

# Why Believe in Christ's Virgin Birth?



**Dr. Andy Woods**

Senior Pastor – Sugar Land Bible Church

President – Chafer Theological Seminary

# Brian McLaren on the Virgin Birth

VIRGIN BIRTH NOT NECESSARILY LITERAL, ONLY A SYMBOL AGAINST PATRIARCHY,  
SAYS BRIAN MCLAREN – BY JOSHUA ARNOLD – DECEMBER 11, 2018

“science-defying miracle that proved something about Jesus...This approach never really worked for me. How can you use something you can’t prove—a virgin birth long ago—to prove something else—the unique identity of Jesus?” The Virgin Birth’s “greatest value isn’t in proving something, but in meaning something...I’m going to work directly with women for a change. I’m taking a step to overthrow the patriarchy.” Concerning the “virgin birth story” its “literal factuality” is “not the point.” The virgin birth is “about a profound rejection of violence.”



## Andy Stanley

ANDY STANLEY'S APPROACH TO THE VIRGIN BIRTH –  
DECEMBER 27, 2016 GERALD HARRIS

**“...but if somebody can predict their own death and resurrection, I’m not all that concerned about how they got into the world, because the whole resurrection thing is so amazing and, in fact, you should know this. Christianity does not hinge on the truth or even the stories about the birth of Jesus, it really hinges on the resurrection of Jesus.”**





# Why the Virgin Birth?

- ❖ To fulfill OT prophecy
- ❖ To emphasize Christ's humanity and deity
- ❖ To emphasize Christ's eternality
- ❖ To maintain Christ's sinlessness
- ❖ To protect the bodily atonement
- ❖ To circumvent the curse of Jeconiah
- ❖ To vindicate the NT





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## Genesis 3:15

“And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”



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## Isaiah 7:13-14

“Then he said, “Listen now, O house of David! Is it too slight a thing for you to try the patience of men, that you will try the patience of my God as well? <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin [almah] will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”



# Three Arguments Against the Virgin Birth

(Isa. 7:13-14)

1. The Hebrew word is *Betulah* and not *Almah* (*Joel 1:8*)!
2. The Hebrew word *Almah* does not mean virgin!
3. No relevance to Isaiah's day!



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# To Fulfill Old Testament Prophecy

## ■ *Almah*

- ◆ OT uses (Gen 24:43; Exod 2:8; Ps 68:25; Song of Solomon 1:3; 6:8; Prov 30:18-19)
- ◆ LXX
- ◆ Matthew 1:23



## Matthew 1:23

“Behold, the virgin virgin [parthenos] shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which translated means, ‘God with us’.”



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# ISAIAH 7 AND 8 DIFFERENCES

## ISAIAH 7

**Immanuel**

**Blessing**

**Born to a virgin**

**Age 12**

**Assyrian judgment upon  
Judah**



## ISAIAH 8

**Maher-shalal-hash-baz**

**Judgment**

**Born to Isaiah's wife**

**Age 1-2**

**Assyrian judgment upon Syria  
and Israel**



# Isaiah 7:13-14

## ■ Ahaz' Day?

- ◆ Isaiah 53 in Acts 8:31-35
- ◆ Sign (Isa 7:14)
- ◆ Two threats (Isa. 7:1-2)
  - ◆ *Shear Jashub* (Isa. 7:3)
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## Isaiah 7:1-2

“<sup>1</sup> Now it came about in the days of Ahaz, the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Aram and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but could not conquer it. <sup>2</sup> When it was reported to the house of David, saying, “The Arameans have camped in Ephraim,” his heart and the hearts of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake with the wind.”



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## Isaiah 7:9–17

<sup>9</sup> “... and the head of Ephraim is Samaria and the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah. If **you [s]** will not believe, **you [s]** surely shall not last.”” <sup>10</sup> Then the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup> “Ask a sign for **yourself [s]** from the Lord your God; make it deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord!” <sup>13</sup> Then he said, “Listen now, O house of David! Is it too slight a thing for **you [pl]** to try the patience of men, that **you [pl]** will try the patience of my God as well? <sup>14</sup> “Therefore the Lord Himself will give **you [pl]** a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will...



## Isaiah 7:9–17

... call His name Immanuel. <sup>15</sup> “He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows enough to refuse evil and choose good. <sup>16</sup> “For before the boy will know enough to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you [s] dread will be forsaken. <sup>17</sup> “The Lord will bring on you [s], on your people, and on your father’s house such days as have never come since the day that Ephraim separated from Judah, the king of Assyria.”



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## Isaiah 9:6-7

“<sup>6</sup> For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.<sup>7</sup> There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.”



# Isaiah 11:2

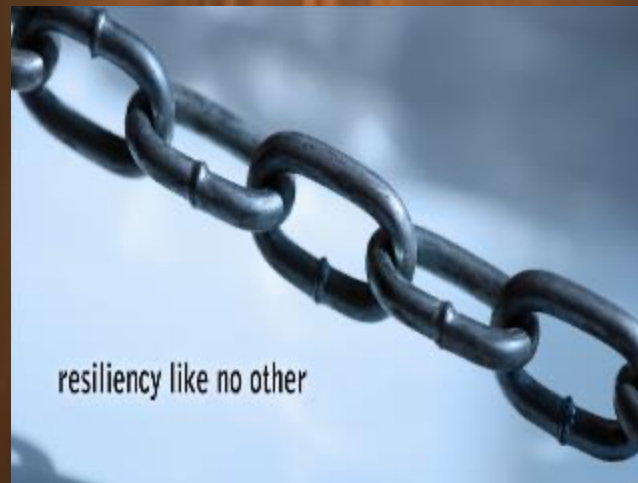
“The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.”





## John 10:35

“If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came  
**(and the Scripture cannot be broken).**”





# Why the Virgin Birth?

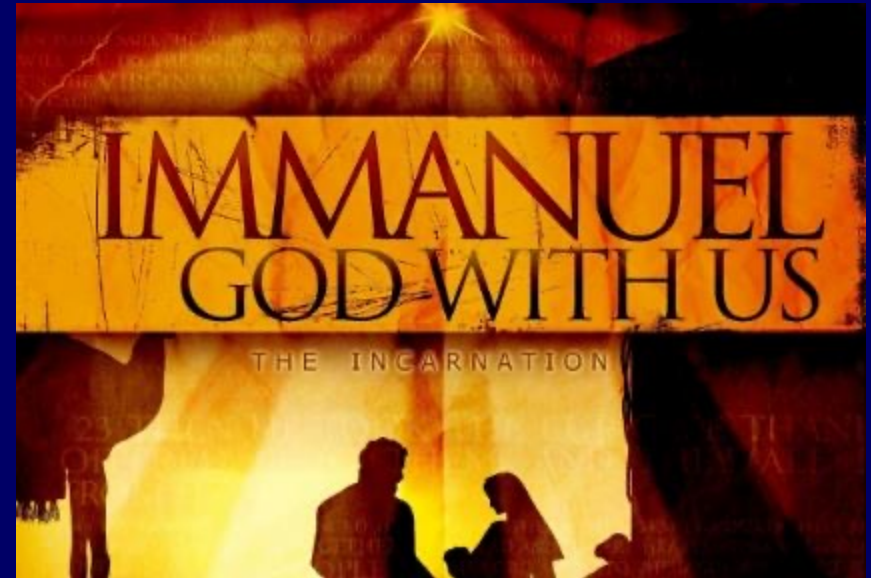
- ❖ To fulfill OT prophecy
- ❖ **To emphasize Christ's humanity and deity**
- ❖ To emphasize Christ's eternality
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- ❖ To vindicate the NT



# An Important Doctrine

## עִמָּנוּאֵל

- Incarnation
- Hypostatic Union
- Unique God-Man
- 100% God
- 100% Man



# Christ's Human Experiences

- Labor (Mark 6:3)
- Distress (Luke 22:44)
- Being troubled (John 12:27)
- Thirst (John 19:28)
- Hunger (Matt 4:2)
- Fatigue (John 4:6)
- Sadness (John 11:35)
- Lack of understanding (Matt 24:36)
- Temptation (Luke 4:1-13; Heb. 4:15)



## Luke 2:52

“And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”



## John 1:1, 14

“<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten [monogenēs] from the Father, full of grace and truth.”



# To Emphasize Christ's Humanity and Deity

- Humanity – Luke 2:52
- Deity – John 1:1, 14
- Hypostatic Union
- Virgin birth emphasizes the unique God/Man
  - ◆ Born naturally of a woman: humanity
  - ◆ Born supernaturally of a virgin: deity



## Galatians 4:4

“But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, *born of a woman*, born under the Law.”







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# To Emphasize Christ's Eternality

- Christ's preexistence (John 8:56-59)
- Nicene Creed
- Virgin birth = no beginning point

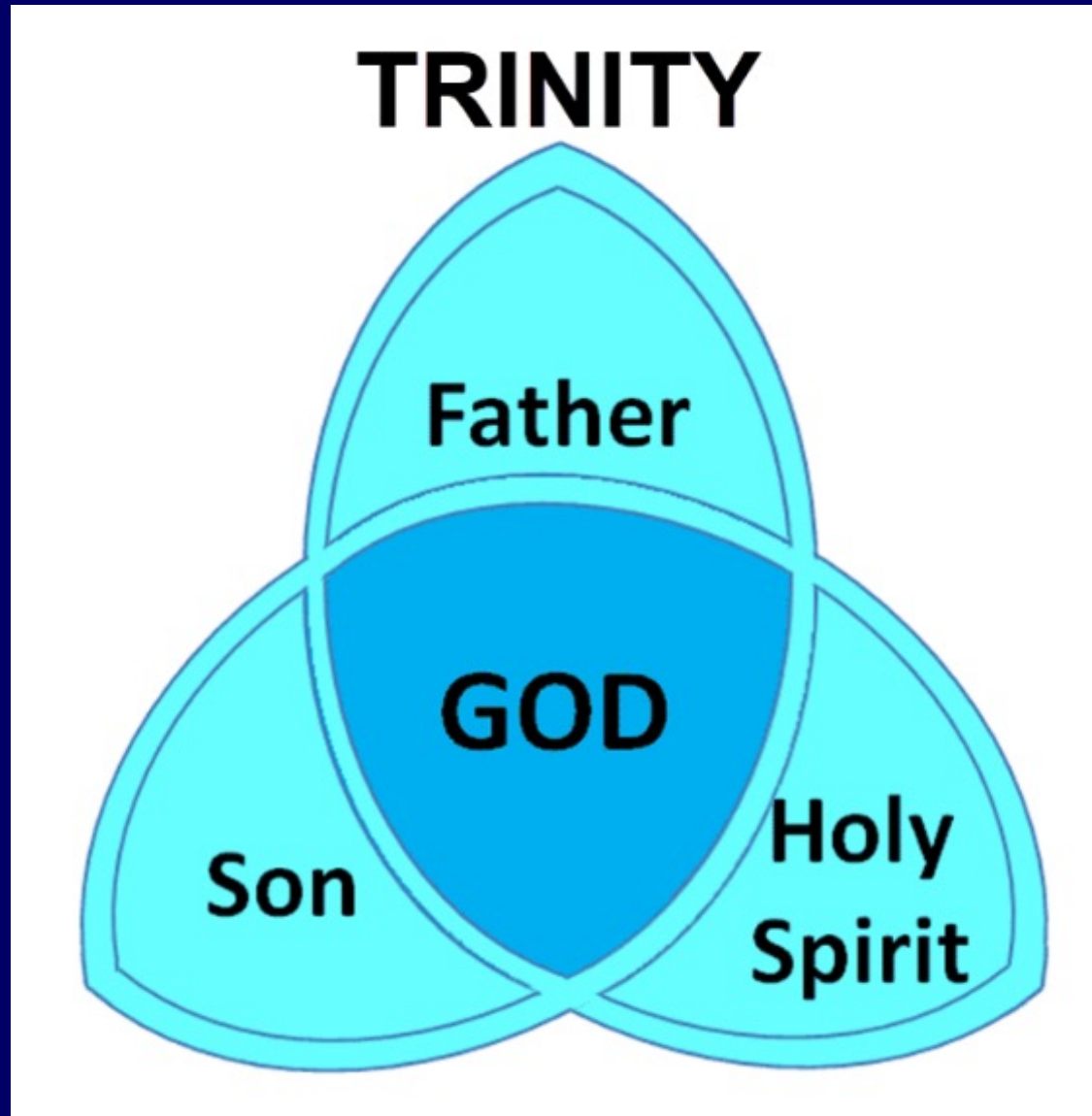


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# To Emphasize Christ's Eternality



# Lewis Sperry Chafer



“The eternity of God is involved in His self-existence. He is uncaused. Therefore, He must be without beginning. He transcends the whole chain of causes and effects. Therefore, He can never cease to be.”

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# Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; **BEGOTTEN, NOT MADE**, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## John 1:14

“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten [*monogenēs*] from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

μονογενής

monogenēs / one and only; only





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# To Maintain Christ's Sinlessness

- Christ's perfection (John 8:46; 1 John 2:1)
- Humanity's sin nature (Ps 51:5) passed down through the man (Rom 5:12)
- Virgin birth = Christ had no biological father



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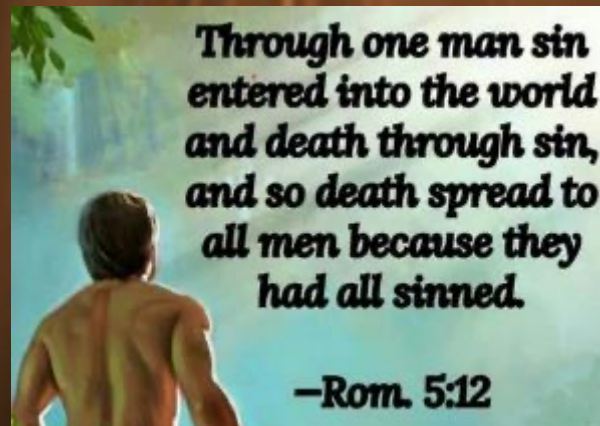
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## Romans 5:12

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—.”



## Genesis 8:21

The Lord smelled the soothing aroma; and the Lord said to Himself, “I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done.[emphasis mine].



## Jeremiah 17:9

“The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?.”





## Mark 7:20–23

<sup>20</sup> And He was saying, “That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. <sup>21</sup> “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, <sup>22</sup> deeds of coveting *and* wickedness, *as well as* deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride *and* foolishness. <sup>23</sup> “All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”



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# To Protect the Bodily Atonement

- Eternal God must pay the eternal penalty for man's sin (Rom 6:23)
- A perfect substitute must pay the penalty for man's sin (Exod. 12:5; 1 Pet 1:19)



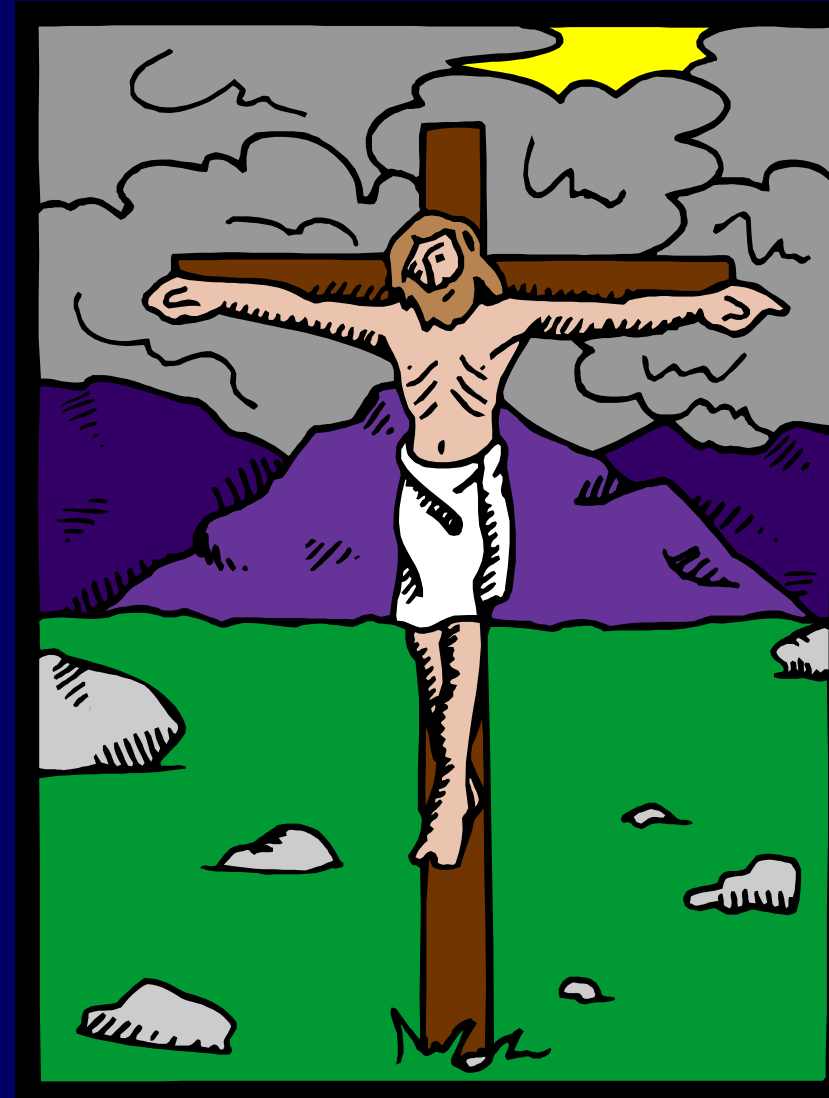
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# To Pay the Penalty for Man's Sin

- Rom. 6:23
- Gen. 2:17
- Gen. 3:21
- Hebrews 2:9



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## Exodus 12:5

“Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.” (cf. 1 Pet 1:19)







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# To Circumvent Jeconiah's Curse

- Jeremiah 22:30
- Matthew 1:12
- Virgin birth = Christ not an actual descendant of Jeconiah
- Luke 3:31



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## Jesus Genealogy According to Matthew

- |                  |                     |                   |
|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Abraham       | 15. Solomon         | 29. Shealtiel     |
| 2. Isaac         | 16. Rehoboam        | 30. Zerubbabel    |
| 3. Jacob         | 17. Abijah          | 31. Abiud         |
| 4. Judah         | 18. Asa             | 32. Eliakim       |
| 5. Perez         | 19. Jehosaphat      | 33. Azor          |
| 6. Hezron        | 20. Jehoram         | 34. Zadok         |
| 7. Ram           | 21. Uzziah          | 35. Achim         |
| 8. Amminadab     | 22. Jotham          | 36. Eliud         |
| 9. Nahshon       | 23. Ahaz            | 37. Eleazar       |
| 10. Salmon       | 24. Hezekiah.       | 38. Matthan       |
| 11. Boaz         | 25. Manasseh        | 39. Jacob         |
| 12. Obed         | 26. Amon            | 40. <b>Joseph</b> |
| 13. Jesse        | 27. Josiah          | 41. <b>Jesus</b>  |
| 14. <b>David</b> | 28. <b>Jeconiah</b> |                   |

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## 2 Samuel 7:12-16

“<sup>12</sup> When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup> He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup> I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the . . .

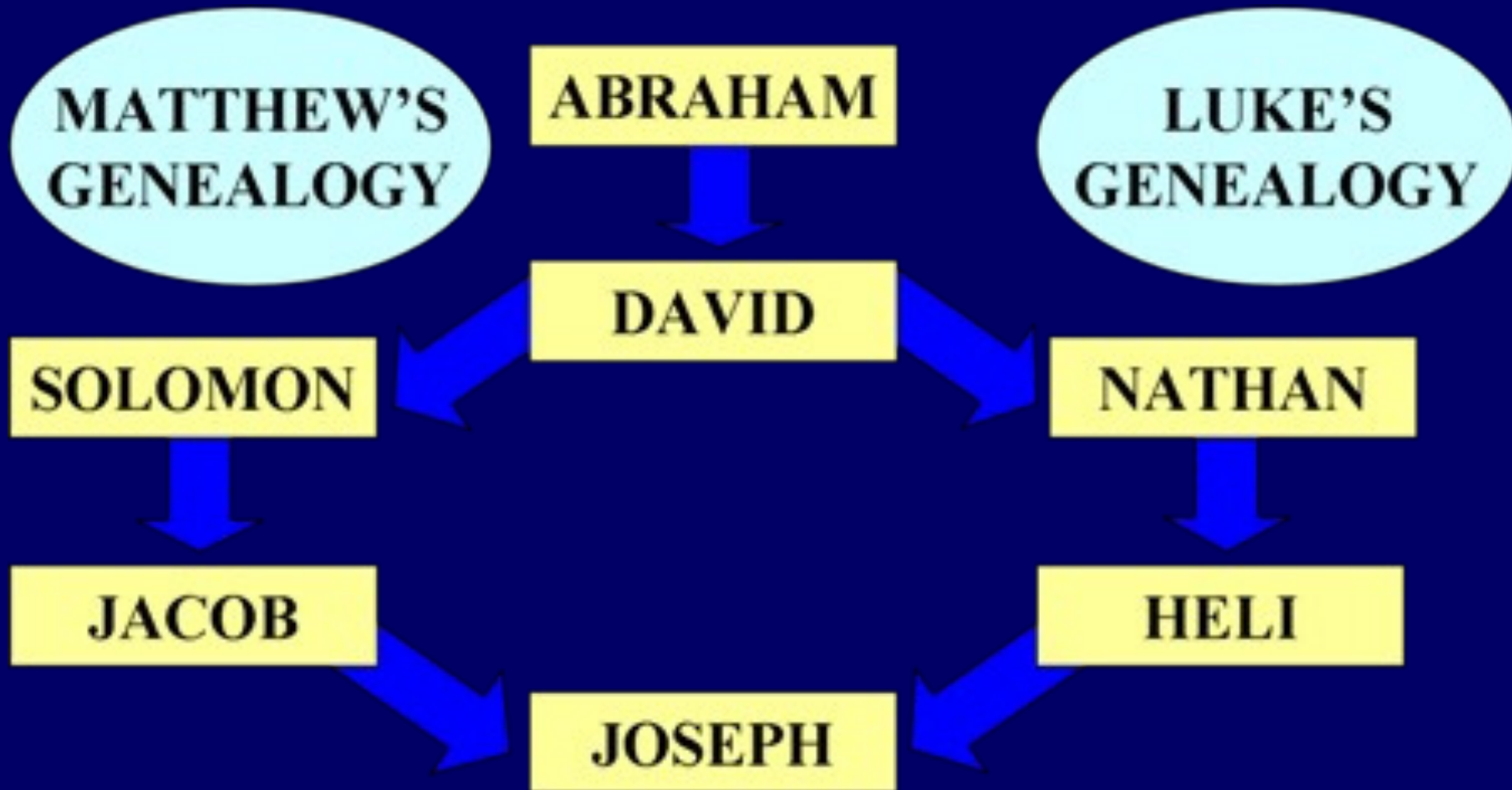


## 2 Samuel 7:12-16

...sons of men, <sup>15</sup> but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took *it* away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. <sup>16</sup> Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever. <sup>17</sup> In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.”



# To Circumvent Jeconiah's Curse





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# To Vindicate the NT

- Matthew 1:18-25
- Luke 1:26-35; 2:1-19
- John 8:41



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## Andy Stanley

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“Maybe the thought is that they had to come up with some myth about the birth of Jesus to give him street cred later on... It is interesting because Matthew gives us a version of the birth of Jesus. Luke does, but Mark and John don't even mention it; and a lot has been made of that.”

Conclusion





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<sup>24</sup> The LORD bless you, and keep you; <sup>25</sup> The LORD make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you; <sup>26</sup> The LORD lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.

Numbers 6:24–26 (NASB95)