

## Is This not Joseph's Son?

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We have perceived from the story of Elizabeth's pregnancy as recorded by Luke that a baby is affected emotionally in the mother's womb. This is how John, the baptist, received a holy spirit. Since then I have read one book, along with other periodicals and heard many references to a mother's diet and her emotional trauma as to how all of it affects the baby she carries. Knowing these things, I can see the implications in scripture, that the same happened to the Son of God, as the son of man, and which has happened to every human on earth.

**Luke 1: 26-27:** *26. And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27. To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.* It was in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy (verse 24) when Mary was visited by Gabriel.

**Luke 1:38-40:** *38. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. 39. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah; 40. And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.* Imagine Mary's excitement when she heard from the angel that her cousin Elizabeth, in her old age, was having a son, which was miracle of God. So she immediately left to visit. **Luke 1:56:** *And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.*

Matthew picks up the story three months into Mary's pregnancy: **Matthew 1:18-19:** *18 This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. 19 Her husband Joseph, being an upright man and wanting to spare her disgrace, decided to divorce her informally.* (Young's Literal Bible) Think about this - Mary comes back from her visit, showing from being pregnant, and telling what seems to be a fantastic story. No doubt, her first explanation would have been to her parents, who probably did not believe her. Obviously, Joseph did not believe her. Visualize the stress, the anxiety and the rejection Mary must have felt at that time? Her emotional anxiety was being impressed upon her baby in the same manner we were impressed with our emotional situations, and which is buried in our subconscious, and influences how we act today.

I have viewed dozens of pictures, statues and paintings of baby Jesus, some sitting on his mother's lap, with a pleasant countenance and a halo around his head, as if he were the perfect, trouble free child. Now, I can see Jesus' as a child more like me - playing with his friends, being teased at times, even ridiculed, and coming to his mother with tears in his eyes, asking questions. I can even see him being a brat at times, or, even getting into scraps with friends because of the teasing, even like we all have done too.

There does not seem to be recorded anything about the direct effects on Jesus, but it is certainly implied by what others thought: **Mark 6:2-3:** *2. And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? 3. Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Judah, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.* Were the people offended because Jesus was healing others? Perhaps they did not like what he was teaching. Most likely, they all knew the story of his birth, which now made him the center of gossip. Surely this caused some teasing in his childhood too, and

affected how some thought of him during his ministry. They must have asked, "How can God use a person of such a questionable birth?" After all, the people were taught that the cripple and blind were being punished by God because of his or his parent's sins (Jn 9:1-2).

*God sent forth his son, made of a woman* (Gal 4:4): There is no Greek word for "birth" in this phrase, as some translations have stated it. The Greek word *ginomai* (1096), basic meaning 'to become', brings a much broader view to the statement. To be made of a woman not only includes birth and the emotions received in the womb, but also the training of his parents while he was a child. The last part of Galatians 4:4 illustrates the point: *made under the law*. Joseph and Mary were devout Jews who kept the letter of the law, and must have brought up all their children to do the same. **Luke 2:22, 39:** *22. And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;... 39. And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.* There were certain sacrifices that had to be made for Mary's purification (cf Lev 12:1-4), and Jesus, being born a male Jew, was circumcised the eighth day.

**Luke 4:16:** *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.* When Jesus began his ministry, he still attended the feasts, and went to the Temple on Sabbath days, though he knew that his visit to earth was to change the way man looked at all the law. The revelation of God through his only begotten Son is by the spiritual understanding of the law - and especially the cross as it reveals the Father's and Son's love for each of us.

**Luke 4:17-19:** *17. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 18. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* Jesus quoted Isaiah 61, and the 'spirit' of God that rested upon him is described as *the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord* (Isa 11:2). This appears to be his first sermon, and in his home church. What was their response? Is not this Joseph's son? They could not accept this person who they knew personally, and probably some played with him as children, knowing, but not understanding the circumstances of his birth. Also, Jesus' remarks must have sounded arrogant to them, to the point they became angry enough to attempt throwing him off a cliff.

**Isa 52:10:** *Yahweh has made bare His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.* (Hebrew Interlinear) The 'holy arm' is Christ (Isa 53:1; Jn 12:38), and the 'ends of the earth' are the Gentiles, or the people of the nations to where all God's people are scattered (Jer 16:19). Christ was physically and spiritually laid bare his whole life, during his ministry and at the cross. From the foregoing discussion of his earthly birth can be interpolated the wounds he received in the womb, and continued to receive through out his life on this earth, much the same as our experience. The parable of the prodigal reveals not only the fact of humanity leaving our heavenly Father's house, but how our elder brother felt about us before his experience in human form, and yet, he totally emptied himself and took the form of those who are servants to sin (Phil 2:6-8). And, in another parable about forgiveness, our debt was completely wiped out because we desired him (Mt 18:32), yet, we struggle with letting go of other's trespasses against us.

**Isa 52:14-15:** *14. Many have been astonished at you ; so corrupted was his image by man, and his form by the sons of men: 15. So shall he sprinkle (symbol for teach) many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.* (Hebrew Interlinear) No doubt, our understanding of God has been perverted. But God, in these

last days has spoken to us in a Son (Heb 1:2), which if we will daily think on the significance of the cross and what Christ has done, indeed, our mouths will be shut, and our *love yet more and more may abound in full knowledge* (Phil 1:9). Amen.