

### The Birth of the Mormon Jesus vs. the Birth of the Biblical Jesus

Most Mormons today are unaware of what their church; *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* teaches in regards to the way Jesus Christ was brought into this world. It is fair to say that most garden variety Mormon missionaries that come to your door have probably *not explored the official LDS doctrine* of the manner in which Jesus was conceived.

Beginning with Brigham Young, the LDS Church has taught that **God the Father had sexual relations with the Virgin Mary to beget Jesus!** However offensive it sounds, this is, the *official doctrine* of the Mormon Church. I use the term "official doctrine" because every LDS **General Authority** that has addressed the subject has consistently taught it. The *General Authorities* of the LDS Church include the President/Prophet and the LDS apostles. In point of fact, **this doctrine has never been denied by any General Authority of the LDS Church!**

To try to avoid decidedly anti-biblical and pagan doctrine, some not all, LDS apologists and BYU professors typically claim that this is merely *19th century speculation* (e.g., LDS teacher, Stephen Robinson). However, as we will clearly demonstrate, this is not the case. First of all, the **majority** of the statements made by the **General Authorities are in the 20th century!** However, other current LDS apologists embrace the doctrine.

It should also be pointed out: **Mormon apologists and BYU professors are not General Authorities-- thus they do not determine doctrine for the LDS Church.** Therefore what they assert, is in itself, mere speculation and commentary, and hence **not official**. For that reason, this examination is confined solely to the statements of the *General Authorities* and official LDS Church publications, which are distributed to the LDS people.

#### 19th Century Teaching

Second President, and Prophet of LDS Church, **Brigham Young:**

When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. **He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost.** And who is the Father? He is the first of the human family; and when he took a tabernacle [body], it was begotten by *his Father* in heaven, **after the same manner** as the tabernacles of Cain, Abel and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve. . . . (*Journal of Discourses (hereafter:JD)*, 1:50; emphasis added).

Young is unambiguous: Jesus **was not** begotten by the Holy Ghost. Notice that he says Jesus was begotten **"after the same manner as the tabernacles"** of Cain and Abel. And how are the tabernacles, that is, bodies, of Cain and Abel and the rest of humanity begotten? Young explains further:

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The birth of the Savior was as natural as are the births of our children; it was the result of natural action. He partook of flesh and blood--was begotten of his Father, as **we were** of our fathers. . . . (JD, 8:115).

When the time came that His first-born, the Savior, should come into the world and take a tabernacle, the **Father came Himself and favoured that spirit with a tabernacle instead of letting any other man do it.** . . .(JD, 4:218; emphasis added).

In LDS theology, **we were all spirit children** procreated by sexual relations between the Father and His wives in heaven before coming to earth. After which we were then sent to earth to receive bodies. However, the Mormons assert, Jesus was not only the **firstborn spirit child**, (His brother Lucifer being the second) but He was also the only **physical offspring** on earth, of Mary and God the Father. This is why Mormons refer to Jesus as "the Only Begotten **in the flesh.**"

Even more absurd, other LDS General Authorities taught that **God the Father was actually married to Mary!**

LDS Apostle **Orson Pratt:**

It was the personage of the **Father who begat the body of Jesus;** and for this reason Jesus is called the Only-Begotten of the Father; that is, *the only one in this world whose fleshly body was begotten by the Father.* There were millions of sons and daughters whom He begat before the foundation of the world, but they were spirits, and not bodies of flesh and bones; **whereas both the spirit and body of Jesus were begotten by the Father...** The fleshly body of Jesus required a Mother as well as a Father. Therefore, the Father and Mother of Jesus, according to the flesh, must have been **associated together in the capacity of Husband and Wife; hence the Virgin Mary must have been, for the time being, the lawful wife of God the Father.** . . .

He had a lawful right to over- shadow the Virgin Mary **in the capacity of a husband, and beget a Son,** although she was espoused to another; for the law which He gave to govern men and women **was not intended to govern Himself, or to prescribe rules for his own conduct.** It was also lawful in Him, **after having thus dealt with Mary,** to give Mary to Joseph her espoused husband. Whether God the Father gave Mary to Joseph for time only, or for time and eternity, we are not informed. Inasmuch as **God was the first husband to her,** it may be that He only gave her to be the wife of Joseph while in this mortal state, and that He intended after the resurrection **to again take her as one of his own wives to raise up immortal spirits in eternity** (Orson Pratt, *The Seer*, 158; emphasis added).

LDS Apostle **Heber Kimball**:

I will say that I was naturally begotten; so was my father, and also my Saviour Jesus Christ. According to the Scriptures, **he is the first begotten of his father in the flesh, and there was nothing unnatural about it**" (JD, 8:211; emphasis added).

**Nothing unnatural about it?!** Kimball says Jesus was begotten **just as he was: in the flesh!** Is this not what Brigham Young and Orson Pratt taught?! But what about present-day Mormonism? Do they now repudiate the clear teachings of former leaders? Of course, this would make Young and other LDS leaders, *false teachers*. If so, then the entire LDS Church fell into apostasy deviating from their own prophets and *apostles*. Or, is it as BYU professors assert: "*only 19th century speculation?*" Again, the assertions made by BYU professors are only speculation and commentary, they do not **speak for or determine the official doctrine of the Church. They are not General Authorities.**

**20th Century**

In analyzing the official LDS position on the paternity of Jesus Christ, we find that the majority of the **statements** made by the *General Authorities* and publications printed by the LDS Church on this teaching; **were made in the 20th century!** Hence, it is complete error to assert that this doctrine is **simply 19th century speculation.**

LDS Apostle and scholar, **James E. Talmage**:

The relationship of the Christ to the Eternal Father **has been set forth in such plainness** that I do not think any wayfaring man amongst us can fail to understand. We recognize in Jesus Christ the Son of the Eternal Father, **both in spirit and in body.** There is no other meaning to attach to that expression, as used by the Eternal Father Himself--"Mine Only Begotten Son." Christ combined within His own person and nature the attributes of His mortal mother, and just as truly the attributes of **His immortal Sire...** This simplicity of doctrine has **shocked many**, but the truth is frequently shocking just because of its simplicity and consequent grandeur (*Conference Report*, April 1915, 121; emphasis added).

Please note, Talmage refers to the Father as Jesus' "**immortal Sire.**" Talmage frequently uses the title "Immortal Sire" in his writings:

Born of a mortal mother He inherited the capacity to die; **begotten by an immortal Sire** He possessed as a heritage the power to withstand death. . . . (*Jesus the Christ*, ch. 3, 22; emphasis added).

A natural effect of His immortal origin, as the earth-born Son of an immortal Sire, was that He was immune to death except as He surrendered thereto (*ibid.*, ch. 25, 418-19).

Tenth President of the LDS Church, **Joseph Fielding Smith:**

**THE FIRSTBORN.** Our Father in heaven is the Father of Jesus Christ, both in the spirit and in the flesh. . . . **CHRIST NOT BEGOTTEN OF THE HOLY GHOST.** I believe firmly that Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten Son of God in the flesh. He taught this doctrine to his disciples. He did not teach them that He was the Son of the Holy Ghost, but the Son of the Father... Christ was begotten of God. **He was not born without the aid of Man, and that Man was God!"** (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:18; emphasis added; caps. theirs).

LDS Apostle, scholar and prolific writer, **Bruce R. McConkie:**

These name-titles all signify that our Lord is the only **Son of the Father in the flesh**. Each of the words is to be **understood literally**. Only means *only*; Begotten means *begotten*; and Son means *son*. Christ was begotten by an Immortal Father **in the same way that mortal men are begotten by mortal fathers** (*Mormon Doctrine*, 546-47; emphasis added).

**Begotten in the same way as mortal men?** In this same book McConkie declares:

God the Father is a perfected, glorified holy Man, an immortal Personage. And Christ was born into the world as the literal Son of this Holy Being; he was born in the same personal, real, and literal sense that any mortal son is born to a mortal father. There is nothing figurative about his paternity; he was begotten, conceived and born in the normal and natural course of events, for he is the Son of God, and that designation means what it says (742).

In his book: **The Mortal Messiah**, McConkie utilizes the same term Talmage uses: **"Sire."** McConkie writes:

She [Mary] shall conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and **God himself shall be the sire**. It is his Son of whom Gabriel is speaking. A son is begotten by a father: whether on earth or in heaven it is the same (1:319; emphasis added).

### **Family Home Evenings:**

The Mormon Church also provides publications designed for the family. One such publication is: **Family Home Evenings**, copyrighted by the *Corporation President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. This booklet clearly represents the LDS view:

We must come down to the simple fact that God Almighty was the Father of His Son Jesus Christ. Mary, the virgin girl, who had never known mortal man, was his mother. **God by her begot his Son Jesus Christ**, and he was born into the world with power and intelligence like that of His Father... Now, my little friends, I will repeat again in words as simple as I can, and **you talk to your parents about it**, that God, the Eternal Father, is **literally** the father of Jesus Christ (125-126; 1972 ed. emphasis added).

Following this statement there is some pictorial artwork to help explain this doctrine to children. A figure of a man is drawn and under the man the title "**Daddy**" is placed and next to him a drawing of a woman with the title "**Mommy**" underneath. In between the figures "Daddy" and "Mommy" there is a + sign. From these two figures, pointing down, there are two arrows pointing to a drawing of a child with the title "**You**" underneath. *Obviously, this diagram teaches children how they are conceived.* Right below this diagram, there is another drawing. It's the *same diagram* but the titles are changed. The title "**Our Heavenly Father**" is in place of the "Daddy" and the title "**Mary**" are in place of the "Mommy." And guess who is in the place of the child figure titled "**You?**"----you got it-- "**Jesus.**"

### **Encyclopedia of Mormonism:**

This four-volume set is a treasure for Mormons. It contains numerous statements and teachings from LDS scholars and *General Authorities*. And it is sold in most LDS bookstores.

For the Latter-day Saints, the paternity of Jesus is not obscure. He was the **literal, biological son of an immortal, tangible Father and Mary, a mortal woman...** Jesus is the only person born who deserves the title "the Only Begotten Son of God. . . .(under the subject title: *Jesus Christ*, emphasis added).

Latter-day Saints recognize Jesus as literally the **Only Begotten Son of God the Father in the flesh...** This title signifies that **Jesus' physical body was the offspring of a mortal mother and the eternal Father. . . .** It is LDS doctrine that Jesus Christ is the child of Mary and God the Father, "not in violation of natural law but in accordance with a higher manifestation thereof (ibid., emphasis added).

My primary reason for this rather lengthy list of citations is because of the simple fact: LDS doctrine **is not determined by LDS apologists or BYU professors** but by the *General Authorities* and "official" LDS

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Church publications. Again, this doctrine has been consistently taught by LDS *General Authorities*, and **has never been denied** by any *General Authority*.

So how does God the Father have physical relations with Mary? Answer: The Mormons teach: "**The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's**" (*Doctrine and Covenants*, sec. 130:22). However, Scripture pointedly refutes the Mormon position:

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 [lit. "**she was pregnant by the Holy Spirit**," *heurethe en gastri echousa ek pneumatos hagiou*] Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her public example, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in 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 (Matt. 1:18-20).

Mormons have *paganized* **the historic biblical doctrine of the Virgin Birth**. To demonstrate that the LDS Church, has in fact, taught this doctrine is an extraordinarily effective way to show the Mormons that they are not in the **true Church of Jesus Christ**. Only God can open the eyes of the Mormon people to see the truth.