

9/10/17

The Birth of Jesus The Messiah
Matt. 1:18-25

There was a time in our nation, not long ago, that even those declaring to be atheist or agnostics were respectful of Christianity, but those days are gone.

We are living in vile and evil days and some of the vilest and most offensive things against Christ are done, without any fear of God!

* Like the Andres Serrano who in 1987 used public tax funds provided by the government for the endowment of the arts and took a picture of a crucifix immersed in urine and exhibited it as a piece of art, showing complete disregard both for Christ and for those who believe in Him!

Oh what hopeless world this would be if God the Father had not sent His Son to be born, to die and be raised from the dead for our sin, in order that we repent and be forgiven for our sins!

We want to look at the birth announcement of Jesus that unfolds in three movements. Matt. 1:18-25

- I.** The personal devastation. vs. 18-19
- II.** The personal revelation. vs. 20-21
- III.** The personal submission. vs. 22-25

I. The personal devastation. vs. 18-19

A. The proclamation about the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. vs. 18a

* “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows:

- 1.** Matthew has just given the genealogy of Jesus to assure He was the promised Messiah.
 - a.** The word now “de” could be translated moreover or and.
 - b.** The connection is to what proceeds. vs. 1-17
- 2.** Matthew gave the Godly line from Abraham to David.
 - a.** The line of Abraham to David. Matt. 1:2-6a
 - b.** The line of David to the Babylonian captivity. Matt. 1:6b-11
 - c.** The line of David from the captivity of Babylon to Joseph. Matt. 1:12-17
- 3.** Matthew revealed the birth of God as a man.
 - a.** The word birth “genesis”, means the event of a baby entering this world through a woman.
 - 1)** The word begot is found for every person in the genealogy. vs. 2-16
 - 2)** But the word “begot” is nowhere found for the birth of Jesus, as we

- will see Joseph was not the father of Jesus, but the Holy Spirit
- b.** The name Jesus “Iesous” represents His humanity, as a real person.
 - 1)** The name means Yahweh is salvation.
 - 2)** The name Jesus is the translation of the Hebrew Joshua.
 - c.** The title Christ “Christos” represents His deity.
 - 1)** The word indicated the “Anointed or Messiah”.
 - 2)** The Redeemer God had promise to Adam, the Seed of the woman.
Gen. 3:15
 - d.** The account of the nature of the birth is indicated by the phrase, as follows “houto”, meaning after this manner.
- B.** The explanation about Mary’s marital purity. vs. 18b-d
- * “After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together”.
- 1.** Mary at the present time was betrothed to Joseph. vs. 18b
 - a.** The marriages of that day were arranged by the heads of family to secure the protection and provision of their children in life.
 - b.** The word betrothed “mneteuo”, means to woo her or espouse her in

- marriage and would be affirmed or rejected by couple at the betrothal.
- c.** The aorist passive participle, indicates a historical fact at a previous time.
 - d.** The betrothal lasted one year and the woman remained in her parent’s home, yet it was legally binding as marriage and needed a writing of divorce.
- 2.** Mary at the present time being betrothed had not consummated the marriage sexually with Joseph. vs. 18c
 - a.** The one-year mark had not been reached for consummating the marriage, indicated by the phrase “before they came together”.
 - b.** Mary had been faithful and honorable to the betrothal.
 - 3.** Mary at the present time was found to be pregnant, but not by any man. vs. 18d
 - a.** Matthew records, “She was found with a child of the Holy Spirit” just as God had promised Adam. Gen. 3:15
 - 1)** The text does not say Joseph alone found out, without doubt those of the family became aware of her pregnancy.
 - 2)** As far as Joseph was concerned and rightly so, Mary had been unfaithful and allowed another

- man to go into her sexually and she became pregnant.
- 3) God declared any woman not found a virgin on her wedding night played the whore, while in her father's house, Deut. 22:21
 - 4) This was a devastating blow, a treacherous betrayal.
 - 5) The initial shock was disbelief, his life came crashing down, his high regard for her was shattered, all he had hoped for was ruined.
 - 6) Though anger is not mentioned, anger, regret and resentment and bitterness come after the initial shock and disappointment.
- b. Mary did not tell Joseph about the visitation of the angel Gabriel, she left the entire matter in the hands of God.
- 1) She was probably 14-16 years old.
 - 2) She was incredible spiritually mature for her age.
 - 3) Mary was willing to experience disgrace and risk divorce as a servant of God!
- c. The gospel of Luke help to fill in the details of the conversation between the angel and Mary. Lk. 1:28-35, 39
- 1) "And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored *one*, the Lord *is* with you;

- blessed *are* you among women!" vs. 28
- 2) "But when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was." vs. 29
 - 3) "Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God." vs. 30
 - 4) "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS." vs. 31
 - 5) "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David." vs. 32
 - 6) "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." vs. 33
 - 7) "Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" vs. 34
 - 8) "And the angel answered and said to her, "*The* Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God." vs. 35

9) Mary then went right away to visit her cousin Elizabeth. Lk. 1:39

C. The hesitation by Joseph to follow through with the marriage. vs. 19

1. Matthew first depicts Joseph by two things, “Then Joseph her husband, being a just man.” vs. 19a-b
 - a. Joseph was the legal husband of Mary.
 - 1) Their marriage was binding.
 - 2) Their marriage would need an act of divorce.
 - b. Joseph was a man of character.
 - 1) The word just “diloios”, means an upright man who kept the law.
 - 2) A godly man.
2. Joseph had decided he would not take Mary as his wife, “and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.”
 - a. The implication is clear, Joseph was severely wounded and disappointed.
 - 1) He was not willing to live with the disgrace and shame of an adulterous wife.
 - 2) To deny or remove that right from him, would be unjust!
 - 3) Every person has the right to decide who they will spend the rest of their life with based on the

information they possess about a person, to hide that information is a willful lie and deception.

- b. The second implication is that Joseph because of his love for her was compassionate and merciful.
 - 1) He did not want to make her a public example with a formal trial to shame her before all.
 - 2) He did not want to expose her sin publically, lest she be put to death by stoning. Deut. 22:23-24
- c. The final decision of Joseph is stated, “He was minded to put her away secretly.”
 - 1) Giving her a writing of divorce privately.
 - 2) This was done before two or three witnesses.

Illustration

After being a minister for 41 year I believe the sins of deception and lies are the most destructive to people, the most damaging being sexual.

Application

1. In the mid-sixties some young girls would at time lie that they were pregnant to their boyfriend and after the marriage he found it to be a lie.
2. At other times young women got pregnant by another man and told her boyfriend or fiancé the

baby was his and it was not, back then paternity test was not the first thing a person would do.

3. Young men returning from Nam would at times bring back little wooden jewelry boxes that probably cost them about \$40-50 and given them to a girl or girl-friend and at times she in turn gave him the only true jewel she possessed, her purity.
4. A doctor told me of a young woman that asked for a vial of blood that she might deceive her husband to be a virgin on their honeymoon night.
5. Others just lied about having been married, having children and lived with the consequences of regret, resentment and disillusioned in marriage.
6. There are three Gentile women listed in the genealogy of Jesus with sordid sexual pasts in order to give hope to even those who have sinned in this area, Tamar committed adultery, Rahab was a harlot and Bathsheba adultery. Matt. 1:3, 5, 6

The personal devastation was crushing!

II. The personal revelation. vs. 20-21

- A. The visitation of the angel to Joseph was to relief his crushing devastation over the pregnancy of Mary. vs. 20
 1. The time the angel came to Joseph was right on time, “But while he thought about these things.” vs. 20a
 - a. The word “but” marks the sharp contrast between verse 19 and 20.

- 1) To not make her a public example.
 - 2) To put her away by divorce privately.
 - 3) Remember Elizabeth was her cousin and was six months pregnant when Mary went to see her because she was carrying the forerunner of the Messiah, John the Baptist, staying with her for three month, so when Mary came back, she was three months pregnant. Lk. 1:36, 56
- b. The word thought “enthumeomai”, means to bring to mind, resolve or ponder to deliberate.
 - 1) This seeming horrible situation of Mary, without doubt seeking God.
 - 2) The difficult decision to do the right thing.
 - 3) The aorist passive Lenski indicates at the proper time God intervened.
 - 4) The word appears two other times in the New Testament.
 - a) For the scribes evil thoughts when Jesus healed the paralytic. Matt. 9:4
 - b) For Peter’s rooftop vision on at Joppa, to reflect on. Acts 10:19
2. The manner the angel appeared to Joseph is indicated, “behold, an angel of the

Lord appeared to him in a dream.” vs. 20b

- a. The suddenness of the appearance is indicated by the word behold “idou” and at this critical time.
- b. The angel is not identified for us by Matthew, it simply says “an angle”.
 - 1) This I not the Angel of the LORD, used in the Old Testament for a pre-Incarnate appearance of Jesus.
 - 2) Possibly Gabriel, but not stated.
 - 3) God will continue to use angels. Matt. 1:20, 24; 2:13, 19
- c. The appearance was in a dream.
 - 1) This was while Joseph was sleeping and remained asleep.
 - * There will be five other times God spoke by dreams. Matt. 1-2
 - 2) Visions are also used by God.
 - * When a person is awake and perceives God’s revelation.
3. The message of the angel to Joseph is recorded. vs. 20d-g
 - a. The angel called him by name “Joseph”. vs. 20d
 - * To remove all doubt God was speaking to him.
 - b. The angel confirmed his line to the throne, “son of David”. vs. 20e-f

* Though he was not the biological father, he was of the line to the throne of David, as well as Mary.

- c. The angel lifted the devastating weight crushing him, “Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.” vs. 20g-h
 - 1) The truth set Joseph free.
 - 2) The conception of the child, the Second Person of the Godhead was by the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. Lk. 1:35
- B.** The visitation of the angel to Joseph was to reveal to Joseph the mission of the child. vs. 21
1. The sex of the child was revealed to Joseph, “And she will bring forth a Son.” vs. 21a
 - a. Mary had been the chosen vessel of God.
 - b. Mary had submitted to the will of God
 2. The name of the son was given to Joseph, “and you shall call His name JESUS.” vs. 21b
 - a. The name Jesus “Iesous” identified Him as a genuine human being.
 - 1) 100% man.
 - 2) 100% God.

- b. The name Jesus is the Greek translation of the name Joshua.
 - 1) Joshua is a contraction of Yahweh-shua.
 - 2) Yahweh-shua, Joshua and Jesus, all mean Yahweh is salvation.
- 3. The reason or purpose for the birth and name was the salvation of sinners, “for He will save His people from their sins.” vs. 21c
 - a. The personal pronoun He is emphatic in the Greek.
 - 1) Jesus, not the law.
 - 2) Jesus, not any other person.
 - b. The spiritual mission was to save sinners.
 - 1) The reference to “His people” is in the first sense of priority to the Jews.
 - a) Jesus came to His own, but His own received Him not.” Jn. 1:11
 - b) The allusion is from the Psalms. Ps. 130:8
 - 2) The reference in a secondary sense is to the Gentiles, who would become the people of God.
 - c. The spiritual problem is stated, sins.
 - 1) Sins “hamartia”, to miss the mark.
 - 2) Sin through Adam resulted in spiritual death, second physical death.

- 3) Sin separated man from God for He is Holy.
- 4) God was fulfilling His promise of bring in the Messiah, the Redeemer and Savior of the world.

Illustration

On May 24, 1738, on that evening John Wesley reluctantly attended a meeting in Aldersgate. Someone read from Luther's *Preface to the Epistle to Romans*. About 8:45 p.m. “while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.”

Application

- 1. The only one that can bring peace over your mind and heart over injustice done by others in your life is Jesus.
 - a. Recognizing that Jesus has forgiven you all your sins.
 - b. Remembering Jesus does not remember your sins.
 - c. Relying on the word, prayer and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
 - * “Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;

bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. But above all these things put on love, which is the **bond** of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.” Col. 3:12-15

2. The one message Satan and the worldly institution of the world want to obstruct, remove and silence is the gospel that proclaims that God wants to forgive sinners and transform their lives.
 - a. The educators who believe in the goodness of man and his ability to solve all the problems in the world.
 - b. The liberal progressives that want to destroy all objective truth of right and wrong and accept all things and beliefs to teach and benefit man, except for Christianity.
 - c. The politicians that merely manipulate the people and pit them against each other by race, color and rich against poor.

* “For I am **not ashamed** of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” Rom. 1:16-17

The personal revelation was liberating!

III. The personal submission. vs. 22-25

- A. The visitation of Gabriel was for the prophesy of God to be fulfilled through Mary. vs. 22-23
 1. The prophetic commentary comes from Matthew, “So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying.”
 - a. This is a key phrase in the gospel of Matthew.
 - 1) The repeated phrase, “That it might be fulfilled”, appears 14 times.
 - 2) The phrase, “it is written” 6 times.
 - 3) The phrase identifies the particular prophecy coming to pass.
 - 4) The word fulfilled “pleroo” means to make full, fill to the top or rendered complete.
 - b. This validates the Scriptures as coming from God.
 - 1) For He alone knows the future.
 - 2) For He alone reveals it to men, “the Lord speaking through the prophets”, the mouth-piece of God.
 - 3) For He alone can bring to pass.
 2. The prophecy was two-fold, “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son,

and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” vs. 23

- a. The prophecy is found in the prophet Isaiah. Is. 7:14
 - 1) Seven-hundred years before the fulfillment.
 - 2) “For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, **Mighty God**, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *His* government and peace *There will be* no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.” Is. 9:6-7
- b. The short-term prophecy was a sign to Ahaz that Syria would not take Jerusalem. Is. 7:14
 - 1) The most obvious interpretation is that a woman in the days of Ahaz, probably in the royal family would bear a son and call his name Emmanuel, God with us, as the sign of Ahaz’s unbelief and lack of

trust in Yahweh, that God would defend Jerusalem. Is. 7:15-16

- 2)) The only association for the short-term fulfillment in the context is Isaiah’s son, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, having a double name “Emmanuel”, like Benjamin and Solomon and others. Is. 8:1-4
- b. The long-term prophecy was the birth of the Messiah, identifying Him as Emmanuel, God with us. Is. 9:6
 - 1) This is the Incarnation of John. Jn. 1:1, 14
 - 2) The final person God speaks through to all sinners. Heb. 1:1-3
- c. The word virgin “parthenos”, means a woman that is sexually pure. LXX
 - 1) The prophetic word in Hebrew is “alma”, means a virgin engaged.
 - 2) There is another Hebrew word for virgin “bethulah” describing a virgin not espoused or engaged.
 - 3) Both of these words are used for Rebekah. “bethulah” before she to Isaac and “alma” after she was espoused to Isaac. Gen. 24:16, 43
 - 4) The RSV translates it young maid because “Gesenius” in his lexicon because he didn’t believe in miracles.

- B.** The visitation of the angel was for the prophesy of God to be embrace by Joseph. vs. 24-25
1. The man Joseph woke up a different man. vs. 24
 - a. The implication is that he woke up with joy and peace in his heart, “Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep.” vs. 24a
 - 1) Joseph no longer had any doubt about the loyalty and purity of Mary to him.
 - 2) Joseph no longer was ashamed of Mary.
 - b. The evidence is stated, “did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife,” vs. 24b
 - 1) His obedience was in spite of all the suspicions, rumors and accusations that would follow the two all the days of their lives.
 - 2) His commitment to Mary was fulfilled, he took her as his wife and they had the wedding ceremony.
 2. The man Joseph understood the sanctity and holiness of the child in the womb of Mary. vs. 25
 - a. Joseph did not consummate the marriage sexually at their honeymoon and the remaining time of her

- pregnancy, “and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son.” vs. 25a
- 1) The phrase “first born” implies Mary had other children.
 - 2) The dogma of Rome that Mary was perpetual virgin is a lie, she had other children. Matt. 13:55-56; Mk. 3:31
 - 3) In 1854 Pope Pius the 9th declared the “Immaculate Conception”, that Mary had no sin.
- b.** Joseph did give the name Jesus to the child, “And he called His name JESUS.” vs. 25b

Illustration

Ireneaus the second century church father gave his in depth analysis of why God was in Christ.

“Irenaeus described the work of Christ under various aspects. The premise is always the reality of the divinity and humanity of the Savior. Only upon this basis could he furnish certain deliverance and deliver the particular race of man...

Christ, therefore, became man in order to recapitulate the whole human race in himself....He embraces in himself the entire human race and all human life: “When he became incarnate and was made man, he recapitulated in himself the long line of men, standing surety in compendium for our salvation, so that what we lost in Adam, i.e., our

being in the image and likeness of God, this we might receive in Christ Jesus.” (Contemporary Wesleyan Theology, Vol. 2,:342a)

Application

1. What do you believe about the Scripture?
 - a. It is God’s word. 1Tim. 3:16-17
 - b. It is infallible and inerrant. 2Pet. 1:19-21
2. What is your assessment of Jesus?
 - a. Is He just a prophet?
 - b. A good teacher?
 - c. That is not good enough!
 - d. He is God who became Incarnate to save you from your sins.
* Jn. 1:1,14; Phil. 2:6-8; 1Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:1-4; Col. 2:9-10
3. Listen to the words of Jesus, “I am the Way, the truth and the life, no man comes to the Father but by Me.” Jn. 14:6
 - a. Do you agree with God?
 - b. Do you believe He died for your sins and able to save you?

The personal submission was obeying!

Conclusion

This is the announcement of the birth of Jesus that unfolds in three movements.

- I. The personal devastation was crushing!
- II. The personal revelation was liberating!
- III. The personal submission was obeying!