

## A USEFUL NOTE ON THE MEANING OF “UNTIL” (*HEÔS*) FOR POST-PARTUM ANTI-VIRGIN “BIRTHERS” WHO DON’T PAY ATTENTION TO ST. MATTHEW’S GOSPEL

Rev. Dr. C. Kappes<sup>1</sup> & William Albrecht

Our recent articles have focused on signaling the unsound and surprisingly simplistic reading of Matthew 1:20-1:25 with regard to what must, by now for our readers, be considered a laughably myopic argument.<sup>2</sup> Allegedly, for these innovators even among their own kind, when Joseph was recorded by St. Matthew not to have relations with Mary “**until she gave birth**,” St. Matthew is obliged –according to them– to speak something against Mary’s virginity (in virtue of the very Greek words, their idiom, and their syntax). The very simple chiasm we wrote about pointed out, without the slightest shred of doubt, what escaped self-styled Bible-alone experts who claim to be interpreting Scripture by Scripture. That is odd, indeed, since according to their programs (for decades) Oriental and Eastern Orthodox Christians and Roman Catholics have suffered from thousands of years of amalgamated traditions that have barnacled the Ark of the Church, weighting down Scripture so as to sink these churches under the heavy weight of their own traditions. Beneath the waves of the abyss, wherein the demons dwell, the barque of St. Peter or the boat of salvation (that is, the Church of God,) cannot be said any longer to live in these historical Churches according to very vocal and, by and large, anti-ecumenical Christians who rely –so they say– only on Scripture. We exploded their “**until**” myth which remains “**until**” now (meaning from this moment and beyond!) unanswered. For the moment, in order for our reader to see yet another discovery, we must first succinctly review how St. Matthew in chapter 1 designed a literary unit for his masterpiece known as a Gospel:

NKJV MATTHEW CHAPTER 1: VERSE 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. VERSE 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. VERSE 20

[A<sub>1</sub>:] But while he thought about these things, behold, [i:] AN ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED TO HIM IN A DREAM, SAYING, [ii:] “JOSEPH, SON OF DAVID, DO NOT BE AFRAID [iii:] **to take to you Mary your wife**, [iv:] **for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.** VERSE 21 [v:] **And she will birth a Son**, [vi:] *and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.*” VERSE 22

[B:] SO ALL THIS WAS DONE THAT IT MIGHT BE FULFILLED WHICH WAS SPOKEN BY THE LORD THROUGH THE PROPHET, SAYING: VERSE 23 “**Behold, the virgin shall conceive with child**, [v:] **and birth a Son**, *and they shall call His name Immanuel,*” which is translated, “*God with us.*” [LXX= Septuagint Isaiah 7:14] VERSE 24

[A<sub>2</sub>:] [iii:] THEN JOSEPH, [i:] from the time HE WAS AROUSED AROUSED FROM SLEEP, DID AS THE ANGEL OF THE LORD COMMANDED HIM [iii:] **and took to him his wife**, VERSE 25 [iv:] **and was not knowing her** [v:] **until she had birthed her firstborn Son.** [vi:] *And he called His name Jesus.*

<sup>1</sup> Due to the expenses I’m incurring in writing and researching these articles, I invite you support my work by helping me at my newly established Patreon account: <https://www.patreon.com/ChristiaanAnswers>.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. C. W. Kappes & William Albrecht, “Projecting Sex onto the New Testament by Alpha & Omega Ministries,” [https://991df016-c004-44e6-a066-e7fa1fd832b7.usrfiles.com/ugd/991df0\\_940d80b7442c4778be712e76d02c9fab.pdf](https://991df016-c004-44e6-a066-e7fa1fd832b7.usrfiles.com/ugd/991df0_940d80b7442c4778be712e76d02c9fab.pdf).

It is important to recap what this sandwich or chiasm *must mean* in light of St. Matthew: The Evangelist surrounds Isaiah's prophecy with commentary about this virgin who pregnant and who must stay virginal in her way of life until her moment of actual giving birth (to meet the exact demands of fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy). Every concept and each phrase, bot before and after Isaiah's prophecy, mirror the lines of prophecy in LXX Isaiah 7:14! **A<sub>1</sub>** numbers [i-vi.] above explain every feature of **A<sub>2</sub>** numbers [i-vi.]. Every number [i-vi.] in **B** is anticipated by the numbers [i-vi.] in **A<sub>1</sub>**:

Above [**A<sub>1-2</sub> i:**] **An angel of the Lord speaks in a dream** and when coming out of his **dreamy sleep Joseph obeys the angel of the Lord.**

Above [**A<sub>1-2</sub> ii:**] The person of focus for both references is named **Joseph**.

Above [**A<sub>1-2</sub> iii:**] **Take a wife** means “**she comes under the roof your house to fulfill the contract mentioned in** Matthew 1:19 for marriage.” The prophecy **B [v.]: “and a virgin shall birth a Son”** requires that Joseph was continuously not knowing her from the time of his dream until Jesus's birth. The Angel Gabriel is saying: “**Don't be afraid to take to her/her to your home legally**” despite St. Joseph's past doubts and his future obligation not to consummate the marriage so that Mary can give birth as a virgin. Precisely as *virgin* giving birth is demanded by Isaiah's prophecy in LXX Isaiah 7:14, or else Jesus will not qualify to be the messiah (failing to meet the criteria of Matthew 1:22-24 and LXX Isaiah 7:14) if he should prove to be a son from a non-virgin. St. Matthew created exact parallelisms between and among **A<sub>1</sub> iii-iv**, **B iii-iv**, and **A<sub>2</sub> iii-iv** above:

**A<sub>1</sub> Take to you Mary your wife** for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit **and she will birth a Son**

**B Behold the virgin** shall conceive with child **and birth a Son**

**A<sub>2</sub> took to him his wife** and was not knowing her **until she had birthed her firstborn Son.**

The wife **must be a virgin up to and including the activity of birthing** lest she not fulfill the prophecy of LXX Isaiah 7:14. How can anyone escape from this fact that Matthew 1:24-25 (**A<sub>2</sub>**) demands merely this *exact* meaning of “**until**” (*heôs*): St. Matthew's chiasm (parallelism) is a structure **necessarily** declaring that from the moment of Mary's virginal conception **until** her act of birth she was physically a virgin. Therefore, Mary *fulfills the prophecy* of Isaiah's exact-calendrical period in which she must prove herself to be a virgin-conceiver & virgin-birther. The conclusion simply means that the literary unit here is neither designed nor meant to settle a post-partum sexual question. Instead, we have to turn to St. Matthew's other parallel uses of “**until**” in his Gospel elsewhere in order to understand what cannot be divined from this chiasm by itself,

which is strictly talking about the period of conception until birth. We are lucky, St. Matthew spills the beans later in his Gospel!

### 1. What Has Been Missed or Ignored “until” Now (a continuous action from here into the future of anti-virginalists ignoring the Bible)!

“Until” present (which supposes that the Alpha & Omega Ministries will continue afterward to do the same action as before), the term “until” as used by Jesus in St. Matthew has been ignored with the exception of isolating Matthew 1:25 to pick on perpetual virginity of Mary. Let us suppose, hypothetically, that *until* present, I were a self-styled Bible Christian using for thirty or so years my “until” argument bombastically. Let suppose that I had become overly committed to this attack on the virginity of Mary, as my hallmark, by using my “until” argument (Matthew 1:25). Let us suppose that I were accustomed to deride sincere Christians, telling them to leave their silly historical Christian Churches (of the first millennium) because said churches importantly, *if not principally*, are –according to me– unbiblical (thus risking one’s salvation), then I would be claiming to know all this because I (and apparently I alone among Reformers and historical Christians) allow Scripture to interpret Scripture. Let us say, hypothetically, that I were accustomed to bang loudly my war drum (recently reduced to a Tom-tom) *until* 23 January 2021<sup>3</sup> (the preposition “until” here means: I’ll keep banging my Tom-tom, although only behind closed doors to non-Greek educated audiences), then I would feel committed as a matter of reputation to this preposition “until,” as I have customarily interpreted it anti-virginally for Matthew 1:24-25, as if Bible truth. Yet, in light of the recent Kappes-Albrecht article (23 January 2021), I would need to be bold (nay, reckless) and now pretend that the clear intention and construct of Matthew 1:19-25 in the Kappes-Albrecht’s recent article (23 January 2021) doesn’t affect the beat to which I’ve been marching for most of my life. St. Matthew’s unit in the Bible, an honest man would have to admit, is constructed in such a the way that Matthew 1:25 has nothing to do with Mary’s post-partum virginity, but the question still remains: “What did happen sexually between Joseph and Mary after the ‘until’” (Matthew 1:25)? After all, cannot Mary’s and Joseph’s natural domestic life still be asked about (as St. Basil the Great already admitted in the Kappes-Albrecht article [23 January 2021])? Of course, the answer is “Yes.” But, why not use St. Matthew to interpret St. Matthew on how to understand “until” in St. Matthew? If I were a Bible Christian of the anti-virginalist variety, I should (shouldn’t I) be excited to see what St. Matthew says in regard to whether an action tends to continue or to cease after “until”? But, we know the Bible is no longer as exciting these days as it once was for anti-virginalists, since it keeps becoming a liability to their case.

In this same vein, the section below does that yet another time. Let us compare the relevant sections of Matthew chapter 1 with Matthew chapter 24, both of which talk about marriage, childbirth, and “until”! We read:

---

<sup>3</sup> See Rev. C. W. Kappes & William Albrecht, “Projecting Sex onto the New Testament by Alpha & Omega Ministries,” [https://991df016-c004-44e6-a066-e7fa1fd832b7.usrfiles.com/ugd/991df0\\_940d80b7442c4778be712e76d02c9fab.pdf](https://991df016-c004-44e6-a066-e7fa1fd832b7.usrfiles.com/ugd/991df0_940d80b7442c4778be712e76d02c9fab.pdf).

Matthew Chapter 1:	Matthew Chapter 24:
<p>But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid <b>to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.</b> <sup>VERSE 21</sup> <b>And she will birth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus,</b> for He will save His people from their sins.” <sup>VERSE 22</sup> So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: <sup>VERSE 23</sup> <b>“Behold, the virgin shall conceive with child (<i>en gastri heksei</i>), and birth a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,”</b> which is translated, “God with us.” [LXX Isaiah 7:14] <sup>VERSE 24</sup> Then Joseph, <b>from</b> the time (<i>apo</i>) he was aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and <b>took to him his wife,</b> <sup>VERSE 25</sup> <b>and was not knowing her until she had birthed her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.</b></p>	<p>For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines [...]. <sup>VERSE 8</sup> All these are the beginning of <b>birth pangs (<i>odinôn</i>).</b> <sup>VERSE 9</sup> “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated [...].” <sup>VERSE 10</sup> And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. [...]. <sup>VERSE 13</sup> But he who endures to the end shall be saved. <sup>VERSE 15</sup> “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” [...]. <sup>VERSE 16</sup> “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. [...].” <sup>VERSE 19</sup> But woe to <b>those who conceive (<i>tais en gastri echousais</i>)</b> and to those who are nursing babies in those days! <sup>VERSE 20</sup> And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. <sup>VERSE 21</sup> For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since <b>from (<i>apo</i>)</b> the beginning of the world <b>until this time, no, nor ever shall be (<i>heôs tou nun oud’ou mê genêtai</i>)</b> [...]. <sup>VERSE 37</sup> But as the days of Noah were, so also <b>shall the coming of the Son of Man be.</b> <sup>VERSE 38</sup> For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, <b>marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,</b> <sup>VERSE 39</sup> <b>and they did not know until the flood came and took them all away (<i>gamountes kai gamizontes achri hês eisêlthen Nôe eis tên kibôton, kai ouk egnôsan heôs êlthen ho kataklÿsmos kai êren hapantas</i>),</b> so also <b>shall the coming of the Son of Man be.</b></p>

Wow! The kingdoms fighting (Matthew 24:6) in the end times form a kind of rough parallel to David’s kingdom (Matthew 1:6), culminating and coming together in **the birth** of Jesus. While St. Matthew begins his Gospel, a new world order occurs with the act of Jesus’s **birth**, but the world ends by a painful act of **birth** leading to the appearance of *the Son of Man*, parallel with the baby Jesus who had first appeared **by birth** in Matthew chapter 1. Furthermore, just as in Matthew chapter 1, where Mary “**possessed [seed] in her stomach/conceived**” (Matthew 1:23), so too at the end of the world the Son of Man will instantaneously appear while women continue **to conceive** (Matthew 24:19).

Notice, too, that Matthew chapter 1 has a time “**from** which” (Matthew 1:24) Joseph awakes, just like the time “**from** the beginning of the world” (Matthew 24:21). However, in Matthew 24:21, Jesus is abundantly clear *how* he likes to use “**apo**” plus “**until**” in Hebrew (or arguably Aramaic): “**from (*apo*)** the beginning of the world **until this time, no, nor ever shall be.**” Wow! Jesus, as if preventing any debate of the meaning of Matthew 1:25, claims that **until** (in a metaphor of **birth** no less!) designates both ages before and **after** the moment that the Son of Man shall **appear/be born** in the last days and that there **shall never be anything like it** in the future again, just like the preposition “**from**” for the time of Joseph’s awaking from his dream, **he was not knowing Mary from then until she gave birth.** By analogy, we should use this key to understand both Jesus’s (and Matthew’s) usages. Let us <plug in> Jesus’s clarification of

Matthew chapter 24:21 above into Matthew 1:25: “Joseph was not knowing her **until she birthed** <no, nor ever shall [he] be [knowing her]>”!

This ought to be the most significant Matthew-to-Matthew parallelism for interpreting Scripture-by-Scripture, as especially valued by Bible Christians, not according to any traditions of recent haughty men. This is the structure that is possible to use according to the Biblical principle in order to understand Matthew 1:25 and the virgin birth. Dare I say, that after thirty years of commitment to an unbiblical mode of interpretation using “**until**,” we should expect the Alpha & Omega Ministries’ “tradition of men” shall nevertheless continue in its humanly traditional vein to prop up this invented interpretation in the annals of the history of the Church? In answer: “Yes, we can expect this ‘**until**’ the cows come home,” which means that Dr. White & Co. will keep using this comical argument **even after** the cows come home! The coming of the infant *Son of Man* (Matthew 1:21; 1:25) according to St. Matthew’s literary style of writing parallels the end of his Gospel (and end of the world) where the mature *Son of Man*, originally from Mary the ever-virgin, comes forth in a kind of birth once again! This tit-for-tat parallelism ought, by *Scripture alone (Sola Scriptura)*, to convince any good Protestant or Evangelical of goodwill of Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and Turretin, who were all right. But, then, the recent self-described Bible Christians who are anti-virginalists are entirely wrong! But wait, there’s more! In case you thought Jesus was going to let off easy these self-described Biblical anti-virgin “birthers,” he offers us more by continuing to use the same vocabulary and grammar (that St. Matthew himself uses in chapter 1 to describe the virgin birth and perpetual virginity of Mary) for the end times (Matthew 24:37-39):

A<sub>1</sub> But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of *the Son of Man* be.

B<sub>1</sub> For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, **marrying** and **giving in marriage**, **until the day that Noah entered the ark** (*gamountes kai gamizontes achri hês eisêlthen Nôe eis tèn kibôtôn*)

B<sub>2</sub> and they did not know **until the flood came and took them all away** (*kai ouk egnôsan heôs êlthen ho kataklismos kai êren hapantas*)

A<sub>2</sub> So, also, shall the coming of *the Son of Man* be.

Oh my! The same structure and theme of Joseph **taking Mary into his house** (as he was told to fulfill his engagement-**marriage contract** by Angel Gabriel and *not to divorce* Mary as in Matthew 1:19) is present. When the Son of man shall come like **birth pangs** (Matthew 24:8) then **the unaware people on earth shall also be marrying and eating, etc.** This concept complements Matthew 1:18-1:25 and Joseph himself being unaware of *the Son of Man* about **to be born** from a virgin, whether we compare Matthew chapters 1 & 24 in their themes, or vocabulary, or even their syntax and grammar. Now, Jesus says in Matthew chapter 24:38 that **marrying** was taking place: “**until the day Noah entered the ark.**” “Aha,” the unbiblical Bible-alone anti-virginalist shall shout, “When Noah entered the ark, did humanity *really* all continue to eat and drink and be merry? Weren’t they killed by the flood? Ha, ha, Gotcha!” Nope! the Bible says that the evildoers had seven more days of normality (eating, drinking, **marrying**) in the world before God smote them all. So, let’s take a look at what *Jesus* (not anti-virginalists) mean by **until** in Genesis chapter 7 (NKJV):



Then the Lord said to Noah, “Come into the ark, you and all your household [...] **For after seven more days** I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made.” <sup>5</sup> And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him. [...]’ So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. **And it came to pass after seven days** that the waters of the flood were on the earth. <sup>11</sup> In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. <sup>12</sup> And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.

So, next, Jesus uses yet another slightly alternative structure, not unlike Matthew 1:25, to drive home our point about: “Joseph was not knowing (continuous action)” versus Matthew 24:38 “**They were marrying.**” Let us read Matthew 24:39 where **they are marrying**: “**until the day (achri hês hêmeras) when Noah entered the ark.**” This is parallel to Matthew 1:25, where Joseph was not touching Mary: “**until the time when she birthed.**” Two out of two times, in a birthing context (whether literal or metaphorical), when Jesus uses “**until a period of time when,**” Jesus clearly means that the action continues afterwards. So, just as Noahide people kept eating and drinking and **marrying** in the world for some time after Noah entered the ark, so too Joseph, by Matthew’s and Jesus’s combined usages, keeps abstaining from sexual relations **after the birth of a son.**

Yet, that’s not all folks! Jesus uses yet a third example of this phrase in the overall context of a **birthing** metaphor to drive home the point of what he means by “**until.**” We read in the final verse of what happened on after the seventh day, when the waters suddenly opened up under the earth and a giant cataclysm killed all Noah’s mockers, while at the same time tons of water poured from the heavens: “**(they are still marrying)** and they [the people outside the ark] did not know (egnôsan) **until the flood came and took them all away**” (Matthew 24:39). The word “**flood**” is from the Greek “**cataclysm**” in both the Greek Old Testament or Septuagint and in St. Matthew’s Gospel. It’s clear that Jesus is being translated to agree with Sacred Scripture in the only version of the Bible that existed to Greek readers and Greek writers of the New Testament to quote from in the first century. For the most part, that’s what both St. Matthew and the other New Testament writers do, they find the quote they need nearly always in the Greek Old Testament (unless they paraphrase, save the very rare exception when a non-Septuagint quote appears). Notice the parallelism in St. Matthew:

Matthew 1:25: And [Joseph] was not knowing her **until she had birthed her firstborn Son.**

Matthew 24:39: And they [the people outside the ark] did not know **until the flood came and took them all away.**

Now, we should be concluding that Jesus' third use of this construct, just like the other two that we investigated in Matthew chapter 24, means: "They didn't know they were at the destruction of the world, and, afterwards, due to their sudden death they never did know!" But, might we be reading into this? In answer, if we compare both Hebrew and Greek Genesis 7:23, we immediately see that Jesus's phrase: "took them all away," is in reference to a verse that mentions all human beings being killed. The sense of the verse implies a sudden **cataclysmic** event and no time to react. Nobody, not even one animal of any species, was able to have the time or opportunity to survive *or to know what was happening*. The Bible is definitive that all were wiped away instantaneously, as if by a giant tsunami. This coincides with Jesus's examples in Matthew chapter 24:40-41: "Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left." This instantaneous destruction is the very key point for interpretation. This seems to be a perfect fit for Ecclesiastes 9:5: "For the living know that they will die; But **the dead know nothing**, and they have no more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten." Thus, Jesus means to say that "**until**" denotes continued ignorance by the enemies of Noah at the moment of cataclysm where they died instantaneously, just like the example of the man taken in the field and the woman at the mill. However, we should probably expect no mental or literary improvements by anti-virginal apologists on this score **until** they can admit they *have not* for decades understood in the least the Bible on this point ("**until**" means here that it's probably never going to happen!).

## Conclusions

As we have seen through each of our examinations of the relevant passages that are brought up to challenge the virginal integrity of Mary the overwhelming amount of evidence leads us to the eventual conclusion that the earliest Christians were correct in calling Mary *aieparthenos*, or ever-virgin. After St. Jerome's utter refutation and destruction of the Arian Helvidius' heresy-filled pamphlet, the poison from the venomous serpent would infect others and lead them down the path of heterodoxy. Just a short ten years after the great Doctor Biblicus (of the Bible!) took Helvidius to task for his poor grasp of the biblical passages, another denier of the faith, Bonosus was to rear his heretical head. Bonosus used as his rallying cry that there are several usages of "**until**" (*heos*), where the state of the individual changes after the "**until**". There are 49 times that "**heos**" is used in the Gospel of St. Matthew, and rather than relying on the actual context, the divinity-deniers insisted that the usage had to indicate that Mary would eventually have sexual relations with St. Joseph. First, Pope St. Damasus had to deal with the arguments raging from the venomous lies spread by Helvidius, which St. Jerome had so aptly refuted in a definitive fashion. Now, the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century saw Bonosus picking up the torch that Helvidius dropped and causing a further headache for Pope St. Siricius. It was then that Pope St. Siricius remarked that this forerunner of Nestorius should be aware that this was not a matter open for discussion. The context of the Bible was clear enough for St. Jerome so that he also noticed the action continuing even after the usage of "**until**" in the inspired text. The surrounding evidence is accentuated even

more. So, we now recognize that the very same kind of usage for “**until**” is employed by the very same author St. Matthew within his very same Gospel! It is no wonder why the most erudite Fathers who knew the original languages of the Bible thought such arguments that had arisen from the heretics (and are more recently carried on by modern day virginity-deniers) were so absurd. It was common for Christ to speak in metaphors to make certain striking and sharp points that pointed his audience to some broader truth. It is abundantly clear that the text in the Gospel is cluing us into the fact that St. Joseph will continue to refrain from sexual relations **even after** Christ is born. The clear usage of the abstaining from sexual activity after “**until**” in St. Matthew and the very words off of the lips of Jesus Christ are direct points of reference that cannot be avoided. This is why St. Jerome responded in an absolutely incredulous manner towards Helvidius, especially using counterexamples of “**until**,” contrary to the anti-virginalist mindset of the Arian who might find in the very surrounding text of the same Gospel what the heretics love to wrench out of context! It is also no wonder that St. John Chrysostom, pillar of the Church, who was proficient in his native Greek, scoffed at the arguments levied at the Christians that came from Matthew 1:25. The Golden-mouthed doctor wrote one of the most extensive commentaries on St. Matthew’s gospel and would have been aware of the metaphors of birth. He himself was quite meticulous in noting the reference to the birthing metaphor for the Son of Man. The overwhelming consensus of the Biblical text, the early Church Fathers, Councils, and even Protestant Reformers, should finally shut the door on these poorly devised arguments.