promise made to Eve in the Garden of Eden. Next, let's look at some more prophecies concerning the coming of the promised serpent head crusher. Approximately 750 years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Isaiah the prophet prophesied of the Messiah that was to come.

Isaiah 9:2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Isaiah 9:6-7 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, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

What a wonderful promise! People who wandered in the darkness of sin and separation from God would have a light shine upon them. What is the light?

John 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

The coming of the light into the world would come as a child born. This however is no ordinary child. Let's analyze what Isaiah says about this particular child.

- He will be a ruler – the government shall be upon his shoulder
- His name is Wonderful
- His name is Counsellor
- His name is the mighty God (Here we know that this child is God himself!)

- The everlasting Father

(How can the child to be born be called the everlasting Father? Jesus says, “*John 10:30 I and my Father are one.*”)

- The prince of Peace
- His kingdom will never end
- He will sit on David’s throne – He will be a descendant of David from the tribe of Judah

Hebrews 7:14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

- His kingdom will be one of judgment and justice
- God’s zeal will perform this

There is no doubt that this passage was confusing to the people before the time of Jesus who read it. To say a child will be born who is the mighty God and the everlasting Father would have been hard to understand. But, for you and me we can look back and see that Isaiah was telling us about Jesus!

Isaiah also tells us something very important about the Messiah.

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.

Not only will God be born as a child, but he will be born of a virgin. Remember, this is foretold about 750 years before it actually happened! Almost 800 years later the angel of the Lord would tell Joseph that the baby Mary was carrying would be the fulfillment of this prophecy.

Matthew 1:22-23 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Not only was his virgin birth prophesied but the place of his birth was prophesied.

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.

The Messiah of Israel and the king of the world would be born in a small town called Bethlehem. This was the home town of David, upon whose throne Jesus will one day sit. Notice the end of this verse tells us that his goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Once again, the Bible tells us that Jesus is eternal. He will come forth out of Bethlehem, but that is not his beginning. He has no beginning!

The people of Israel knew this prophecy and when Herod asked where the Messiah would be born, the chief priests and scribes told pointed him to this verse of scripture.

Matthew 2:4-6 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

There are many other prophecies about the coming of the Messiah, but these are the most pertinent to our study of the virgin birth of Jesus. From the beginning of creation, God told Adam and Eve that he would bring forth the seed of the woman to crush the serpent's head. This clearly is a reference to the virgin birth. Later, God used Isaiah to tell us that a virgin would conceive and bring forth a son. He also is very clear that this child will be God himself.

How amazing that God had this plan in place from the very beginning!

The Manger in Bethlehem

The New Testament gets directly to the point on the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

We here learn that Mary, his mother was espoused to Joseph. They were engaged so they were not living together. They had not come together yet because they were not yet married. Our society sees living together before marriage as acceptable, but not in that day. Joseph and Mary had never been together, and yet she was found with child. The Bible here point blank tells us that the child was of the Holy Ghost. In Luke's gospel, we learn a little more information about her being pregnant.

Luke 1:26-35 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt 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: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the

Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Notice that after Gabriel tells her that she will conceive and have a son that will be named Jesus, Mary says that she did not know a man. She is affirming that she is a virgin. Both Matthew and Luke's gospels make this clear. Gabriel tells her that the Holy Ghost shall come upon her and the power of the Highest will overshadow her. The child will be called the Son of God because God truly is his father. No man is the father of Jesus Christ.

Joseph was faced with a hard decision when he found out that Mary was pregnant. He could have had her put to death according to the Law of Moses.

Matthew 1:19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.

Deuteronomy 22:13-21 If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid: Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate: And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her; And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech against her, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him; And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days. But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be

not found for the damsel: Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

Joseph did not want to publicly humiliate her or have her put to death. He came up with another plan. He was going to put her away privately. He would divorce her or end the engagement. He loved her but he could not marry a woman that was unfaithful.

Matthew 1:20-25 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 she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

Once again, the fact that a virgin girl was pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit is confirmed to Joseph. The angel helps him understand that Mary has not been unfaithful, but she has been chosen by God to bear the Messiah. He tells Joseph to name him Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. This he confirms is the fulfillment of a 750 year old prophecy from the prophet Isaiah!

Another interesting thing about this passage of scripture is the statement that Jesus is Mary's firstborn son. There is a heresy that Mary remained a perpetual virgin. However, the Bible tells us that she

had other children. Once, when Jesus was teaching, the people were so astonished that he taught as he did they said this:

Matthew 13:55-56 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?

They saw him as the carpenter's son, which he was not. However, Joseph did raise him as if he were his own son. Notice that he had half-brothers and half-sisters. Mary was a virgin when she had Jesus, but she had other children after him.

Jesus lived a relatively short life here on this earth, but apparently he never got past the assumption that he was conceived by fornication. Notice what they said to him as he was confronting those who would not believe on him. He told them that if Abraham were their father, they would do what Abraham did. *John 8:41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.* They accuse him of being born of fornication and claim God to be their father. How ironic since God truly is the Father of Jesus!

A Suitable Sacrifice

The Bible tells us over and over again that Jesus is sinless.

1 John 3:5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

1 Peter 2:22-24 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Hebrews 7:26 For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

2 Corinthians 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

If he is going to take away sins by the sacrifice of Himself, he cannot have sin. However, there is a problem. We inherit sin from our common father – Adam. The book of Romans describes this sacrifice that Jesus made for us.

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

God recommends his love to us so that all can see in the fact that Christ died FOR us. We are totally undeserving of this love and this sacrifice. The book of Hebrews makes it clear, Christ was sacrificed for us:

Hebrews 9:26b but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Romans goes on to explain why all men are sinners:

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

- By one man sin entered into the world – that man was Adam
- Death came because of sin
- Death passed upon all men
- All men sin

Romans 5:18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

Notice in verse 18 it says by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation. Adam's sin passed judgment upon all mankind. So a man born of Adam cannot be a sacrifice for anyone else because he is a sinner himself and will have to deal with his own sin. The virgin birth of Jesus Christ makes it possible for Jesus to be a man and die for sins, and yet not be a sinner himself. Notice it says that the righteousness of one (Jesus Christ) is a free gift that leads to justification of life. Jesus had to be sinless to be a suitable sacrifice.

When Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, the night they left was called the Passover. Exodus 12 describes the Passover in great detail. The command of God was for the Israelites to take a lamb without blemish and to sacrifice the lamb. Then they were to take the blood of the lamb and smear it over the doorposts of the house and God would pass over that house. Every house that did not have the blood on the door would experience the death of the firstborn in that home. The Israelites were told to practice this on the same day every year to remember what God did.

Listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah as he describes Jesus.

Isaiah 53:4-12 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah once again is describing the sacrifice of Jesus not for his own sins, but for our sins. Notice he is said to be as a sheep before her shearers is dumb. It is also said that his soul is an offering for sin. Years later, John the Baptist was baptizing in the Jordan River and when he saw Jesus, he said:

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Jesus is the Passover lamb!

1 Corinthians 5:7b For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

The virgin birth of Jesus was necessary because he had to be a lamb without blemish. He had to be sinless to be a sacrifice. He also had to be a man. Man sinned and a man had to pay the penalty for sin by dying.

1 Corinthians 15:21-22 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Now the question arises. How did Jesus remain sinless even though he was born of Mary? The answer is amazing! When Wendy was pregnant with our first child I was reading one of her baby books. I was amazed to find that the mother's blood does not mix with the baby's blood in the uterus! Even though Mary was a sinner just like you and I, Jesus would not have been contaminated by her blood. He is fully man because he was born of a woman. But he is also fully God!

1 Peter 1:18-19 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

Here is another interesting note about Jesus being the Lamb of God. Where was he born?

Luke 2:7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Where are sheep born?

Who did the angels first announce the birth to?

Luke 2:8-17 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

Who are the first ones to know when a lamb is born?

The Word Made Flesh

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

When we celebrate Christmas, we are celebrating the fact that Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. We call this the incarnation - the fact that the eternal Son of God put on flesh and became a man. This is only possible through the virgin birth as we have already seen. But what all does this mean for us.

We learn the attitude we are to have from the Incarnation:

Philippians 2:5-11 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- Christ made himself of no reputation – We are to be a people who are not looking out for our own reputation, but to live for God’s glory.
- Christ took upon him the form of a servant – He did this by becoming a man. The Son of God became a servant! Our Creator came and served us! We are to do the same.
- Christ humbled himself – he came from heaven to earth and humbled himself to become a man.

- Jesus became obedient to death – he willingly obeyed his Father and went to the cross for us! We are to be obedient as well.
- He is exalted now!

We see the glory of God in the Incarnation:

1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Jesus is God and when we look at Jesus we see the Father. God in the flesh was the visible manifestation of the glory of God. Jesus is the perfect man. He perfectly lived a life that glorified God.

He destroyed the devil

Hebrews 2:14-15 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Adam fell to the temptations of the devil in the Garden of Eden. Christ put on flesh and blood and as a man stood up to the temptations of the devil and did not give in to him. He defeated the devil as a man. He then destroyed him at the cross. Satan is a defeated foe because of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

He delivered us

Not only was the Incarnation the crushing blow to the devil, but through the fact that Jesus took part of flesh and blood, he can deliver us. *Hebrews 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* He knows what it is to be a man. He was

tempted but he did not sin. He knows what it feels like to be tempted and he took all our sins to the cross. He can deliver anyone who will call upon his name and trust in him to be saved.

Won't you trust in Jesus today?