

# The Necessity of the Virgin Birth

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Date: 06 December 2015

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[ 0 : 00 ] It is the season to deviate from normal plans, and so we will not be looking at 1 Samuel tonight.

Rather, we are going to be looking at a subject that every time Christmas rolls around, I cannot resist to speak on the subject of virgin birth. So we are going to be talking about that tonight. And I got to thinking about it before the worship service tonight. I was thinking, this is like preaching to the choir. I doubt seriously that we have anybody in this building tonight that has any doubt whatsoever about the truth of the virgin birth.

And yet you very likely have friends, maybe family members, others who might challenge you on that particular subject. There might be those who say, well, you know, if you want to believe that, that's okay with me.

I believe differently. And so, you know, really, actually, it just really doesn't matter. There are people who will say that. And so I want to make sure that God's people know why, not just that we believe in the virgin birth, but why.

[ 1 : 24 ] What is the evidence for it? And it certainly is. But what is the word of God on that issue? And is it important? And my answer to that is absolutely. Absolutely. I've had this conversation with a number of people over the years about doctrine, what doctrines are crucial, what doctrines will maybe there could be some variances in interpretation, what doctrines are kind of on the peripheral part of our theological stance.

And maybe, you know, they don't matter as much as far as fellowship and so forth. And I think there are doctrines that I would say go inside the bullseye. If you could kind of picture a target with the bullseye and the rings that go out from the bullseye.

There are doctrines that go right there in the bullseye. And they're non-negotiable. There are doctrines that not only have ramifications for fellowship. There are doctrines that make the dividing line between what's Christian and what is not.

They're non-negotiable. I want you to know that your pastor believes with all of his heart that the virgin birth belongs in the bullseye. This is what we'll talk about tonight. And then there may be some other doctrines that we hold to as Baptists.

And maybe some different views, different interpretations. But maybe differing views don't have ramification regarding fellowship. But the virgin birth definitely does.

[ 2 : 52 ] It is absolutely necessary. In fact, I had planned on starting tonight by asking the question, Is it absolutely necessary that a person believe in the virgin-conceived, virgin-born Jesus?

And the answer to that question is yes. It's absolutely necessary. Now there are those who will argue that point. And there are those who we might even label as, quote, theologians, scholars when it comes to the Word of God.

I would call them liberal scholars. Really theological liberalism is still alive in our day. Absolutely. There was a time earlier in the 20th century when theological liberalism was flourishing in our country in the early 1900s.

Later it was replaced by neo-orthodoxy. Which, in my opinion, is just as bad. Because it's the scholars within that category.

Theological liberalism and neo-orthodoxy have sought many of them to demythologize the Bible. Now what would that mean? Is the Bible full of myth?

[ 4 : 06 ] Well, they would argue that it is. And so many of these liberal scholars who were influenced by German theologians in the early part of the 1900s and even earlier than that argued that much of the Bible is myth.

Just myth. Not all of it, but much of it is. And it may be of spiritual value. They might argue and would argue it's of spiritual value. Especially those of the neo-orthodox ilk.

Would say, you know, the inspiration of Scripture is where God's Word inspires you. It's where God's Word touches your life. That's the inspired Word. But they would not go so far as to say that all of God's Word is inerrant and inspired.

And there are many who have searched through Scripture and all those things that come under the category of supernatural. They would label as myth. And so any miracle account in the New Testament and Old Testament, liberal theologians would label myth.

Most of Genesis chapter 1 through 11 would be thrown out of the Bible by many liberal theologians. The miracles that we see in the book of Exodus, they would be thrown out.

[ 5 : 19 ] Or rather, they would be, many times they're explained as natural phenomena. You know, I just hate it when I turn on, you know, public TV or something. They're having some special on some miracle in the Bible.

And they'll spend an hour trying to explain it in some natural way. And, you know, sometimes you might catch yourself sitting back and listening to that and say, You know, that's interesting.

And maybe that's true. Maybe the Red Sea didn't part. Maybe there was just an earthquake. Maybe there was a big wind that came at that time. And so sometimes Christians will say, Well, at least God was working in the wind.

Or Moses didn't turn the Nile into blood. Actually, there was, you know, some fish that gave off this certain kind of colored dye.

And it just happened to happen at that particular time. And so it's just really crazy to try to explain away the miracles by finding some natural explanation.

[ 6 : 19 ] And that's part of this demythologizing of the Bible. And they would include the virgin birth in that. That the virgin birth is a myth.

The virgin birth is not true. The virgin birth is something that was fabricated by Christians in the early centuries of the church and so forth.

And so the virgin birth has always been in the crosshairs of liberal theologians. So let me give you a reason why this is the case before we actually look at the biblical evidence for the virgin birth.

Let me give you a reason why there is unbelief regarding the virgin birth. And it's really very logical if you'll think about it in these terms. I think you'll say, Well, you know, that makes sense.

Because if Jesus was born of a virgin, then who is he? He's God incarnate. All right, he's God incarnate. And if God, if he is God incarnate, then guess what?

[ 7 : 22 ] Everything that he said is authoritative. All right, and so we get back to the question, Why would that be, why do people not want to believe in the virgin birth?

And why would this be such a problem with many people? Well, because if Jesus is God incarnate, and if what he said is authoritative, then everyone must believe what he said.

Everyone must obey his teachings. And not just the part that's printed in red in your Bibles, but the whole of the Bible, because Jesus upheld the authority of the whole Word of God.

Now, obviously, unregenerate man, unbelievers, do not want to live according to the teachings of Christ. Do they?

No, they don't. And unregenerate people, men, women, they want to live any way they want to live. Psalm 14.1 describes people like that.

[ 8 : 23 ] The fool has said in his heart, There is no God, which literally means, by the way, no God for me. No God to rule over me. No God to tell me what to do.

No God to make me feel guilty, you know, in life when I do some of the things I want to do. No God to judge me, ultimately. That's the fool. And so, what do you have if Jesus was not virgin born? Well, simple. You just have a man. You just have a man. Albeit an exceptional man. Okay, we'll give you that.

But he would be just a man. And what does that make his life in ministry? Well, it makes it little more than simply a moral life, or a life of moral and ethical instruction.

And so, what does that do to the cross? You see how logical this is. What does that do to the cross? Well, it renders it little more than just a moral example. We've got to remember that. That's why this is so crucial.

[ 9 : 24 ] It just makes the cross an example of humility. Or it makes the cross an example of self-sacrifice. All very good things. And yet, that's not all of what, and the most important thing that

the cross was.

Because this view, if Jesus was not virgin born, and therefore he's not God incarnate, then his life was just a life of moral, ethical instruction, and therefore the cross was just simply an example, or an expression of his love.

And that's as far as you can go with it. But, if that is all the cross is about, then it really only amounts to something you can take or leave. Right? I mean, if the cross is only simply Jesus being an example, being an example of humility, or being a moral example for us, if that's all the cross is all about, then you can take that or leave it.

And there are no ramifications for whichever decision you make. Because it makes no eternal demands upon you, upon your life. What you believe, how you live, your standing before God, your eternity, and so forth, makes no demands in regard to that.

If the cross is just simply an example of Jesus' humility, or him being a moral example of self-sacrificial love. All right, so here is yet another question.

[ 10 : 51 ] If you wanted to discredit, or destroy the gospel, or render it of little effect, then how would you do it? What would be one way you could do it?

Well, simple. Just convince people that Jesus was born just like every other man. That Jesus was not virgin born, or convince people at least it doesn't really matter that much.

I mean, if you believe in that, that's fine. If you don't, then that's fine too. It's really not that important. And maybe it is a doctrine, but it's of lesser importance. And so that's what you could do.

Just convince people that Jesus was born like any other person. Or convince them that it really doesn't matter one way or the other. But the virgin birth did happen.

And it points, if it points at anything, it points to the deity of Jesus Christ. And when it comes to the deity of Jesus Christ, there are really just four options that you could go with.

[ 11 : 56 ] Either he was a liar because he claimed to be God. Or he was a lunatic because he believed he was God. Or he was a deceiver because countless millions have followed him as God.

Or he is God. All right, that's really it. And he can only be God if the virgin birth is true. All right, so if you want to make a case for the virgin birth, then where do you begin?

Well, you begin with the word of God. Or what I would call the reliability of God's word. The reliability of God's word. That's where we begin.

Because, you see, to deny the virgin birth is to deny the veracity, the truthfulness, the reliability of the Bible, God's holy word.

Well, you know, someone might object to the importance of the virgin birth on the basis that it's only mentioned a couple of times directly or specifically. Matthew 1 and Luke 1.

[ 13 : 04 ] All right, so they might argue that, you know, how can you build this doctrine and put it forth as absolutely crucial Christianity when it only appears a couple of times in the scripture?

You know, Mark and John, they don't say anything about it. Well, my answer to that right off in the first place, how many times does the Bible have to say something before it is true?

Really, I think just one time. Oh, it needs to say it. But in the second place, Matthew and Luke are not the only books in the Bible that mention the virgin birth. That's the better answer.

And it was not some new thing, you know, when we get to the New Testament, not some new thing when Matthew and Luke recorded it in their gospel accounts.

It was not some new doctrine that was revealed only in the New Testament. You know, some would argue there's this progressive revelation. And so this doctrine really didn't even exist until we get to the New Testament.

[ 14 : 03 ] So maybe it was just fabricated by Christians early in the first century to add some kind of credibility to their theology.

But it didn't just begin in the New Testament. The virgin birth didn't just come out of nowhere when it appeared in the New Testament. And there are several Old Testament passages that reveal the truth of the virgin birth.

I want to give them to you. We can go all the way back to Genesis chapter 3 and verse 15. Genesis chapter 3 verse 15. And you might remember what that passage is about, the context of that passage.

Adam and Eve have sinned in the garden. Eve listened to the serpent. Adam listened to Eve, and they got into big trouble. And so God is pronouncing judgment, or the curse as we say.

And he said in chapter 3 verse 15, and I will put enmity, or opposition, between you, speaking to the serpent, who is Satan of course, I will put opposition between you, Satan, and the woman.

[15:14] Alright, so there is coming, there's going to be a hatred. There's going to be hostility between Satan and Eve. Now, we certainly know that there is going to be a constant opposition between those who are Satan's and those who are God's.

But notice what, remember what it says in the passage, and I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed.

Now, that's important. Because the word seed in the passage is in the singular. It's not plural. Not plural, it's singular.

And so this is a reference to a single person who will come out from Eve. That's going to be many, several thousand years before this seed comes, but it's a reference to the Messiah.

But even more significantly, and I think even amazing, is the phrase, her seed. That really is the crucial thing. Not only seed in a singular sense, and therefore something that's looking forward to the Messiah, but the Bible says her seed.

[16:30] Eve's seed. Which introduces something physically impossible. Okay? A woman with a seed. Because the seed is in the man, not the woman.

Alright? So this is not the way you would put it. This would be impossible. And that's exactly right. The virgin birth is impossible, apart from a miraculous God.

And this is the only time in Scripture that it's ever said that a woman has a seed. Now listen, God is saying to Satan here, and to Adam and Eve, by extension to us as well, he's saying that one day there will be a woman who will have a seed, and that seed, God says in this passage, shall crush, shall crush your head.

Speaking to the serpent, speaking to Satan, shall crush your head, and you shall bruise his heel, which of course is an allusion to the cross. Alright? So only one woman in all of history has had a seed.

And it is who? It's Mary. Mary, and her son was Jesus. Of course, you know that. Here's a second passage. Isaiah chapter 7, verse 14.

[17:50] Prophet Isaiah is speaking to King Ahaz, and the prophet Isaiah says, Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel. Now that is a clear prophecy of the future.

Now it certainly applied in some sense to the immediate, to Ahaz's situation, and Israel's situation, and God's promise to deliver them.

And he said, I'll give you a sign. Just whatever sign you want. And Ahaz says, I don't want a sign. And so the Lord says, I'll give you a sign. A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel.

Now, there's been much said from the liberal side about the word virgin there in the Hebrew text in Isaiah 7, 14. The Hebrew word there can be translated maid or maiden or young woman and not virgin.

[19:02] All right? It can be translated that way. But I want you to consider a few things about that. First of all, of the nine times the word, this very word appears in the Old Testament, eight out of those nine times it is used in clear reference to a virgin.

All right? So the word almost always in Scripture refers to a virgin. Second, even if maiden is a correct translation or young woman, if that's the intended meaning, then the natural assumption would be that she's a virgin.

It would just be a natural connection. Maid and young woman, the natural assumption is that she is a virgin. So the words maiden and virgin were typically synonymous terms in the Hebrew.

Third, if the idea in Isaiah 7.14 is that of a young woman or a maiden that would give birth to a son, then what kind of sign would that be?

I mean, what kind of miracle would that be? I mean, there's nothing out of the ordinary about a young woman having a baby. Right? Happens all the time. And so, the prophet Isaiah is coming and the Lord speaking through him to Ahaz and said, I'll give you a sign, a sign, a miracle.

[20:26] A virgin shall conceive and have a child. And if it's just simply a young woman, then that's no kind of miracle at all. Fourth, in Matthew chapter 1 and verse 23, Matthew quotes Isaiah chapter 7 and verse 14, and he used the Greek word that can only be translated virgin.

All right? So, if you're Matthew and, of course, you're guided by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and so what you're writing down is God's word and the Holy Spirit leads you to quote from an Old Testament passage, Isaiah 7, 14, but you're going to quote it in Greek, then if Isaiah 7, 14 means to say a young woman shall have a child, be pregnant, and have a child, then as a Greek speaking person you might select a Greek word that would convey that idea.

And yet Matthew didn't do that. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit he chose a Greek word that means virgin. It only means virgin. It's Parthenos.

Parthenos in the Greek and refers to virgin. Refers to virgin. And an example, you can have an example in 1 Corinthians 7, 34, Paul makes a distinction between a virgin, Parthenos, and a wife, Gune.

All right, so he makes a distinction. So obviously we're talking about, Matthew's talking about, and he's quoting Isaiah 7, 14, he is referencing a virgin that shall be with child and shall have a child.

[ 22 : 07 ] Fifth, and this is interesting, I think, there is a special emphasis in the Hebrew text in Isaiah 7, 14 that really has no counterpart in English grammar.

And it is this phrase, the virgin shall conceive. That's how it's translated in the New King James. A virgin, the virgin shall conceive. Now in the English, shall conceive is a verb.

It's a verb, all right? Sounds like one too, doesn't it? But in the Hebrew text, shall conceive is an adjective.

You say, well, what difference does that make? Well, the English text reads this way, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, but the Hebrew text, if we were to translate it literally, and it would sound really strange, but that's the point, the Hebrew text translated literally would read, the pregnant virgin shall bear a son.

Now, that's strange, isn't it? I mean, what an oxymoron. A pregnant virgin. I mean, which is it? How can there be such a thing?

[ 23 : 17 ] An already pregnant virgin bears a son. That's a sign, you see. That's a miracle. And that's the point of Isaiah 7.14. And so, here are already several passages in the Old Testament that are pointing forward, prophesying the coming of the Messiah, and both of those passages refer to the Messiah coming virgin born.

Here's a third one. Jeremiah chapter 31 and verse 22 where the Bible says, How long will you gad about, O you backsliding daughter? For the Lord has created a new thing in the earth.

A woman shall encompass a man. A woman shall encompass a man. Now, this, of course, is a prophecy. Alright? It's a prophecy. And the Lord has said He's creating a new thing.

Alright? A new thing. And what is that new thing? Well, according to the prophecy, a woman shall encompass a man. Now, that's something new, He's saying.

And so, what does that mean? Well, this would never be said of the birth of a child in the natural way. In fact, we have a number of writings of ancient rabbis regarding the birth of the Messiah.

[ 24 : 35 ] For example, there's one by the name of A.C. Gableen. And he said, or wrote, The birth of the Messiah shall be like the dew of the Lord as drops upon the grass without the action of a man.

Of man. That's clearly a reference to the virgin birth. And this apparently was a prevalent understanding among most rabbis in Jesus' day. And we have some indication of that in John 7, verse 26.

Now, listen to this. People were asking this of their Jewish rulers and they said, Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ? They're asking about Christ. Do our rulers, our leaders, know that this Jesus is the Christ?

However, we know where this man is from. But when the Christ comes, no one knows where he is from. What are they saying? They clearly believed in some mystery connected with the birth of Messiah.

And then, of course, when we get to the New Testament, we have the testimony of both Matthew and Luke in Matthew 1, 18-25. And we have Luke chapter 1, 26-35.

[ 25 : 47 ] In Matthew's account, in Matthew 1, 18, the Bible says of Mary, she was found with child of or from the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1, 20, the angel said, that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. Not of Joseph, but of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew chapter 1, verse 23. Again, quoting Isaiah 7, 14, the fulfillment of prophecy. Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son.

We go into Luke, Luke chapter 1, verse 35. The angel said to Mary, the Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the highest, that's God, will overshadow you.

Therefore, also that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. All right, so, and by the way, if you don't believe in the virgin birth, guess what?

[ 26 : 42 ] You not only have a problem with God's Word, but you also have a problem with Mary. Right? What does it say about Mary? That she was an adulteress. It's what it, you couldn't come to any other conclusion.

All right, so we can add, and we can add to that what Paul said in Galatians chapter 4 and verse 4. So you see, there's a lot of biblical evidence for the virgin birth. Not just Luke, Matthew and Luke. But in Galatians chapter 4, verse 4, God sent, Paul wrote, God sent forth his Son made of a woman. Made of a woman.

Not made of a man, which would be the normal way of describing it, but made of a woman. All right, so we can sum this up before we go to the second point.

If you don't believe in the virgin birth, then you've got a real problem with God's Word because it's clearly there. You know, that, but you've got a problem with the purity of Mary.

[ 27 : 41 ] Now, let's go from the reality of God's Word and look at something else, the deity of God's Son. The deity of God's Son. The Bible makes it very clear that Jesus is God.

Makes that very clear. John 1, 1 is perhaps the most well-known text that speaks of the deity of Jesus Christ.

Let me just read some of it to you and I know you know it very well. Bible says, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.

So, Word in a personified sense. And, of course, we know as we read on that the Word is identified as Jesus. He was in the beginning with God.

All things were made through Him and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life and the life was the light of men and the light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it.

[ 28 : 48 ] And, you can skip on down verse 9. That was the true light which gives light to every man coming into the world. And, skip on down to verse 14. And, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.

And, I'm just hitting some of the high spots there in John 1. Clearly, a person can disagree and say, well, well, I just don't think that's true that Jesus was actually God.

You can disagree with it, but it clearly, clearly this is what John is saying. That the Word, Jesus, is God. With God, He is God.

Alright? So, clearly there. Hebrews chapter 1. You can look at that one real quickly. Hebrews chapter 1 and verse 1. Let me get to it real quick.

You can jot it down or look it up if you want. Hebrews 1, starting with verse 1. God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

[ 30 : 05 ] Alright, now, He made the world a long time before Jesus came, born of Mary, born in Bethlehem, but God made the worlds through Jesus.

That is, He is God, who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, upholding all things by the word of His power when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Clearly, Hebrews 1 is referring to Jesus as God. And these are just really just two references to the deity of Jesus that really the truth of which is found all throughout the New Testament, but also those prophecies in the Old Testament that point to the coming of Messiah.

There are many, many Old Testament passages that substantiate the truth that when Messiah comes, that Messiah is God and not just simply a man.

Now, the virgin birth, then, is the only way that you can have the incarnation of God. That's the only way. God becoming a man.

[ 31 : 26 ] The virgin birth is the only way that will work. There could be no deity of Jesus Christ apart from the virgin birth. You cannot have God produced by two human beings.

So, the Bible clearly substantiates this truth that Jesus is God. The Messiah is God. And so, therefore, you have to have the incarnation and you can't have an incarnation without the virgin birth.

Alright, so we're building a case for the virgin birth, the reality of God, God's Word, the deity of God's Son. And if you do not believe in the virgin birth, you've got a problem with God's Word. You've got a big problem with Jesus. One more thing, quickly. Not only the reliability of God's Word and the deity of God's Word, but finally, the validity of your salvation.

This is really where the tire hits the road for us. This is what makes it so crucial. Our own salvation. And, you know, I'm just going to make a bold statement here.

[ 32 : 31 ] If you do not believe in the virgin birth, then you have a huge problem with your salvation. I've quoted this many times. Adrian Rogers used to say, I wouldn't give you half a hallelujah for your hope of heaven if you do not believe in the virgin birth.

Saying it only the way Adrian Rogers could say it. And again, Galatians chapter 4, verse 4. But when the fullness of time had come, that is the perfect timing of God, what?

God sent forth His Son. He didn't create Him, He sent Him. Alright? Which means He already existed. Alright? So He's the deity of Jesus Christ.

But He sent forth His Son born of a woman. Not born of a man, but born of a woman. He was virgin born, fully God, fully man, the God-man.

And why did God send His Son? Well, going on there in Galatians 4, to be born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law.

[ 33 : 34 ] Alright? So, think of it this way. Jesus was born under the law, and yet kept all the laws perfectly. Right? He did. We were all born under the law, and we've broken every single one of them.

We have. You just think about it. You know you have. I have too. And so, we have to be forgiven, don't we? We have to be redeemed.

And since Jesus never broke a law, a single law, never sinned, He was qualified to redeem or save those who were under the law, so that, Paul says here in Galatians 4, so that we might receive the adoption as sons.

And that's glorious. And this is how important the virgin birth is. Because we need a Redeemer. And our Redeemer had to be man and God.

Otherwise, He couldn't represent us. He had to be man. Otherwise, His blood would have no effect to save us. He had to be God. And in order for that to happen, there had to be a virgin birth.

[ 34 : 52 ] And so, here it is in a nutshell. If there was no virgin birth, now just think of this logic. We'll just put it all together here. If there was no virgin birth, then there was no incarnation.

God becoming a man. You have to have a virgin birth to have an incarnation. If there is no incarnation, then there is no deity of Jesus. Right?

I mean, it's just logical. I mean, it's based upon clear truth in Scripture. No virgin birth, no incarnation, no incarnation, no deity of Jesus.

Now, if there is no deity of Jesus, and He's just a man just like any other man who's ever lived, though perhaps someone might argue a perfect man, if there is no deity of Jesus, then there was no sinless Savior.

It's not possible otherwise. No sinless Savior. And if there is no sinless Savior, then there can be no atonement for our sin. We couldn't have a sinner die for us.

[ 36 : 00 ] He had to be perfect, had to be impeccable, had to be pure, no blemish, no sin, at all, not any. Not any man has ever been born who's capable of living even a moment without sinning.

But Jesus is God, therefore He was born without a sin nature. He was sinless, and so if there is no deity of Jesus, then there is no sinless Savior.

And if there is no sinless Savior, there can be no atonement for our sin. And if there is no, it just logically follows, if there is no atonement for our sin, then there is no hope.

No hope. It's very clear. It is, of course, founded upon the Word of God. But also, it is very rational, very logical.

No virgin birth, no incarnation. No incarnation, no deity of Jesus Christ. No deity of Jesus Christ, no sinless Savior. No sinless Savior, no atonement for our sin.

[ 37 : 08 ] No forgiveness for our sin. And if there is no forgiveness for our sin, there is no hope. No hope. You see how crucial the virgin birth is. That's putting it just about as plainly as it could possibly be put, I think.

Amen. So now, you've got the fuel, right? That is, if you jotted some of those passages down. and for those who might question your belief in the virgin birth, it also is a point of praise, a point of worship to think about it.

This is the only way it could have been done and God did it just this way. He performed a miracle so that we could be saved and really our salvation itself is a miracle.

Thank you.