

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

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CONCEPTION

OF THE
MAN-SAVIOR

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THE CONCEPTION OF THE MAN-SAVIOR

The forerunner of the Man-Savior, John the Baptist, was not conceived by his parents' natural strength, for they were overage. Concerning this, [Luke 1:7](#) says, "And they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in age." This was sovereign of the Lord. Thus they afforded God an opportunity to initiate His gospel, not by man's natural strength but by His divine act.

BY THE DIVINE POWER IN A MIRACULOUS WAY

Zachariah was a priest of the course of Abijah. This was the eighth of the twenty-four courses of priestly service ordained by David ([1 Chron. 24:10](#)). "And it came about, that while he served as priest in the order of his course before God, according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot was to enter into the temple of the Lord and burn incense" ([Luke 1:8-9](#)). Zachariah burned the incense on the incense altar within the Holy Place

(Luke 1:11; Exo. 30:6-8; 1 Sam. 2:28; 1 Chron. 23:13; 2 Chron. 29:11).

Luke 1:10 says, “And all the multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of the burning of incense.” The prayer of God’s people affords Him a way to carry out His plan.

According to Luke 1:11 and 12, an angel of the Lord appeared to Zachariah. The angel said to him, “Do not fear, Zachariah, because your petition was heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John” (Luke 1:13). This indicates that Zachariah had prayed for his wife to bear him a son. This also indicates that our prayer carries out God’s operation. Moreover, it implies that our natural strength must be brought to an end so that God’s operation may begin by His divine act. This was revealed in the case of Abraham and Sarah (Gen. 17:15-19) and in the case of Hannah (1 Sam. 1:5-20).

God came in to cause Zachariah and Elizabeth to bring forth a child in a miraculous way. Hence, the conception of John the Baptist was by the divine power in a miraculous way (Luke 1:19-20). In Old Testament times God did this in bringing forth both Isaac and Samuel. Now in the case of John the Baptist, born of parents

naturally unable to produce a child, God came in to enable them to have a son by His power.

In [Luke 1:13](#) we see that the child born to Zachariah and Elizabeth would be called John. The Greek word for John is *loannes*, meaning Jehovah is favorable, Jehovah shows grace, or Jehovah is the gracious Giver. This name is of Hebrew origin, Jochanan contracted into Johanan ([2 Kings 25:23](#); [1 Chron. 3:24](#); [2 Chron. 28:12](#)).

SEPARATED UNTO GOD AS A NAZARITE AND FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT FROM HIS MOTHER'S WOMB

[Luke 1:15](#) says concerning John the Baptist, “For he will be great before the Lord, and will by no means drink wine and strong drink; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.” The word here concerning not drinking wine or strong drink indicates that John was to be a Nazarite ([Num. 6:1-4](#)). Instead of drinking wine, he would be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit replaces the wine ([Eph. 5:18](#)).

John the Baptist was born a priest, one chosen by God. But this chosen priest of God became a Nazarite in addition. According to [chapter six of Numbers](#), a Nazarite is not a chosen one; rather,

a Nazarite is a volunteer. Therefore, John the Baptist had a dual status. On the one hand, as a priest he was chosen by God; on the other hand, as a Nazarite he was a volunteer. John volunteered himself to serve God.

Luke 1:15 says that John was to be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb. The Holy Spirit is the first divine title ascribed to the Spirit of God in the New Testament. Such a title was not used in the Old Testament. (In Psa. 51:11 and Isa. 63:10-11 “the Holy Spirit” should be translated “the Spirit of holiness.”) It was at this time, for the initiation of the gospel of God, to prepare the way for the Savior's coming and to prepare a human body for Him, that this divine title of God's Spirit was used. The preparing of the way for the Savior's coming required that His forerunner be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, so that he could separate the people unto God from all things other than God, making them holy unto Him for His purpose. The preparing of a human body for the Savior required that the Holy Spirit impart the divine nature into humanity, making man holy for the carrying out of God's plan of redemption.

John the Baptist was the first one in the New

Testament who was filled with the Holy Spirit. Because he was filled with the Holy Spirit he could fulfill the words spoken concerning him in Luke 1:16-17: “And many of the sons of Israel he will turn to the Lord their God. And he will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of fathers to children, and the disobedient to the prudence of the righteous, to prepare for the Lord a people made ready.” This was the fulfillment of Malachi 4:5. That verse prophesied that Elijah would come. It was said of John the Baptist that he would go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah. Therefore, in a sense, John may be considered “Elijah, who is about to come” (Matt. 11:14). However, the prophecy of Malachi 4:5 will actually be fulfilled in the great tribulation, when the real Elijah, one of the two witnesses, will come to strengthen God’s people (Rev. 11:3-12).

THE CONCEPTION OF THE MAN-SAVIOR

The Man-Savior was conceived of the Holy Spirit with the divine essence (Luke 1:35) in a human virgin with the human essence (vv. 27-28, 31). In Luke 1:26-56 we have record of His conception.

Verses 26 and 27 say, “Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David; and the name of the virgin was Mary.” Galilee was a region without fame, and Nazareth was a city people despised (John 7:52; 1:46). The virgin Mary lived in a despised city of a region without fame, but she was a descendant of the royal family of King David (Luke 1:31-32; Matt. 1:16).

According to Luke 1:28-30, the angel told Mary that she was a favored one, one endued with grace, and that she had found favor, grace, with God.

Then in verse 31 the angel Gabriel went on to say, “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus.” “Jesus” is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word Joshua (Num. 13:16), which means Jehovah the Savior, or, the salvation of Jehovah. Hence, Jesus is not only a Man but Jehovah, and not only Jehovah, but Jehovah becoming our salvation. Thus, He is our Savior. He is our Joshua bringing us into rest (Heb. 4:8; Matt. 11:28-29), which is Himself as the good land to us.

In Luke 1:35 we see clearly that the Man-Savior was conceived of the Holy Spirit: “The

Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; wherefore also the holy thing which is born will be called, Son of God.” As the cloud overshadowed the Mount of Transfiguration ([Matt. 17:5](#)) and the tabernacle ([Exo. 40:34, 38](#)), the power of the Most High would overshadow Mary. It seems that, according to this verse, the Holy Spirit would be only upon Mary as the power for her to conceive the Holy Child. However, [Matthew 1:18](#) and [20](#) tell us that Mary “was found having in womb out of the Holy Spirit” (lit.), and “the thing begotten (generated) in her is out of the Holy Spirit” (lit.). This indicates that the divine essence out of the Holy Spirit had been generated in Mary’s womb before she delivered the Child Jesus. Such a conception of the Holy Spirit in the human virgin, accomplished with both the divine and the human essences, constitutes a mingling of the divine nature with the human nature, producing a God-man, one who is both the complete God and perfect Man, possessing the divine nature and the human nature distinctively, without a third nature being produced. This is the most wonderful and most excellent Person of Jesus—Jehovah the Savior.

The conception of John the Baptist and that

of Jesus the Savior are strikingly different in essence. The conception of John the Baptist was God's miracle, accomplished with the overage human essence, merely by the divine power, without the divine essence being involved, thus bringing forth a mere man who was only filled with the Spirit of God ([Luke 1:15](#)) but lacked the nature of God. The conception of the Savior was God's incarnation ([John 1:14](#)), constituted not only by the divine power, but also of the divine essence added to the human essence, hence producing the God-man of two natures—divinity and humanity. Through this, God joined Himself to humanity that He might be manifested in the flesh ([1 Tim. 3:16](#)) and might be a Man-Savior ([Luke 2:11](#)).

We have emphasized strongly that the Man-Savior was conceived of the Holy Spirit with the divine essence in a human virgin with the human essence. Here we see the two sources of the Lord's two essences. It is very clear that the conception of the Lord Jesus involved two sources—the Holy Spirit and the human virgin—and two essences—the divine essence and the human essence.

The conception of the Man-Savior involved a mingling of the divine essence and the human

essence. Actually, any conception is a matter of mingling. With the conception of the Man-Savior the divine essence was not merely added to the human essence; on the contrary, the divine essence was mingled with the human essence.

In ancient times there was a debate regarding the word “mingling.” Some who did not understand the matter of the mingling of the divine essence with the human essence in the Person of Jesus Christ taught the heresy that this mingling means that Christ was not quite God nor quite man but a third thing with a third nature, something neither God nor man. What a great heresy this was!

Nevertheless, even though this word has been used wrongly, the Bible reveals the truth that Christ our Lord is the mingling of God with man. But this mingling did not cause Him to lose either the divine nature or the human nature, and it did not produce a third nature. Rather, in this mingling both the divine essence and the human essence remain distinguishable, and no third nature, no third essence, is produced.

We agree with the first definition of the word “mingle” given in Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary: “to combine or join (one thing with another, or two or more things together), especially so

that the original elements are distinguishable in the combination.” Hence, to mingle is to combine two or more things together so that the original elements remain distinguishable.

This is certainly the situation regarding the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was conceived of two essences, the divine and the human. Hence, He was a mingling of God and man. But both the divine essence and the human essence remain and are distinguishable. These essences are mingled in one Person without the producing of a third nature. The Lord possesses two natures, and in Him, each one is distinguishable. We need to be deeply impressed with this matter, for it is the basic element for our knowledge of the wonderful Person of the Lord Jesus.

BORN AS THE SON OF GOD AND A DESCENDANT OF DAVID

Because the Lord Jesus was conceived of God the Spirit, He is the Son of God. Concerning Him, Luke 1:32 says, “He will be great, and will be called Son of the Most High.” The Most High is a divine title. In Hebrew it is Elyon ([Gen. 14:18](#)), denoting the Supreme (God); hence, there is no article. Jesus will be great because He is the Son of the Most High, the Supreme God.

Luke 1:35 says that “the holy thing” born of Mary was to be called the Son of God. Because the conceiving was of the Holy Spirit, what was born of this conception was a holy thing, something intrinsically holy. This is Jesus our Savior.

The second part of 1:32 says concerning the Man-Savior, “The Lord God will give to Him the throne of David His father.” Jesus, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a human virgin, will be the Son of the Most High God, and at the same time He will be the Son of a highly ranked man, David the king (Matt. 1:1; 22:45). His status is both divine and human.

Luke 1:33 goes on to say, “And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall not be an end.” The preceding verse unveils the family of Jesus, and this verse unveils His kingdom. Jesus will have the house of Jacob—the nation of Israel—as the center of His reign (Acts 1:6; 15:16), through which He will rule over the entire world as His kingdom (Rev. 11:15). He will rule the world first in the millennium (Rev. 20:4, 6) and then in the new heaven and new earth for eternity (Rev. 22:3, 5).

In the brief word spoken to Mary by the angel there is a clear revelation that the One who was to be born of her is both God and man. Because

He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, He is the Son of God. Because He was also conceived in the human virgin, He is the Son of Man. On the divine side, He is the Son of God; on the human side, He is the Son of Man. According to the human side, He was a descendant of David to inherit the throne of David and to reign over the house of Jacob forever in His everlasting kingdom.

Because the Lord Jesus is both the Son of God and the Son of Man, sometimes He indicated to others that He is the Son of God, and at other times, that He is the Son of Man. Because He was conceived of two essences—the divine and the human—He is both the Son of God and the Son of Man.

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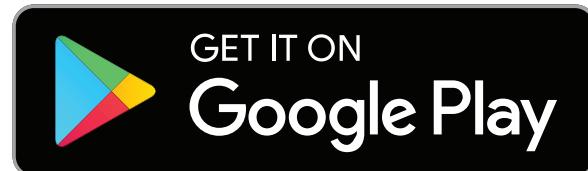
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