

“Chosen by God”

Matthew 1:18-25

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Presenter for December 12, 2017

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¹⁸. This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: 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 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. 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.” 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” (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.

After 400 years of silence, the Lord wasted no time in speaking to Joseph and Mary. Matthew shares the good news that The Lord had made a way for humanity to be forgiven of sin by His only Son. (see John 3:16-17) The first chapter of Matthew prompts a believer not only to celebrate Christmas, but also to anticipate the cross and the hope for celebrating Easter and the resurrection of all of those who believe.

Mary and Joseph were “Chosen by God”. They were selected from a number of possibilities. However, something made them different. They went from a possibility to the fulfillment of prophesy.

The prophet Isaiah said that Jesus would be born of a virgin and he was. The prophet said it at least 600 years before Jesus was born. The prophet Micah said Jesus would be born in Bethlehem and he was. The prophet Hosea said that he would be called out of Egypt and he was. Many prophets said he would be from Nazareth and he was. Matthew assembles those specific prophecies starting at the end of chapter 1 and going through chapter 2 in order that he might strengthen his argument that this child is indeed the promised King.

In chapter 1 Matthew pointed out that the Child had the credentials of the King, which is he was born of the seed of Abraham and of the descendant line of David, the royal family. Then having established that this one is the promised king by virtue of His lineage, Matthew then turns to the virgin birth, and establishes that this one is indeed the promised King by virtue of his virgin birth. That is, Jesus had no earthly father. This is the God man because that which was conceived in Mary was conceived by the Holy Spirit.

So Matthew establishes His credentials by virtue of His lineage and by virtue of His virgin birth. Then Matthew further establishes the credentials of Jesus Christ as the promised King and the promised Messiah by seeing the fulfillment of prophesy. One clear and precise prophesy appears at the end of chapter 1 where after presenting the virgin birth Matthew quotes from Isaiah chapter

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7:14, "Behold the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son and they shall call his name Immanuel," which translated means God with us."

Other Prophetic voices from Isaiah and Micah

Isaiah 6:6-7 (NRSV) ⁶“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.”

Micah 5:2 (NIV) ²“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”

Joseph and Mary

1. Joseph was a righteous man (v19a)
2. He was compassionate toward Mary (19b)
 - a. he was responsible (registered for the census & to pay taxes - Luke 2:1-5)
 - b. he decided to divorce her privately (19c) (although he was heartbroken, disappointed and embarrassed)
3. The dream changed his prospective. He was told:
 - a. an Angel appeared unto him and said, “do not be afraid to take Mary as his wife” (v20b)
 - b. “that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit” (v20c)
 - c. “And she shall bring forth a son” (21a)
 - d. name the child Jesus – (The Lord Saves) (v21b)
 - e. “for He will save His people from their sins” (v21c), see Luke 19:10

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” (which means “God with us”).

- f. He was obedient – “When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.” (v24) ... “And he gave him the name Jesus” (v25).
4. Mary was a young virgin
5. She was fearful, ashamed, submissive, a woman of faith, obedient

Key Words – *virgin, righteous, obedient, Jesus - The Lord Saves & Immanuel- God with us.*

Questions to answer on your own: **What does God see in us? What makes us different? Why would God choose us?**