

I.N.I.

Mid-week Advent
December 4, 2019
Genesis 3:15-16, 20; 4:1-2

In Christ Jesus, the Seed of the woman, born to rescue all of mankind by dying for the dead and rising to give life to all, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

What is the most impossible birth in the history of the world? That is a pretty easy question for a Christian. Of course it is the birth of Jesus---conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. That just doesn't happen naturally. The conception and birth were impossible, without the Holy Spirit. There was no father involved. Nothing from a man to gather together with a woman to make a baby. Just the Holy Spirit miraculously coming upon Mary and implanting in her womb this amazing miracle—the God/Man; God the Son in human flesh and blood, Immanuel!

But when you think of it, every birth is also impossible, without God. He alone is the one who creates life within the womb. He brings the two needed components together and miraculously brings about a conception, a new life begins and some 9 months later a birth.

This Advent we will be looking at Three Impossible Births. This evening is

A BIRTH OF IMPOSSIBLE HOPE!

This first birth there ever was must have been greatly longed for. Adam and Eve had sinned and brought death into the world. Even though they did not know what death was, since they had never seen or experienced it, they knew it meant separation from God. They felt that. Their fear and guilt led them to try and hide from God. For a time they were spiritually dead in their sins.

But God in love promised them life, everlasting life from the Seed of the woman—a child who would be born of flesh and blood but sent from God.

No wonder Adam and Eve were so excited. Just think about how much you looked forward to your first child! There's a great deal of promise, of hope, of longing, wondering what the child will look like, sound like, be like. Imagine how much more there was for this first married couple. For this birth was the first birth for the first couple. The first birth ever. And there were no doctors. No hospitals. No one else at all. No text books. Nothing to google to find out what would happen, how it would take place. No one had ever done this before. All they had to go on was God's Words **“with pain you will bring forth children.”**

Yet for as much fear and worry as there must have been, there was so much hope. There was hope for a new life. Hope to forge ahead after having lost paradise. And hope to regain it. They remembered God's promise that a child, a Seed of the woman would crush Satan's power and authority over them. They got that. They believed that. Adam showed it with the name he gave his wife: not “The mother of all dying” because she led him into sin, but EVE--the “the mother of all living.” What hope there was in that name despite the death they had brought upon themselves. Adam showed his faith in the promise that God has spoken to them. The term “life” is often used in the Scriptures to describe a union with God, sometimes referred to as “salvation.” The term “death” always connotes separation from God. There was hope because she would be the mother of **“all the living”** and the **LIVING ONE!**

And now Eve perhaps thought that **LIVING ONE** was here.

There is division on how verse 1 of chapter 4 is to be translated. NKJV translates it: **NOW ADAM KNEW EVE HIS WIFE, AND SHE CONCEIVED AND BORE CAIN, AND SAID, "I HAVE ACQUIRED A MAN FROM THE LORD."** But it can also be translated like the Beck Bible does: **“I have gotten a man, the LORD.”** Or as Today's Bible translates: **“I have gotten the man that the Lord promised.”**

The name "Cain" means 'to get, to acquire.' Was she saying "this is the One whom God promised, the One who would crush Satan and set us free"? Eve also did not call God by the name Elohim: Creator-God, but she used the name Jehovah: the God of the Promise, the LORD! All their hope and faith in God's promise may have been resting in this first born son, named Cain—"gotten, acquired, brought forth" from the Lord.

In this phrase there is both thankfulness and praise. Thankfulness at her deliverance from the pain, fear and danger of what she had just gone through--the birth of the first child ever. And praise that Jehovah God was showing His grace and faithfulness in giving them this son, perhaps the Promised Son! Eve praises God that He who promised victory to "the Seed of the woman" actually lets "the Seed of the woman" be born.

This belief showed how deeply the promise God gave to her had sunk into her heart. How quick she was to find the fulfillment of that promise and how she longed for it, even as the early New Testament Christians looked for and longer for Jesus' return soon after He ascended. We see how our first parents put all of their hope and trust in God's Word! He promised and they believed His promise!

Eve was right. But she also was wrong. The timing was wrong. It would be through a child, yes, the "Seed of the woman." Yes, it would be through a birth. But not this child. Not this birth. She and Adam must have discovered that soon after Cain was born and saw that he was just like them, sinful in thought, word and deed. Cain was born as the Bible says: **AND (ADAM) BEGOT A SON IN HIS OWN LIKENESS, AFTER HIS IMAGE.** Cain was not born in the perfect image of God as Adam was created. He was born in his father's image—spiritually dead in sin, an enemy of God and blind to God.

We do not know how long after Cain was born that Eve conceived and gave birth again, but we do know that it was long enough for both Adam and Eve to learn the truth about Cain. That he was not the Promised One! How do we know this? From the name they gave to their second child. They named him Abel. Abel means "breath, vapor, nothingness, emptiness, vanity!" Eve's realization that her first-born was not the Promised One and possibly also her realization that sin continued to scar and stain and burden everyday life, led her to name her second son "vanity, emptiness, useless."

At the time of her naming Abel she did not know the rest of the story as we do. Little did Eve know the vanity and emptiness the life of sin would be between her two boys. As we know Cain grew up to be a hypocrite, an unbeliever and one who committed the first murder recorded in this world. He killed his own brother out of hatred and envy. Abel's prophetic name came true as Adam and Eve saw in their children the sin and death that they brought into the world by their own rebellion and sin against their Creator God.

They were in for a long and bitter wait as they saw sin rear its ugly head over and over and over again in their descendants. Adam lived for over 900 years and no doubt Eve lived a long time also. No Savior came. Just the promise. And God's people kept waiting, through all the bitterness, through all the weariness, through all the pain and "vanity" (the Abel's to come) for the Child that would come, the Child who would fulfill what God had promised, the living one, the Lord, the Seed of the woman!

4,000 years later God fulfilled His promise in the person of Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary. We read the Angel's words to Mary: **"AND BEHOLD, YOU WILL CONCEIVE IN YOUR WOMB AND BRING FORTH A SON, AND SHALL CALL HIS NAME JESUS. HE WILL BE GREAT, AND WILL BE CALLED THE SON OF THE HIGHEST; AND THE LORD GOD WILL GIVE HIM THE THRONE OF HIS FATHER DAVID. AND HE WILL REIGN OVER THE HOUSE OF JACOB FOREVER, AND OF HIS KINGDOM THERE WILL BE NO END."**

When Mary asked how this could be since she was a virgin. The angel simply answered: **"FOR WITH GOD NOTHING WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE."** The

impossible would be done! The impossible conception and birth would be accomplished in Nazareth and in Bethlehem.

A BIRTH OF IMPOSSIBLE HOPE?

Yes it was for Adam and Eve at first. It was not Cain. But it was more a mistaken hope, hope in the wrong person, but not in the wrong promise! Adam and Eve lived and died in the hope, the certain assurance that the Promised One would someday come, born from the Woman's Seed, not from Eve but from some other woman in their offspring .

Thank God we have no mistaken hope, or impossible hope, our hope, our assurance is based on God's fulfilled Word. It is in the baby Jesus born in Bethlehem to the virgin mother Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit, true God and true Man in one person. For that person lived perfectly for you and me. He died for you and me and He rose again for you and me and assures us of life together with Him forever in heaven.

Amen and Amen.