

Chapter Two:

The Incarnation:

Introduction:

The Book of Leviticus: chapter/verse: 4:3, and The Book of Leviticus: chapter/verse: 5:14-15, and The Book of Leviticus: chapter/verse: 6:6, required animal sacrifices for the sins of the Jewish people, for both intentional and unintentional sins. These sacrifices were to atone for their sins, to be forgiven, to clean the slate, and to re-establish communion with Yahweh, (“God” the father, the Great “I Am”). The book of Numbers: chapter/verse 28:15 required sacrifices for unintentional sins once a month. In addition, the book of Leviticus: chapter/verse: 3:6 required that the animal offered, as the sacrifice, be without defect or blemish.

I. The Promised Messiah/The Virgin Birth:

A. The Prophecies:

Isaiah 7:14:

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel . . . “ (ESV)

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel . . .”, (NIV)

Micah 5: Verses 2, 3, & 4:

“(2) But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. (3) Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. (4) And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.” (ESV)

“(2) But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler of Israel, whose origins are of old from ancient times.” (3) “Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor bears a son, and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites.” (4) “He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.” (NIV)

Psalm 72:10-11:

“(10) May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts! (11) May all kings fall down before him, all nations serve him!” (ESV)

“(10) May the kings of Tarshish and of distant shores bring tribute to him. May the kings of Sheba and Seba present him gifts. (11) May all kings bow down to him and all nations serve him.” (NIV)

B. Who were the Magi and what caused them to journey to Jerusalem and Bethlehem?:

i. Introduction:

The Gospel According to Matthew 2:1-2:

“(1) Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, (2) saying, ‘Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him’.” (ESV)

“(1) After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem (2) and asked, ‘Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.’” (NIV)

Several very good books have been written on the subject of The Bethlehem Star, by astronomers and historians. This scripture begins to give us a time-frame for The Bethlehem Star. The time frame is identified by King Herod, who died in 4 B.C., and sought to kill all baby boys/toddlers, two years and younger in the Bethlehem region, in order to attempt to kill our Lord Jesus Christ. This gives us an approximate time-frame that The Bethlehem Star would first appear.

The Gospel According to Matthew 2:16:

“Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men.” (ESV)

“When Herod realized he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.” (NIV).

Because of this scripture, there is general consensus among many theologians, that the Lord Jesus Christ was born approximately (5 B.C. to 6 B.C.).

It is hard to image, in our contemporary industrial world where the night sky is difficult to see, (due to city lights), that astrology and astronomy were disciplines that were widespread and, if you will, venerated in the ancient world. Astrology and Astronomy were very influential in the

Hellenistic world, and the Imperial Roman world. Ancient Babylon and Ancient Persia employed astrology and astronomy in an attempt to determine potential future events that may occur.

Generally, the term “Magi” refers to Persian priests and astronomers, who used astrology and astronomy to determine future events. In fact, the original application and development of higher mathematics was tied to predicting the time and place that certain stars would appear in certain constellations in the night sky. The night sky consists of constellations, which are arrangements or gathering of stars and planets in specific regions of the night sky. These constellations, were named for animals and deities attributable to the ancient Hellenistic world. Astrology/Astronomy continued to be practiced in the first century B.C., in the Imperial Roman/Hellenistic world, at the time of the Lord Jesus Christ’s birth.

Planets, visible in the night sky, were referred to as stars. The two constellations that constitute our primary focus in the night sky are Pisces and Aries. Aries was considered to refer to Judea. Therefore, certain formations of stars in Aries would generate meaning with regard to Judea. There are some astronomers who believed that the constellation next door to Aries, Pisces, was the constellation that would indicate future events in Judea.

Johannes Kepler (1571 A.D. to 1630 A.D.), was a famous astronomer, and a devout Christian. Kepler developed important theories about the universe that apply to the Star of Bethlehem and to our modern world. Kepler believed that Pisces was the constellation that referred to Judea. However, ancient Hellenistic Astronomers: Claudius Ptolemy (90 A.D. to 168 A.D.), in his book “Tetrabiblos”, and Julius Firmicus Maternus, (who is known to have lived between 306 A.D. to 355 A.D.), in his book “Mathesis”, both indicate that it was the Constellation Aries which provided insight into future events in Judea. Maternus converted to Christianity and became a noted Christian writer in the field of Apologetics. Vittius Valens, (120 A.D. to 175 A.D.), in his book “Anthology”, also seems to indicate that the constellation next door to Pisces, Aries, referred to Judea, indicating that significant formations of stars in Aries could provide insight into Judea’s future.

ii. Does the Lord use signs in the heavens to illuminate His Word, fulfil Bible prophecy, and indicate His Glory and Majesty?:

Isaiah 40:26:

“Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might and because he is strong in power, not one is missing.” (ESV)

“Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens” Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.” (NIV)

Job 9:8-9:

“(8) who alone stretched out the heavens and trampled the waves of the sea; (9) who made the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the chambers of the south;” (ESV)

“(8) He alone stretches out the heavens and treads on the waves of the sea. (9) He is the maker of the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the constellations of the south.” (NIV)

Job 38:31-32:

“(31) Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades or loose the cords of Orion? (32) Can you lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season, or can you guide the Bear with its children?” (ESV)

“(31) Can you bind the chains of Pleiades? Can you loosen Orion’s belt? (32) Can you bring forth the constellations in their seasons or lead out the Bear with its cubs?” (NIV)

The Gospel According to Luke 21:25:

“And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves.” (ESV)

“There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea.” (NIV).

iii. The Bethlehem Star:

One of Johannes Kepler’s main theories, and one of his main contributions in understanding the framework/architecture of the universe, was the theory of planetary movement, the elliptical orbits of the planets around the sun. For the earth, the elliptical orbit around the sun is 365 1/4 days. In addition, the earth makes a complete rotation on its axis, every 24 hours. The earth’s rotation on its axis every 24 hours, occurs at a tilt of 23 ½ degrees, as the earth orbits the sun. With regard to the other planets in the night sky, and where they are in their elliptical orbits around the sun, relative to earth’s elliptical orbit around the sun, will dictate where those stars (planets) will appear in the night sky. The earth’s elliptical orbit is much shorter than the elliptical orbit of Jupiter, and Saturn. This becomes significant, since the earth’s orbit will catch up with Jupiter’s, and Saturn’s orbits, and make it appear as if Jupiter, and Saturn, at their points of being passed by the earth, are static in the night sky, and possibly reverse their orbits, in retrograde motion, in the night sky. In summary, the earth periodically passes these planets due to the earth’s smaller elliptical orbit around the sun. The same can be said of Mars which has a shorter elliptical orbit. Johannes Kepler calculated, that Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars line up as planets to create a very brilliant light in the night sky, (a triple conjunction), every 805 years. (Please note, Johannes Kepler believed that the Bethlehem Star was a Nova of a dying star, which occurred in concert with this triple conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars, at the time of Jesus’s birth). In general, the universe is in constant motion. Each planet has its own elliptical orbit based on its mass and gravitational pull, including our own.

In ancient times, Jupiter, (interpreted by Persian Magi to represent kingdoms and dynasties,

and by the Greeks to represent Zeus, etc.), was elevated and revered. This caused the Magi to view Jupiter as a very significant star. To make a long story short, Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars lined up in Aries approximately 6 B.C. (a triple conjunction). However, Johannes Kepler, calculated that Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars also lined up in a triple conjunction next door in the Pisces constellation approximately 7 B.C.. This triple conjunction motivated the Magi to follow this star and to find the new born King of Judea. This would have been based on the Magi's understanding and interpretation of astrology and astronomy and the alignment of these stars (planets), in these constellations.

The Gospel According to Matthew 2:9 to 2:11:

“(9) After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. (10) When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.” (ESV)

“(9) After they had heard the king, they (the Magi), went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. (10) When they saw the star, they were overjoyed .” (NIV).

The triple conjunction could have lasted a number months or longer. The star, (triple conjunction), recounted in The Gospel According to Matthew (2:9 to 2:11), stopped over the place where the Lord Jesus Christ was. This event likely occurred at the same time that the earth was passing Jupiter, and Saturn, based on the earth's elliptical orbit, and at the time, that the earth was being passed by Mars, (as determined by the earth's own elliptical orbit around the sun). This made the star (the planets) appear to stand still in the sky.

The Gospel According to Matthew 2:11:

“And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.” (ESV)

“On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh .” (NIV).

Most theologians believe that the Magi came sometime after Jesus' birth, up to 2 years later, as it would take time for the Magi to identify the Bethlehem Star, determine and interpret its significance, and then travel to Jerusalem and finally to Bethlehem, following the star. Mary, at this time was in a house “. . . going into the house . . .” (ESV), which presumably she and Joseph built or bought while living in Bethlehem. Jesus was present, and his mother Mary, when the Magi arrived at their house: “And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother” (ESV).

Many believe that there were only 3 Magi, this was based on the fact that there were 3 gifts. In the Syrian Christian tradition they believe that there were 12 Magi. However, a Mosaic found in the catacombs of Rome at Santa Priscilla, which was created/produced during the Second

Century (100 A.D. to 200 A.D., during the persecution of Christians by the Roman authorities), this Mosaic shows three Magi presenting gifts to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Gospel According to Matthew 2:16:

“Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men.” (ESV)

“When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.” (NIV).

Therefore, based on the time-frame that the Magi first reported the Bethlehem Star to King Herod; King Herod, in turn, killed all male boys two years old and younger in order to attempt to kill the Lord Jesus Christ. This indicates that the arrival of the Magi at Mary’s house may have been up to two years after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Next, in The Gospel According to Luke, chapter/verse: (2:4 to 2:20), Luke recounts the events in which an Angel told the shepherds to see the newly born Lord Jesus Christ, born in a stable and laying in a manger. These are the folks who actually saw the Lord Jesus Christ on the night of His birth.

C. The Incarnation (The Nativity):

i. Prelude to the Nativity based on the account in the Gospel According to Luke:

The Gospel According to Luke 1:26-38:

“(26) In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, (27) to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin’s name was Mary. (28) And he came to her and said, ‘Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!’ (29) But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. (30) And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. (31) And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. (32) He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, (33) and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’ (34) And Mary said to the angel, ‘How will this be, since I am a virgin?’ (35) And the angel answered her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy – the Son of God. (36) And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. (37) For nothing will be impossible with God. (38) And Mary said, ‘Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.’ And the angel departed from her.” (ESV)

“(26) In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, (27) to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. (28) The angel went to her and said, ‘Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.’ (29) Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. (30) But the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. (31) You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. (32) He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, (33) and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.’ (34) ‘How will this be?’, Mary asked the angel, ‘since I am a virgin?’ (35) The angel answered, ‘The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. (36) Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. (37) For no word from God will ever fail.’ (38) ‘I am the Lord’s servant,’ Mary answered. ‘May your word to me be fulfilled.’ Then the angel left her.” (NIV)

We see, in the Gospel According to Luke, chapter/verse: (1:26 to 1:38), Mary is visited by the angel Gabriel. It is established that she is virgin and that she is going to bear a son, and that she is to name him Jesus. So, the normal process of pregnancy will be by-passed. Certainly, the creator of cells, and molecules, the creator of trees, plants, animals, the earth, and the universe, and all it contains, can do this. The Lord’s promise to Mary continued, that Jesus will be given the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever, and that his kingdom will never end.

The Gospel According to Luke, chapter/verse: (2:1-9), also discloses the need for Joseph and Mary to travel to King David’s hometown of Bethlehem before the birth of Jesus, in order to comply with Caesar Augustus’s census decree, and, incidently, to comply with Biblical Prophecy.

The Gospel According to Luke 2:1-7:

“(1) In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. (2) This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. (3) And all went to be registered, each to his own town. (4) And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, (5) to be registered with Mary his betrothed, who was with child. (6) And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. (7) And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.” (ESV)

“(1) In those days, Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (2) (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) (3) And everyone went to their own town to register. (4) So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. (5) He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. (6) While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born. (7) and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She

wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.” (NIV)

ii. The census which caused Joseph and Mary to travel to Bethlehem:

The Gospel According to Luke, Chapter/Verse (2:1-3) states: “(1) In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. (2) This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. (3) And all went to be registered, each to his own town. “ (ESV).

Please note in 6 B.C. and 5 B.C. Sentius Saturninus was Governor of Syria, and Quirinius was the Procurator of Syria. Quirinius would become Governor of Syria 6 A.D. to 12 A.D.. Herod the Great died in 4 B.C.. As mentioned earlier, the consensus among many theologians is that the Lord Jesus Christ was born approximately 6 B.C. to 5 B.C.. Matthew 2:1 states: “Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem . . . “. (ESV). So, approximately 6 B.C. to 5 B.C., (the consensus date for the birth of Jesus), Herod the Great was still alive (until 4 B.C.), and Quirinius was the Procurator of Syria, (in 6 B.C. to 5 B.C.), prior to his becoming Governor of Syria (6 A.D. to 12 A.D.).

Tertullian, (Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus, 155 A.D. to 220 A.D.), was a prominent early Christian Theologian and prolific writer, from the city of Carthage. Tertullian wrote 31 books in Latin and Greek, covering Apologetics, and Theology. Tertullian was the tutor of St. Cyprin, who was in turn the tutor of St. Augustine. (St. Cyprin is considered the father of Latin Theology). Tertullian, wrote the following in his book “Against Marcion”, (“Adversus Marcionem”), Tertullian, in Book 4, Chapter 19 addressing the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ: “. . . If because they wished to know whether he had been born, or not-had there ever been any doubt of this, which they could resolve by means of that temptation? Yet who could have any doubt of the birth of one who he saw was a man, whom he had heard declare himself the Son of Man, who in consideration of all his human attributes they hesitated to believe was God, or the Son of God? They found it easier to esteem him a prophet, some great one no doubt, but one in any case who had been born. Even if there had been reason to tempt him by investigating his nativity, any other means would have been more in keeping with temptation than the mention of those relations, in spite of having been born, **Also it is well known that a census had just been taken in Judaea by Sentius Saturninus, and they might have inquired of his ancestry in those records.** . . .”, Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus, (208 A.D.).

Archbishop John Chrysostom of Constantinople (347 A.D to 407 A.D.), states in his Homily 8 on Matthew: “. . . The Magi and Barbarians, leaving the superstition of their fathers have come to worship; thus (Caesar) Augustus ministers to the birth at Bethlehem by the decree for the taxing . . . “.

iii. Christmas Night:

The Gospel According to Luke 2:8-20:

“(8) And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. (9) And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. (10) And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. (11) For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. (12) And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. (13) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, (14) ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!’ (15) When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.’ (16) And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. (17) And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. (18) And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. (19) But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. (20) And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.” (ESV)

“(8) And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. (9) An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. (10) But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. (11) Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. (12) This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” (13) Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, (14) “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” (15) When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about”. (16) So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. (17) When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child. (18) and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. (19) But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. (20) The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told“ (NIV)

D. The Virgin Birth, Pope Leo's Tome, and the Council of Chalcedon:

i. Pope Leo's Tome: (449 A.D.):

Periodic Councils of Bishops were called to resolve issues: addressing the tenants of the Christian Faith, to determine which Books and Epistles were canonical, and to resolve issues of theology and Christology. Before the calling of the Council of Bishops for the Council of Chalcedon, (451 A.D.), but after the Council of Bishops at Nicea (325 A.D.), and the Council of Bishops at Ephesus, (431 A.D.); Pope Leo the First (Pope Leo the Great), published and issued a Tome (449 A.D.), in order to re-affirm the position of the Church on the nature of Christ, God the Son, as carried by the Virgin Mary. A Tome is a scholarly book or volume, here a statement of Christian Theology, by Pope Leo, on an important issue and a pressing issue of Christian Theology (regarding the Virgin Birth of Christ, and the nature of Christ, as God the Son). Pope Leo's Tome was sent to the new Archbishop of Constantinople, Flavian. Archbishop Flavian was lobbying to prevent the discipline of a priest, Eutyches, who continued to embrace incorrect views of the incarnation, (the Virgin Birth of Christ and the nature of Christ, God the Son). In light of this, Pope Leo wrote his Tome to Archbishop Flavian of Constantinople, and to the Christian Church at large:

Pope Leo's Tome, (In Part), (referring to the Priest Eutyches): “. . . But into this folly do they fall who, when hindered by some obscurity from apprehending the truth, have recourse, not to the words of the Prophets, not the letters of the Apostles, not the authority of the Gospels, but to themselves; and become teachers of error, because they have not been disciples of the truth. . . . If, then, he knew not what he ought to think about the Incarnation of the Word of God, and was not willing, for the sake of obtaining the light of intelligence, to make laborious search through the whole extent of the Holy Scriptures, he should at least have received with heedful attention that general Confession common to all, whereby the whole body of the faithful profess that they ‘believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary.’ . . . For when God is believed to be both ‘Almighty’ and ‘Father’, it is proved that the Son is everlasting together with himself, differing in nothing from the Father, because he was born as ‘God from God’, Almighty from Almighty, Coeternal from Coeternal; not later in time, not inferior in power, not unlike him in glory, not divided from him in essence, but the same Only-Begotten and Everlasting Son of an Everlasting Parent was ‘born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary.’ This birth in time in no way detracted from, in no way added to, that divine and everlasting birth; but expended itself wholly in the work of restoring man, who had been deceived; so that it might both overcome death, and by its power ‘destroy the devil who had the power of death’. For we could not overcome the author of sin and of death, unless he who could neither be contaminated by sin, nor detained by death, had taken upon himself our nature, and made it his own.

For, in fact, he was ‘conceived of the Holy Ghost’ within the womb of a Virgin Mother, who bore him as she had conceived him, without loss of virginity. But if he

(Eutyches) was not able to obtain a true conception from the pure fountain of Christian faith because by his own blindness he had darkened for himself the brightness of truth so clear, he should have submitted himself to the Evangelist's teaching; and after reading what Matthew says, 'The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, Son of David, the Son of Abraham, . . . he should have bestowed some devout study on the pages of the Prophets; and finding that God's promise said to Abraham, 'in thy seed shall all nations be blessed' in order to avoid all doubt as to the proper meaning of this 'seed', he should have attended to the Apostle's words, 'To Abraham and to his seed were the promises made. He saith not, 'and to seeds', as in the case of many, but as in the case of one, and to thy seed', which is Christ.' He should also have apprehended with his inward ear the declaration of Isaiah, 'Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which is, being interpreted, God with us;' and should have read with faith the words of the same prophet, 'Unto us a Child has been born, unto us a Son has been given, whose power is on his shoulder; and they shall call his name Angel of Great Counsel, Wonderful, Counsellor, Strong God, Prince of Peace, Father of the age to come.' . . . the 'Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, . . .'" (Pope Leo the First; Pope Leo the Great; **Pope Leo's Tome, (In Part), 449 A.D.**).

ii. The Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.):

As the issue of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ needed to be settled once and for all, in the form of a Creed endorsed by the Christian Bishops, the Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.) was called. The Chalcedonian Creed was agreed to by the Christian Bishops who attended the Council of Chalcedon. The Chalcedonian Creed directly addressed the issue of the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. The attending Bishops were drawn from the Western Roman Empire, the Eastern Roman Empire, North Africa, and Asia Minor. The Chalcedonian Creed was endorsed by Pope Leo the First, (Pope Leo the Great).

iii. The Chalcedonian Creed: (451 A.D.):

“ Following then, the Holy Fathers, we all unanimously teach that our Lord Jesus Christ is to us one and the same Son, the Self-Same perfect in Godhead, the Self-Same perfect in manhood; Truly God and Truly Man; the Self-Same of a rational soul and body; co-essential (consubstantial) with the Father according to the Godhead, the Self-Same co-essential (consubstantial) with us according to the manhood; like us in all things, sin apart, (without sin); before the ages begotten of the Father as to the Godhead, but in the last days, the Self-Same, for us and for our salvation (born) of Mary the virgin Theotokos as to the manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-Begotten; acknowledged in two natures unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the difference of the natures being in no way removed because of the union, but rather the properties of each nature being preserved and (both) concurring into one person and one hypostasis; not as though he were parted or divided into two persons, but one and the Self-Same Son and Only-Begotten God, Word, Lord, Jesus Christ; even as from the beginning the prophets have taught concerning Him, and as the Lord Jesus Christ himself hath taught us, and as the symbol of the Fathers hath handed down to us.”

The Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.), also endorsed and adopted Pope Leo's Tome which was addressed to Archbishop Flavian of Constantinople.

Books that should be in your library:

"New Testament Studies (Philological, Versional, and Patristic)" by Bruce M. Metzger (Leiden E J Brill, 1980);

"A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament" by Bruce M. Metzger (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, D-Stuttgart, United Bible Societies U.S.A., 1971, 1994);

"The First Seven Ecumenical Councils (327-787) Their History and Theology", by Leo Donald Davis, (A Michael Glazier Book, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1983);

"The Virgin Birth of Christ", by J. Gresham Machen, (Solid Ground Christian Books, Birmingham, Alabama USA, 2011).

"The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church: their canons and dogmatic decrees, together with the canons of all the local synods which have received ecumenical acceptance", by Henry R. Percival, Henry Wace, and Philip Schaff, (Oxford : Scribners, Parker, 1900)

"Select Sermons of Saint Leo the Great on the Incarnation", ("Pope Leo the First, with his 28th Epistle, called the "Tome"), Reverend William Bright D.D., J. Masters and Company, London, (1886).

"The Mystery of the Trinity: A Trinitarian Approach to the Attributes of God", by Vern S. Poythress (2020), P & R Publishing Company

One important note. Wikipedia has compiled a very large amount of research material including much of the early history of Christianity. Although Wikipedia, where an opinion is rendered, can sometimes side with liberal theologians, I encourage viewers of this website to support Wikipedia for all the Christian History that they have preserved online: www.Wikipedia.org, (Donate), or donate to: Wikimedia Foundation Inc. P.O. Box 98204, Washington D.C. 20090.

ESV = English Standard Version (2016) Crossway, Good News Publishers

NIV = New International Version (2011) Zondervan,, Biblica Inc.

-JWAlmq.-

