**HE WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS**

Matthew 1:18-25

Key Verse 21

“She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

**Introduction**

 Merry Christmas! Today’ passage is Matthew’s Christmas message to the people of Israel and all mankind. In this story we learn about Jesus who came to this earth with a clear purpose, that is to save His people from their sins. God’s coming to this world should be very effective and productive because he incarnate into the restricted time and space. He did not come to take a vacation from heaven but to complete the redemptive work. Nowadays it seems that people lost their sense of direction without knowing the purpose of their lives. But Jesus showed a clear road map for us to follow, that is to be forgiven our sins and come to be with God for good! Then nothing matters!

1. Read verses 18-20. How does Matthew describe what happened to Mary? (18) How did Joseph respond and what does this show about him? (19) How did God help him? (20)

 1-1, Read verses 18-20.

 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23163d)]: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23164e)] did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. 20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

1-2, How does Matthew describe what happened to Mary? (18)

 ***This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about[***[***d***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23163d)***]: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.***

* What happened to Mary was that she was found to be pregnant. This description is from Joseph’s point of view.
* Mary was betrothed to Joseph and she was in the preparation period for a year or two years under her parent’s authority.
* In Jewish society, it was a serious commitment and they were considered to be a legally married couple.
* There were essentially three steps to marriage in the Jewish world of Jesus' time.

- *Engagement*: This could happen when the bride and groom to be were quite young, and was often arranged by the parents.

- *Betrothal*: This made the previous engagement official and binding. During the time of betrothal the couple were known as husband and wife, and a betrothal could only be broken by divorce. Betrothal typically lasted a year.

- *Marriage*: This took place after the wedding, after the year of betrothal.

* Based on Luke 1, Mary was pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit and was in a hurry to visit Elizabeth’s house. So there was no chance for her to explain her husband.
* The Holy Spirit made her pregnant. It was a supernatural thing but nothing is impossible with God. When God planned in Genesis 3, at His best time, the Holy Spirit implements according to His redemptive plan.

1-3, How did Joseph respond and what does this show about him? (19)

***19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet[***[***e***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23164e)***] did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.***

* Joseph must have been in an awkward situation. He must have never imagined that this would happen to such a nice girl.
* He might have been distressed with a sense of betrayal. He was faithful to the law. He could have gossiped with his friends to bring her to public disgrace.
* But he did not. Rather he intended to divorce her quietly. Truly he was a kind and a righteous man. God then helped him at the right time.

1-4, How did God help him? (20)

***20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.***

* God sent him an angel while he was sleeping. In a dream, the angel said to him, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”
* First, he was called as “son of David.” David was known as a man after God’s own heart. David received God’s promise in 2 Samuel 7 through Nathan.

*“‘The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: 12 When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom...16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me[*[*b*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+samuel+7&version=NIV#fen-NIV-8197b)*]; your throne will be established forever.’”*

* It was God’s clear direction for him by an angel. “Do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived is from the Holy Spirit.”
* From Joseph’s point of view, it was the first time to be explained what had happened. Thanks to this explanation, his long day question was answered.

2. Read verse 21. What does this verse teach us about who Jesus is and God’s purpose in sending him? (21) What does this mean to his people, the people of the world, and to us?

2-1, Read verse 21.

21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23166f)] because he will save his people from their sins.”

2-2, What does this verse teach us about who Jesus is and God’s purpose in sending him? (21)

***21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,[***[***f***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23166f)***] because he will save his people from their sins.”***

* The name of Mary’s son are to be “Jesus”. According to its footnote, Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua, which means “the Lord saves.”
* Jesus did not come to exist when Mary was pregnant. He is the eternal God who was before the creation.

John 1:1-3 and 14 says,

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

* The purpose of his coming was crystal clear. It was to save his people from their sins. Then the next question would be what sin is?
* Sin is what has separated us from God. Sin is what is wrong with all the world since the beginning, from Adam and Eve.
* Sin is what is wrong with the world today, and sin is what is wrong with every one of us. Sin is unbelief in God. Sin is a rejection of God, and rebellion towards God.
* Then what does it mean by saving his people from their sins? It means that he became flesh, he became a man to redeem mankind.
* Jesus was blameless, perfect, and sinless. He came in our flesh and in our weakness. He was tempted in every way we are, but was without sin.
* He went through what we went through. He experienced our temptations. On him was every sin laid, every sin for every person, every one of you in this room, every one of your sins: the weight of infinite and eternal punishment for sins was pressed into his body and soul.
* He tasted death for us, he tasted the full wrath of God for us, so that all of our sins may be paid for. His sacrifice atones for all our sins.
* When we believe in Jesus, because of his blood, we are purified, and justified in the sight of God. By faith in Jesus, we are declared righteous, and have been given the right to live forever, the right to enter the kingdom of God, and the right to be called the children of God. This is how much love the Father has lavished on us.

2-3, What does this mean to his people, the people of the world, and to us?

* His people means Jewish people in Jesus’ time who were waiting for the political Messiah to destroy all their oppressors. But the real blessing for them was to save them from their sins.
* So is the same with the people of today’s world and us. We are bombarded with so many issues and people are talking about many problems such as climate change, economy or impeachment.
* Jesus’ coming to this earth must be very effective and successful and productive above all. It is to save us from our sins and to have us come to God!

3. Read verses 22-25. How did Jesus’s birth fulfill prophecy? (22, Isa 7:14; 9:6,7) Describe what it means that Jesus is Immanuel - God with us? (23) What did Joseph do? (24-25)

3-1, Read verses 22-25.

22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23168g)] (which means “God with us”).

24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

3-2, How did Jesus’s birth fulfill prophecy? (22, Isa 7:14; 9:6,7)

***22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:***

* Matthew pointed out that all this took place in order to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet.
* God’s words of promises never fails. We are rest assured that God is faithful more than capable of fulfilling his promises in every aspect. Praise the Lord.
* Here all this includes what had happened to Mary. What the Lord said was meant, especially Isaiah 7:14. “*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel”*
* Isaiah 9:6-7 also says, *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.* ***7*** *Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.*

3-3, Describe what it means that Jesus is Immanuel - God with us? (23)

***23 “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”[***[***g***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23168g)***] (which means “God with us”).***

* Jesus is Immanuel. Jesus is God with us. He is God in human flesh. He is the Son of God, and the Son of Man. He is fully God and fully man.
* The eternal Son of God, infinite in power and wisdom, equal to God the Father, came to earth in human flesh. He was with us in our sorrows and pain.
* He felt our grief and our weakness. He cried with us, he cried for us. He suffered with us, and he suffered for us.
* No one suffered for us more than Jesus did. At last, he died for us on that old rugged cross. His blood was shed, so that all of our sins may be forgiven. He paid our debt in full.

3-4, What did Joseph do? (24-25)

***24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.***

* Mary’s becoming the mother of Jesus seemed to be a glorious mission but Joseph’s becoming the guardian of Jesus and the protector of Mary seemed not so glorious; his mission seemed to be just that of a supporting role.
* His mission was to make a good environment for Mary and the baby Jesus. Anyway Joseph humbly accepted his holy mission from God.
* When he woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.
* He did not have marital relationship until she gave birth to a son. Then he named a baby Jesus as he had been instructed by the angel.
* Knowing the will of God is one thing but obeying Him is another. May the Lord raise up many Joseph like servants in our times who can be sensitive to follow the will of God by faith. Amen.

**Conclusion**

No amount of human comfort will suffice for the human soul. Jesus is our Immanuel God. Jesus is with us. Jesus gives us God’s comfort, not as the world gives. May the Immanuel God be with his suffering people. Let us accept the truth that Jesus, the Immanuel God, came to this world to be with us. He wants to save us from our sinful lives and change us into new creations by being with us. Let us be with him through personal prayer, Bible study and by having fellowship with one another in Jesus. Let us also be with God’s flock of sheep by teaching them the word of God and shepherding them with God’s love. Immanuel!

**One word: Jesus came to save us from our sins!**