

Matthew 1:18-25 – The Birth of Jesus Christ, Part 1

Introduction:

1. The Goal of the Harmony of the Gospel Series: Behold the Son of God, from Cradle to Cross, Burial to Resurrection
2. Goal #2: Deepen Appreciation of Jesus & Grow in Christ
3. We need to know WHO Jesus is, before WHAT He does
4. Matthew gives us both the Humanity & Deity of Jesus

Main Idea: Jesus is God, conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin, come to save His people from their sins.

The Perspective & Character of Joseph (vv 18-21, 24-25)

1. Joseph did not see this coming – pledged to be married, but Mary was found to be with child
2. Jewish Betrothal: dowry, lasted 1 year, parent involvement
 - a. Legal transaction that required divorce to terminate
3. Mary had gone to see Elizabeth for 3 mos. (Lk 1:39-40, 56)
 - a. Comes back pregnant – a child conceived by the Holy Spirit – Joseph does not believe Mary
4. Joseph's Character: Just, Righteous, Compassionate, Kind
 - a. He believed Mary was unfaithful
 - b. To marry would be an admission of guilt
 - c. He cared for Mary – did not want to make a public, disgraceful spectacle out of her or her family
 - d. The Law permitted a divorce – he would do it quietly, without embarrassing her
 - e. Joseph feared God and wanted to do what was right
5. The Angel of the Lord Intervenes:
 - a. Son of David – Joseph is heir to the Throne of David
 - b. Joseph is told that this child is indeed conceived by the Holy Spirit – He is commanded to call Him Jesus
6. Joseph's Response: A quiet divorce turns into a quick marriage
 - a. By God's Grace Joseph yields to the Lord completely
 - b. He embraces what has been Revealed – He goes public and marries Mary and adopts this child

The Gospel Given to Joseph (vv 18, 20-25)

1. Jesus would be Conceived by the Holy Spirit
 - a. *The Apostle's Creed, 2nd Century:* We believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary
 - b. Jesus was Born like you and me, but with different origins – He is ancient of days, of old (Micah 5:2)

- c. The New Testament writers assert Jesus was Conceived by the Holy Spirit (**Luke 1:35, Matthew 1:20b**)
 - d. God the Holy Spirit, by His Creative power, MADE Jesus in the womb of the Virgin Mary
 - i. A New Genesis, A New Humanity (**See Genesis 1**)
 - ii. Matthew 1 – A Record of the Genesis (Genealogy) of Jesus Christ who is From Divine Origins, Eternal God
 - iii. Made Fully Human in Embryonic Form
 - e. Joseph contributed nothing, Mary was passive in receiving
 - f. The Word became Flesh (**John 1:14**)
2. Mary was a Virgin
 - a. 4 Times in our Text is this Mentioned (vv 18, 20, 23, 24-25)
 - b. The Bible asserts Jesus was born of a Virgin
 - c. Jesus' birth was prophesied by Isaiah 700 Years prior (**Matthew 1:22-23 and Isaiah 7:10-14**)
 - d. Context of Isaiah 7 – Ahaz, King of Judah is threatened with war by King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah of Israel – told he would be given a sign, a virgin would bear a child
 - e. 19th-20th Century Liberalism Denied the Virgin Birth
 - i. Hebrew word *Almah* – defined by Liberal theologians as young maiden (**See RSV, NEB, NIV translations**)
 - ii. They argue Isaiah would have used the word *Bethulah* if he meant virginity
 - iii. The Problem: Any time *Almah* is used in the Bible it is in the context of a virgin girl and *Bethulah* only meant a young woman under the guardianship of her father
 - iv. A woman ceases to be a *Bethulah* when she is married and a woman ceases to be an *Almah* when she becomes a mother
 - v. *The Septuagint:* In 200 BC, Greek Jews translated the Hebrew text into Greek – they translated *Almah* to the Greek Word, *Parthenos* which explicitly means virgin
 - f. The Bible makes Clear, Jesus was born of a virgin – **See Matthew 1:25 – Joseph knew her not until...**
 3. Jesus will Save His People from their Sins
 - a. The Dark Reality: The Reason Jesus had to Come was that we are Sinners and He came to Die for His People's Sins
 - b. We were unable to save ourselves, Jesus had to do it
 - c. The Manger Scene is a Troubling Scene before it Comforts
 4. Jesus is Immanuel, God with Us
 - a. He was able to bear and Die for our Sins, because Not only is He born human through a virgin's womb, but deity
 - b. The Child in the Manger is God!
 - c. God promised He would walk with His people (**Lev 26:9-12**)
 - d. Jesus put on Flesh and Dwelt Among Us – He is God!