

# CSI “BEGGETTING”

## Mistranslations, corruptions and bias on the origin of the Son

As the saying goes, ‘for those who came in late’, the title of this study takes after those popular crime shows on television which are involved in *Crime Scene Investigations* of all kinds. The Bible is riddled with them. As we will see, these are ‘crimes’ committed by people not only in the past but also in the present. This article will take on the style of those shows, in an effort not only to uncover the biblical crime scene, but to try and bring clarity to the issues at hand.

### The Evidence

Our first case deals with those texts associated with the “begetting” of the Son of God, “the man Messiah Jesus” [1Tim 2.5]. As the evidence will show, there is a strong case to be made that very early in the transmission of the NT letters, people at times sought to obscure and, in some extreme cases, totally remove evidence relating the *unique creation* by God of His Son. This took place not in some “time before time” [as per the Creeds], but in a small Jewish village near Jerusalem some 2 000+ years ago.

### Exhibit A: Ps 2.7

While our first exhibit does not necessarily show any signs of tampering or indeed corruption, it is those verses associated with it that will lead us to the ‘crime scene’.

As it stands, the text of Ps 2.7 says:

“You are my son. Today I have *begotten* you.” [cp. 2Sam 7.14]

The verse as it appears in the Greek translation of the Bible [some 300 years before Christ] translates the Hebrew for “begotten” [*yalad*] as *gennaō*. Scholars are adamant that, in its OT usage/background, “the few passages (Dt. 32:[15], 18; Ps. 2.7; LXX 110.3[LXX 109.3]) in which God appears as subject of [*yalad*] *must be interpreted figuratively*”. So that in each case these verses allude to the “*enthronement* of the [Davidic] king”<sup>1</sup>, as opposed to his physical/literal “begetting” by YHWH. Yet, the verse as used by the NT writers [Acts 13.33; Heb 1.5; 5.5] gives it an altogether *literal*, as opposed to *figurative*, meaning. It is here where we will discover clear signs of ‘violence’ based on Christological bias.

The verse is first cited by the writer of Acts [13.33] in a sermon the Apostle Paul gave to a Synagogue in Pisidia, Antioch. Paul aptly explains how some of the Jews did not recognize Jesus as the promised Messiah because they could “not understand the words of the prophets” [v.27]. Though unjustly killed as

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<sup>1</sup> *TDOT*, *yalad*. Emphasis mine.

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a criminal, God raised him from the dead, thus proving to everyone that he was the Messiah. Paul then explains how these events were brought to completion when God “*raised up* Jesus, as it was written” in **Ps 2.7**.

#### Crime scene 1: Acts 13.33

Early on in the translation of v.33, it was taken as a second reference [the first being at v.30] to Jesus having been ‘*raised up* from the dead’. For example the KJV [1611] added the word “again”, whereas some modern translators paraphrase it as “from the dead”<sup>2</sup>. This has led to its wide acceptance amongst many noted scholars<sup>3</sup> and commentators.

For example, the popular *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of the NT*, under their definition of *gennaō* in **Mat 1.20** makes the claim that “it is used of the act of God in the birth of Christ, **Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5**, quoted from **Psalm 2:7**, *none of which indicate that Christ became the Son of God at His birth.*” Yet, when giving us the definition of the Greek word translated “raise (up)” [*anistemi*] they note:

“[It is] said of Christ, **Acts 3:26; 7:37; 13:33**, RV, ‘raised up Jesus,’ *not here by resurrection from the dead, as the superfluous ‘again’* of the AV [NCV; WNT] would suggest; this is confirmed by the latter part of the verse, which explains the ‘raising’ up as being *by way of His incarnation*, and by the contrast in **ver. 34**, where stress is laid upon His being ‘raised’ from the dead, the same verb being used.”

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<sup>2</sup> New Century Version; Wycliffe NT; Authorized Version; also reflected in all major Spanish translations, RV1960, 1995; NVI; LBLA; GOD’S WORD Translation reads, “by bringing Jesus back to life”.

<sup>3</sup> “There is a wide measure of agreement that the earliest (traceable) Christian use of **Ps. 2.7** was probably in reference to Jesus’ resurrection along the lines of **Acts 13.33**...spoken of as a fulfillment of the divine promise to Israel, a promise expressed in **Ps 2.7**...as the day of his appointment to divine sonship, as the event by which he became God’s son.” Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, pp 35-36. Dunn cites prominent scholars including: Brown, *Birth*, pp. 29f., 136; J.H. Hayes, ‘The Resurrection as Enthronement and the Earliest Church Christology’, *Interpretation* 22, 1968, pp. 333-45; Kummel, *Theology*, pp. 110f.; Hengel, *Son*, pp. 61-6. See his “notes to pages 32-35, 35-39”; fn. 138, 142.

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So, even though the word can be used in reference to being “*raised up* from the dead”<sup>4</sup>, the context dictates the meaning of the expression. Thus, in **Acts 13.33**, God is said to have “raised up” His Son onto the scene; a clear allusion to and in complete harmony with, the writer’s use of **Ps 2.7**.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, many have argued [incredibly enough] over the centuries that **Ps 2.7** should be understood in reference to Jesus’ resurrection and not his birth!

A running debate amongst scholars has to do with the variant reading found in some ancient manuscripts, as well as patristic writings that quote **Ps 2:7** in connection with Jesus’ baptism. (Even though the weight of the manuscript testimony is against this reading, some still argue for its inclusion.) Most of these obviously agree with the assumption, as stated above, that Jesus *only became* Son of God at his resurrection and not at his virgin birth<sup>6</sup>.

“Ps 2.7 is much used in the NT. At Acts 13.33 the “to-day” of the generation of the Son of God is the resurrection. At Lk. 3.22 (western reading) it is the baptism...At Hb. 1.5; 5.5...it is again doubtful whether the reference is to his birth or his baptism...This begetting is more than adoption. For the resurrection, in which it was consummated, is the beginning [of something new]...”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> (a) of the resurrection of Christ, **Matt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19**, RV; **26:32**, RV, "(after) I am raised up" (AV, "... risen again"); **Luke 9:22; 20:37; John 2:19; Acts 3:15; 4:10; 10:40; 13:30,37; Rom. 4:24,25; 6:4,9; 7:4; 8:11** (twice); **8:34**, RV; **10:9; 1 Cor. 6:14** (1st part); **15:13,14**, RV; **15:15** (twice),**16-17; 15:20**, RV; **2 Cor. 4:14; Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Pet. 1:21**; in **2 Tim. 2:8**, RV, "risen;" (b) of the resurrection of human beings, **Matt. 10:8; 11:5; Matt. 27:52**, RV (AV, "arose"); **Mark 12:26**, RV; **Luke 7:22; John 5:21; 12:1,9,17; Acts 26:8; 1 Cor. 15:29,32**, RV; **15:35,42-43** (twice),**44,52; 2 Cor. 1:9; 4:14; Heb. 11:19**. *Vine’s*

<sup>5</sup> Note v.22, God “raised [*egeiro*] up David to be their king”.

<sup>6</sup> Thus Ehrman, who argues on the basis of the perceived inconsistencies he finds in the Lukan accounts where the writer predicates christological titles at “different critical moments, or junctures, of [Jesus’] existence [highlighting the tensions] consistently found throughout Luke’s portrayal of Jesus [in his Gospel and book of Acts].” This leads to his conclusion that “**Acts 13.33** states that he *became* the Son of God at his resurrection.” *Orthodox Corruption*, pp 64-67, 1992. Cf. Dunn, *Christology*, pp 35-36.

<sup>7</sup> TDNT, *gennaō*.

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#### Crime scene 3: Heb 1.5-6

The “western reading” of the Lukan account of the baptism seems to have affected the way the parallel accounts of Jesus’ baptism have been transmitted in **Mat 3.17; 17.5; Mar 1.11; Luke 3.22; 9.35**<sup>8</sup>. This is the reason why most scholars wrongly connect **Ps 2.7**<sup>9</sup> to Jesus’ baptism and/or his resurrection.

The context in which these appear “is that Jesus is the Melchizedek high priest and the catena texts which introduces the letter” points to the uniqueness of his sonship in contrast to God’s holy angels. The writer does this by citing two specific OT texts which show YHWH “begetting” a son, the Messianic king.

“This was the world view of the ancient priests of Israel and *owes nothing to Platonism* [where Philo had a similar view, interpreting such priesthood passages like **Lev 16.17** as] *He shall not be a man when he enters the holy of holies...* (*On Dreams* 2.189, 231) For Philo, **the high priest was more than human...** The *Logos* was the High Priest, the King, the Firstborn, the Beginning, the Name, and the Man after God’s Image and his archangel.<sup>10,11</sup>

But, as the comment from the *ESV Study Bible* shows, “Platonism” did take over the biblical meaning of these passages. The *ESV* says that it describes how God entered “into a *new phase* of that Father-Son relationship [so that the text] *should not be pressed* to suggest that the Son *once did not exist* [since God has] begotten the *already living* Son ‘today’”. At **Heb 1.6** they note that “since only God is worthy of worship (**Ex. 20:3–5; Isa. 42:8; Matt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:9**), this is *further evidence* [where’s the rest?] of the Son’s *full deity*.”

Such interpretations of the text go against the language used in the virgin birth accounts. For example, notice the words in the phrase “the holy child *to be born*”. The first is the word *tikto*, variously translated “to *bring forth*, give birth”. This word is related to another that is often used in reference to the Son, *prototokos* [“firstborn”] related to *gennao* [“cause to exist”] and *ginomai* [“come into existence”]. This

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<sup>8</sup> Texts vary between “my Son”; “my (the) Beloved”; and “(only) elect”. See *WBC* verses cited.

<sup>9</sup> “The allusions in the remarks of the text recall **Ps 2:7...**” *NET Bible Online*, **Mar 1.11**.

<sup>10</sup> *On the Migration of Abraham* 102; *On Dreams* 1:215; *On Flight* 118; *On the Confusion of Tongues* 41, 146.

<sup>11</sup> Margaret Barker, ‘The High Priest and the Worship of Jesus’, *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus*, ed., C.C. Newman, J.R. Davila, G.S. Lewis, p. 99, 1999.

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explains why throughout the rest of the NT Jesus is identified by both spiritual beings [the Devil, **Mat 4.3**] and humans [the Baptist; Nathaniel, **John 1.34; 49**] as *the unique Son* of God.

The same sentiment is reflected under the definition in *The Complete WordStudy Dictionary* given to the word *gennaō* in **Mat 1.20**. But in this case the commentators find themselves with no choice but to ‘confess’ giving the game away:

“The designation of this relationship by words with a temporal notion [“*this day* have I *begotten* you”, **Ps 2.7**] has *troubled theologians*, who have proffered *various explanations*. Origen understood this as referring to *the Son's relationship within the Trinity* and was *the first to propose the concept of eternal generation*. The Son is said to be *eternally begotten by the Father*. Others have viewed the language more *figuratively* and connected it with Christ's role as Messiah. Upon *Christ's exaltation* to the Father's right hand, God is said to have appointed, declared or officially installed Christ as a king (**Act 13:33; Rom 1:4; Heb 1:5; 5:5**).”

#### The verdict

What many fail to see with these interpretations are the **clear Gnostic-pagan overtones that they introduce to the biblical text**. As many scholars note, “what we find in **Matthew** and **Luke** is not the story of some sort of *sacred marriage* (*hieros gamos*) or *a divine being* [“**the Son**”] *descending to earth...in the guise of a man*...but rather the story of a *miraculous conception without aid of any man, divine or otherwise*.”<sup>12</sup>

**Ps 40.6** [MT]; [39.7, LXX; **Heb 10.6**, NT]: “*Heb* ‘ears you hollowed out for me.’ The meaning of this **odd expression** is debated (this is **the only collocation of “hollowed out” and “ears” in the OT**). It may have been an **idiomatic expression referring to making a point clear to a listener**.” *NET Bible Online*

“Dr. Kennicott has a very ingenious conjecture here: he supposes that the Septuagint and apostle express the meaning of the words as they stood in the copy from which the Greek translation was made; and that the present Hebrew text is corrupted in the word אַזְנַיִם *oznayim*, ears, which has been written through carelessness for גוּה אֶז [body]...On **this supposition** the ancient copy translated by the Septuagint, and followed by the apostle, must have read the text thus: ‘Then a body thou hast prepared me’: thus the

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<sup>12</sup> Green, Joel B.; McKnight, Scot; Marshall, I. Howard: *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Intervarsity, 1992, S. 70.

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The Ethiopic has nearly the same reading: the Arabic has both, "A body hast thou prepared me, and mine ears thou hast opened." But the Syriac, the Chaldee, and the Vulgate, agree with the present Hebrew text; and none of the MSS. collated by Kennicott and De Rossi have any various reading on the disputed words." *Clarke's Commentary on the Bible*

“The reading *soma de* [a body] could be either a case of an interpretative translation of the Hebrew idiom, which was subsequently corrected in the revisions of Aquila, Theodotian, and Symmachus to read *stia* [ear], in conformity with the Hebrew text.<sup>13</sup> Alternatively, the original *stia* [ear], chosen by the Gottingen Septuagint as the *lectio difficilior*, might have evolved to read *soma* [body] as result of corruption in the transmission of the Greek text.

Textual evidence suggests that the reading *soma* [body] and not *stia* [ear] was more likely to have been the text in the Author's *Vorlage*. This variant also provides a more plausible explanation of the development of the other variant. The Septuagintal reading obviously is more conducive to a Christological interpretation than the Hebrew parallel text.<sup>14</sup>

...the application of this Scripture to the Incarnation of Christ is directly provided by the Septuagint of Ps. 39 LXX [40 MT].” R. Gheorghita, *The Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*, pp. 48-49, 2003.

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<sup>13</sup> Attirdge, Hebrews; Bruce, Hebrews; Lane, Hebrews.

<sup>14</sup> Karen H. Jobes argues unconvincingly that the reading *stia* [ear] in the Author's *Vorlage* was modified to read *soma* [body] on rhetorical considerations, “Rhetorical Achievements in the Hebrews 10 ‘Misquote’ of Ps 40”, *Biblica* 72 (1991) 388.

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“The Greek version cannot well be explained as representing a variant or corrupted Hebrew reading;<sup>15</sup> it is rather an interpretative paraphrase of the Hebrew text. The Greek translator evidently regarded the Hebrew wording as an instance of *pars pro toto* [(taking) a part for the whole]; the “digging” or hollowing out of the ears is part of the total work of fashioning a human body.<sup>16</sup> Accordingly he [Hebrews writer] rendered it in terms which express *totum pro parte* [(taking) the whole for the part]. The body which was “fashioned” for the speaker by God is given back to God as a “living sacrifice”, to be employed in obedient service to him.

But if our author had preferred the Hebrew wording, it would have served his purpose almost as well, for in addition to reminding him and his readers of the psalm from which it was taken, it might have reminded them also of the Isaianic Servant’s language in the third Servant Song [Isa 50.4f.]” F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p 240, 1990.

“The early Christians understood the psalm as messianic prophecy, vv. 6-8 are quoted in Heb 10.5-7 in the LXX version where the somewhat curious Hebrew ‘ears you have dug for me’ (NRSV ‘you have given me an open ear’) is replaced by ‘you have prepared a body for me’, which was taken to be a reference to the incarnation. The origin of the LXX phrase is uncertain; it may have been internal Greek corruption (the Gk. Words for ‘ears’ and ‘body’ are not too dissimilar, but could hardly have been confused except in a damaged MS) or a part of the body (‘ears’) may have been taken to represent the whole.” J. Barton, J. Muddiman, *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, p 379, 2001.

**Ps 110.3** [MT]; **Ps 109.3** [LXX] “...the clause LXX Ps. 109:3 [“I have begotten thee from the womb before the morning”, Brenton] is comparable to **Ps. 2:7ab.b** [MT/LXX]... LXX **Ps. 109:3** is easier to read

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<sup>15</sup> As though MT *‘oznayim*, “ears”, were a corruption of *‘az gawah*, “then a body” (B. Kennitcott). Neither can *soma* be satisfactorily explained as due to a corruption in the transmission of the LXX, as though it replaced an earlier *stia* (“ears”), as has been suggested, e.g., by F. Bleek, G. Lunemann, and A. Kuyper. J. Moffat says: “Whether *stia* was corrupted into *soma*, or whether the latter was an independent translation, is of no moment” (ICC, *ad loc.*); true enough, but that it is a corruption is, as F. Delitzsch rightly says (*ad loc.*), “highly improbable”. (Aquila, Theodotian, and Symmachus, with Origen’s Quinta and Sexta, and some late LXX editions, read *stia*, by way of conformity to the MT.)

<sup>16</sup> There is no ground for relating **Ps. 40:6** to the boring of the servant’s ear in **Ex. 21:6**; **Deut 15:17**.

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and comprehend than the MT counterpart... The idea, then, is that it reflects a Hebrew *Vorlage* that depicts Yahweh’s giving birth in a way comparable to **Ps. 2:7**. Moreover, the difficult MT, on the contrary, assumed to be the result of a corruption.”<sup>17</sup>

“...refers to the king’s **divine adoption** (see on **Ps 2**), although **the text of verse 3 is obscure and poorly preserved**... Verse 3 would be sort of poetic commentary of **Ps 2:7**.”<sup>18</sup>

“...the LXX translation is rather surprising [, though it could be] justified as free renderings of the Hebrew... **Ps 110.3 is never explicitly cited in the NT period**. It was **not until Justin took it up in the middle of the second century AD** (*Dial.* 63.3<sup>19</sup>; 76.7<sup>20</sup>) that it **began to be used as a prophecy of Christ’s pre-existence**.”<sup>21</sup>

“The interpretation of this verse is so **uncertain** that it cannot be given a place of importance...the problem is complicated by **extensive corruption [mutilation]** of the text of **Ps 110, especially v. 3**. Rowley has stated the matter thus: **the MT text is certainly not in its original form; the textual difficulties are so great as to render restoration impossible**.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Gard Granerod, *Abraham and Melchizedek: Scribal Activity of Second Temple Times in Genesis 14 and Psalm 110*, pp 177-78, 2010.

<sup>18</sup> L. Sabouring, *The Psalms, their Origin and Meaning*, pp 360-61, 1969.

<sup>19</sup> “Trypho said, ‘This point has been proved to me forcibly, and by many arguments, my friend. It remains, then, to prove that He submitted to become man by the Virgin, according to the will of His Father’...I answered, ‘This, too, has been already demonstrated by me in the previously quoted words of the prophecies...what is said by David, ‘In the splendours of Thy holiness have **I begotten Thee from the womb, before the morning star**’...does this not declare to you that [He was] from of old, and **that the God and Father of all things intended Him to be begotten by a human womb?**...Therefore these words testify explicitly that He is witnessed to by Him who established these things, as **deserving to be worshipped, as God and as Christ**.”

<sup>20</sup> “David predicted that **He would be born from the womb before sun and moon**, according to the Father’s will, and made Him known, **being Christ, as God strong and to be worshipped**.”

<sup>21</sup> Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, pp. 70-75, 1992.

<sup>22</sup> *Festschrift Alfred Bertholet*, Tubingen, 1950, pp. 469-70, n.3. Eerdmans comments: “All translations are little more than presumptions”—*op. cit.* 501f. Ringgren, however, suggests that “even the MT might be intelligible



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For the MT’s “Your youth” several MSS, HO, LXX and Syriac appear to have read, “**I have begotten you.**” MT’s form is rare, occurring only in Eccles 11.9 [the consonants without the vowels]; **while LXX’s reading is identical with that of Ps 2.7 in both MT and the Versions...many recent commentators have preferred the LXX’s variation.**<sup>23</sup>

In the light of the Versions of Ps 110.3 and of other texts examined in the present study, a conception of God’s “begetting” the Messiah **need not be regarded as a later messianic interpretation of royal psalms**; the conception was **taken over intact from the earlier psalms.**

The king is “begotten” or “brought forth”, by God; he **becomes God’s son**, receiving thereby the **special status and powers of one in close relationship to God** and in the capacity of **standing for or representing** the people before God.”<sup>24</sup>

**Mat 1.1, 18:** Some early scribes who were uncomfortable with “*genesis*” (“*engendering*”) changed it to “*genesis*” (“*birth*”). Textual critic Bart Ehrman explains why.

“Both *genesis* and *gennesis* can mean ‘birth’, so that either one could be appropriate in the context. But unlike the corrupted reading, ***genesis* can also mean ‘creation’, ‘beginning’ and ‘origination’.** When one now asks why scribes might take umbrage at Matthew’s description of the *genesis* of Jesus Christ, the answer immediately suggests itself: **the original text could well be taken to imply that this is the moment in which Jesus Christ comes into [existence].** In point of fact, **there is nothing in Matthew’s narrative**, either here or elsewhere throughout the Gospel, to suggest that **he knew or subscribed to the notion that Christ had existed prior to his birth.**”<sup>25</sup>

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without changes”: *The Messiah in the Old Testament*, London, 1956, p.14. Johnson’s reconstruction also follows the consonantal text of the Hebrew: *op. cit.*, pp. 121ff.

<sup>23</sup> *Inter alia*: Mowinckel, T.C. Vriezen, Johnson, Widengren.

<sup>24</sup> Cooke, Gerald. ‘The Israelite King as Son of God.’ *ZAW* 73 (1961): pp 218-225.

<sup>25</sup> Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, p 75-76, 1993.

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**Mat 1.20:** Of the 96 times the Greek word *gennaō* appears in the New Testament, this is the only place where it has been rendered ‘conceived’. That should tell us something. ‘Conceived’ is not the intended meaning of the original Greek.

According to *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* by Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich, *gennaō* means ‘to beget — literally to become the father of’ as in **Matthew 1:2-16** and **Acts 7:8, 29...**

Fenton's translation says the conception was ‘produced by the Holy Spirit’. Rotherham's translation says, ‘the source of the pregnancy being the Holy Spirit’. William's translation renders the passage, ‘for it is through the influence of the Holy Spirit that she has become an expectant mother’. **You could substitute the word ‘produced’ with ‘caused’, ‘generated’, ‘brought forth’ or ‘begotten’ and the meaning would still be the same.** *Gennaō* refers here to **the action of the Holy Spirit in producing or causing the conception.** *Gennaō* does not mean ‘conception’ in this verse any more than it means ‘quarrels’ in **2 Timothy 2:23**.

Contrary to what some have thought, *Strong's* dictionary does not say *gennaō* means conceived. Strong says the word *gennaō* means ‘to procreate (properly of the father, but by extension the mother); fig. to regenerate’. That's where the definition ends. Strong goes on to cite the various ways the King James translators render *gennaō*. But **a rendering is not a definition.**”<sup>26</sup>

### Luke 1.35

According to the *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, **Luke 1.31** “follows *the typical Old Testament structure for a divine birth announcement*”<sup>27</sup>. The story echoes the miraculous accounts of the patriarch Isaac, whose parents were too old to conceive [**Gen 21**], and Samson, whose story closely parallels that of Jesus [**Judg. 13**]:

“The point of [**Luke**] **1:36–37** is that God, who acted for Elizabeth as he did for Sarah, *could still do anything* (**Gen 18:12–15**).”<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Gene Nouhan, *The Meaning of Gennaō in Matthew 1.20*.

<sup>27</sup> Keener, Craig S.: *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. Intervarsity, 1993, S. **Lk 1:31**

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* S. **Lk 1:36**.

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**John 1.18:** “The earliest manuscripts say **the only God** (using the same word for “only” as 1:14, meaning “unique, one-of-a-kind”). John refers to **two different persons here as “God,” as he did in v. 1**. John concludes the prologue by emphasizing what he taught in v. 1: **Jesus as the Word is God**, and he has revealed and explained God to humanity.” *ESV*

**1 John 5.18:** “**He who was born of God** is a reference to Jesus Christ, who **in his physical birth** was “born of God” in that **he was sent from God the Father** and was conceived by the Holy Spirit (**Luke 1:35**) and **in his resurrection from the dead was “born of God”** in that he was brought back to life (**Col. 1:18**).” *ESV*

**Heb 10.6:** **a body have you prepared for me**. The *esv* translates the corresponding phrase in **Ps. 40:6** as, “you have given me an open ear.” Literally, the Masoretic (Hb.) text reads, “ears you have dug for me” (**Ps. 40:7–9** MT). The **Hebrew metaphor** has been understood by the Septuagint translators (**Ps. 39:7–9** lxx) and by the writer of Hebrews to indicate **the physical creation of a person's body**. (NT quotations of OT texts are not always precise; **NT authors often reword them or adapt them to suit their own purposes, yet always in a way that is compatible with their original meaning.**) *ESV*