

MOTHERHOOD MIRACLES

Matthew 1:18-23

By Raymond White

For women without children, there is a legitimate concern about the biological clock. It was no less a concern to the women of the Bible, more of a concern for them, in fact, because today's women can at least try fertility clinics. Back then, there was no such thing, and for a childless woman of advanced age, having a baby was impossible — unless God intervened.

God created the world. Then he created and resurrected Jesus. That God creates and recreates life by great supernatural means impresses us, but we ought to also be impressed when God uses the more ordinary means to create life,. And if a pregnancy is impossible but happens anyway, then we can, so much the more, believe that that baby, that miraculous baby, came from God. And we can then believe that perhaps all babies come from God.

That is what we see in these supernatural births in the Bible. They simply could not have happened if God had not taken personal charge.

So, for your reading pleasure, here are the very special moms and their very special children of the Bible.

[1] THE BIRTH OF ISAAC

Genesis 18:11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. *:14* Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. *21:3* And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

Sarah was an old woman that couldn't have children and God made her an outrageous promise that she would have a son. God was certainly sure of himself. Not only did he promise the impossible, he named the gender, "a son," and that without ultrasound.

The final verse points out that this child of promise can only be Sarah's son, "whom Sarah Bare," the old woman who was past baring years. Therefore, this son was from God. If any son would do, then any woman — a younger woman, Hagar — would do. But that would miss the point. God wanted Abraham to know that this son came from God and therefore could only have come from Sarah, the old woman, the barren woman who could not have a baby unless it came from God. That's why God allowed Hagar to have Abraham's baby, so that God could say, "No. Not *that* one, *this* one, from the *old* woman. The baby *I* gave you is the covenant baby."

[2] THE BIRTH OF SAMPSON

Judges 13:2 And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. *:3* And the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. *:24* And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him.

God does not often intercede and cause a barren woman to conceive. But when God has a special job to be done that requires a special person, like Sampson, then God gets involved.

[3] THE BIRTH OF SAMUEL

1 Samuel 1:5 But unto Hannah he [her husband] gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb. **:11** And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. **:17** Then Eli [the priest] answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. **:20** Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD.

What are you brave enough to ask God for? How hard should a task be that would make you say, “God, even you can’t do this”? Barren Hannah was asking a lot and she knew it. But the priest sealed it, probably not really understanding what he was sealing, and God did it.

[4] THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Luke 1:7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years. **:13** But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. **:57** Now Elisabeth’s full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

Here’s another old woman beyond child baring years and an old man without the capacity to even try — “both were now well sticken in years.” But God had other plans, and like Sarah and Abraham, God wanted them to know that this miraculous baby had a miraculous destiny.

[5] THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

But as miraculous as those births were, they were small compared to this one —

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 [before they had sex], she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. **:20** But while he [Joseph] 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. **:21** And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins. **:22** Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, **:23** 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.

There have been amazing births: Sarah and Elizabeth. In modern times, there are quads, and quintos, and more. And more miraculous still is that some babies are operated on while still in the womb so that they could live to *be* born. Amazing times we live in.

But there never has been a birth so miraculous as the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, born to a virgin, so that the world might know from his birth like no other, that he came with a destiny like no other.

[6] CONCLUSION

God directly involved himself in these births. And by involving himself, he documented that these specific babies were of divine origin. But that hints that maybe all babies are of divine origin because if God causes some babies to *happen* then maybe he causes all babies to happen.

God's first commandment to the human race was —

Genesis 1:28 ... be fruitful and multiply ... :31 ... and, behold, it was very good.

In other words: Adam, get the girl pregnant! God was anxious to get on with the business of procreation.

But then, why is sex a sin? I don't know that sex *is* a sin. But if we take our clue from the 7th and 8th commandments —

Exodus 20:14 Thou shalt not commit adultery. :15 Thou shalt not steal.

— we can understand that harming families, harming children, ending marriages, and taking what belongs to someone else, those things are sinful and not the sex per se.

The Torah provides a blushing list of sexual sins (*Deuteronomy 22-23*), many of them capital crimes. But there is one sex sin on that list that is not a capital crime: seduction. And what is the penalty for that?

Deuteronomy 22:28 ... she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.

The penalty for seducing a girl is not death but marriage without the possibility of divorce. Some guys might think that's worse than death. But the point is that the purpose of law, here anyway, is not revenge but damage control. If we can turn a messy situation into a functioning family then why not do that?

It is, after all, about children. And children are divine and should always be welcomed.