

**Theme: Immanuel—God With Us**

Matthew 1:18–25

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. <sup>20</sup> But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”

<sup>22</sup> So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: <sup>23</sup> “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”

<sup>24</sup> Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, <sup>25</sup> and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

**Consider**

**1:18.** What is the nature of Mary and Joseph’s relationship at the beginning of this verse?

*Note: Customs in Hebrew culture often involved a betrothal period (usually one year) when a man and woman were committed exclusively to one another, were often called “husband” and “wife,” but were not yet living together in marriage.*

What is “found” (discovered) about Mary’s condition? Why does this present a problem for Joseph?

**1:19.** What type of man is Joseph? How would you describe him based on this verse?<sup>1</sup>

Why might Joseph want to “put her away secretly”?

According to Jewish Law given by God in Deuteronomy 22:20–21, what would have been a potential punishment for a woman who was found unfaithful to her betrothed husband? How does this help you understand Joseph’s dilemma?

**1:20.** Does Joseph react immediately or wait?

Discuss: What emotions might Joseph have felt while he decided what to do? What fears would he have had?

Who does God send to interrupt Joseph’s deliberations?

What does the angel call Joseph? “Son of \_\_\_\_\_.”

Read 1 Chronicles 17:10b–14 and notice the promise that God gave to King David about his throne. To Whom is this passage referring?

What is the angel’s command to Joseph? “Do not be \_\_\_\_\_ to take to you Mary your wife.”

Why is Joseph encouraged to take Mary as his wife, even though she is found to be with child?

**1:21.** Why does the angel tell Joseph he shall name the child “Jesus”? How would Jesus someday accomplish what the angel described?

*Note: The name “Jesus” is the Greek version of the Hebrew (Old Testament) name “Joshua” meaning “Yahweh (the Lord) saves.”*

How does understanding the meaning of Jesus’s name and the purpose for His coming point to the deity of Christ?

**1:22–23.** Matthew reveals to us that this sequence of events happened to fulfill the words of Isaiah the prophet (Isaiah 7:14). According to the prophecy which he directly quotes, what would be the name of the child? What does this name mean?

How would Jesus fulfill this prophecy of “God with us?”

**1:24–25.** What does Joseph do after waking from sleep? How does this prove his character description from 1:19?

How do these verses show that he believes the message from the angel of the Lord?

**Ask Yourself**

How would I have responded if I had been in Joseph’s situation?

How does knowing the promise “God with us” bring me comfort and calm my fears?

<sup>1</sup> The adjective Matthew uses to describe Joseph (*dikaios*) means “upright, just, fair, equitable.”

How can I choose to submit myself to God's plans when I see my plans have been disrupted or redirected by God? How does Proverbs 16:9 help me trust the Lord when times are uncertain?

Is there something God has called me to do that I am afraid of doing? How can I take the next right step of obedience?

## Cross References

Deuteronomy 22:20–21

<sup>20</sup> But if the thing is true, *and evidences of virginity* are not found for the young woman, <sup>21</sup> then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father's house. So you shall put away the evil from among you.

Matthew 1:6

And Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her *who had been the wife* of Uriah.

1 Chronicles 17:10b–14

<sup>10</sup> Furthermore I tell you that the LORD will build you a house. <sup>11</sup> And it shall be, when your days are fulfilled, when you must go *to be* with your fathers, that I will set up your seed after you, who will be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>12</sup> He shall build Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. <sup>13</sup> I will be his Father, and he shall be My son; and I will not take My mercy away from him, as I took *it* from *him* who was before you. <sup>14</sup> And I will establish him in My house and in My kingdom forever; and his throne shall be established forever.

Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Proverbs 16:9

A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.