

Because of who came at Christmas, we rejoice and worship the Son. Who?

Not every book of the Bible is about Jesus' earthly life - just the 4 Gospels. And not every Gospel records Jesus' birth - just Matthew and Luke. And Luke the doctor, seems to write as though he interviewed the mother, Mary. That leaves one account – just Matthew to write as though he interviewed Joseph. Consider how Matthew began, in Matthew 1:1, “*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the Son of Abraham.*” Our first two sermon points.

### **1. The Son of David. (v.18-20)**

Matthew's clear purpose in approaching things from Joseph's perspective was to depict Jesus as the new Son of David, the new rightful heir to the title, "the King of the Jews." In order to present Jesus as the true king of Israel, Matthew must show that this new-born baby boy was the first-born son of the man who currently held the royal title, "Son of David." That man's son, and only that man's son, could be the next rightful heir to the throne, and possess the title, "Son of David." This explains the presence of the family tree or genealogy in Matthew chapter 1. What we learn from the genealogy is that at the time that Matthew began to write, the current Son of David, was Joseph (v.1,16,20). Matthew must show that Jesus Christ was the first-born son in Joseph's family.

Logically, Matthew took us into the story in verse 18, at the precise point during which Joseph was engaged, but not yet married. Matthew has re-winded history to the point when Joseph was still without a son and yet having become engaged, Joseph showed new potential to have Joseph's first son soon, upon getting married. As Matthew showed, the Son came sooner to Joseph's family, and in a different way, than Joseph expected. Mary, the fiancé of Joseph, was already pregnant. And this was a surprise to Joseph, because Joseph had never done the activity that would make him the father. We sense a scandal.

In Jewish law, in the Book of Deuteronomy, betrothal, or formal engagement to be married, was much more commitment than our American custom of engagement. In America, it is acceptable to break off an engagement, and it can be done without a lawyer. But in those days, in a Jewish betrothal, the engagement was itself already a binding legal contract, on the same level as a marriage contract. Just like a marriage relationship, there were only two ways to end an engagement: death or divorce. First let's consider death. If the man died during the engagement, the woman was considered a widow, and if the woman died during the engagement, the man was considered a widower. Now let's consider the only other way to end the engagement, which was divorce. If a man decided to divorce the woman, then the man had to go through the same legal procedure as a divorce for a marriage. As evidence of this, notice that verse 19 uses the term '*husband*' for Joseph even before the wedding. Husband, not fiance, was the term used for a man betrothed or engaged, yes, before the actual wedding day. The woman, however, was not called a wife during the engagement. She was not called his wife until the wedding day. She remained living in her father's house until the wedding day. Only after a husband took the betrothed woman to his own home during in the public wedding ceremony, did they come together, so that she became his wife. Only then did they consummate their marriage bond.

v.19 - Also in Deuteronomy, a woman who lost the status of virgin was no longer eligible to be married to her betrothed, her fiancé or husband. It was not an option to go through with the wedding; she must be given a document of divorce because the engagement was broken by her actions. Joseph, being a godly man, wanted to do the right thing, in the right way. He did not have a choice. He was not giving up on Mary. He was obeying God. Rather than taking her to court and disgracing her in public, Joseph desired to do the right thing, while showing the most kindness possible – Joseph desired to put Mary away in a quiet divorce from

the engagement agreement. There was just one thing Joseph did not know...he knew she was pregnant. Not that. What was the one thing that Joseph did not know? **THOUGH PREGNANT, MARY WAS A VIRGIN**, and therefore Mary remained legally eligible to be married to Joseph in all righteousness. Now that was a category Joseph had not thought of – that Mary was with child and yet a virgin. Do you know why Joseph had never thought of that? Because that had literally never happened before in the history of mankind. How could Joseph know this was the case for his betrothed – for his Mary?

Now, do you appreciate all that hung on Joseph's next action? Will Joseph marry her, or will Joseph divorce her from the engagement? If Joseph were to divorce his fiance Mary, Jesus would not be the legal Son of David, the next king of Israel at his birth. In order for Jesus to have that legal title of king, Mary would have to be the wife of Joseph at the time of the birth of the first son in Joseph's house. Is it any wonder that before Joseph acted on his best thinking, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, asking him to reconsider? Notice in verse 20, how the angel of the Lord referred to Joseph as the Son of David, to confirm what the genealogy showed. Heaven's angels knew – only in this way would Jesus the King of the Jews. Fast forward to Matthew 27:37, when Jesus hung on a cross, what was written on the sign above his head? *"THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS."* Jesus the king died and rose again to save us from our sins!

## **2. The Son of Abraham. (v.21-23)**

"Son of Abraham" was the second title that Matthew used in 1:1, and this title was to show that Jesus was the promised Savior. Remember that Matthew was writing to Jews, who knew God's promise through Abraham. In Genesis 22:18, just after God said He Himself would provide a sacrifice in place of Abraham's son Isaac, God promised to Abraham, "...in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth shall be blessed..." Even more plainly we read in Galatians 3:16, "Now the

*promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, 'And to your offspring,' who is Christ."*

The term Son of Abraham refers to the long-promised Christ, the Ram needed to take Isaac's place, the Savior, we see the fulfillment of that in verses 21-23 of our text, "*...you shall call His name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.*"

As if that were not enough proof, in verse 22 Matthew explicitly stated why all of this took place, "*...All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel.'*" It was the Lord who had given this sign in Isaiah 7:14. Jesus is the Son of Abraham.

### **3. The Son of God. (v.24-25)**

We know that Mary was the biological mother. We know that Joseph was the adoptive father. But who was the biological father? Our author pointed us in this direction of wondering when he wrote in verse 18 "with child," in verse 21 a son, in verse 23 a son, in verse 25 a son. Whose Son? Who is the father? Furthermore, notice that this Child was never described in chapter one or chapter two as Mary's son nor as Joseph's son. In fact, if we fast forward to chapter 2, instead, 5 times we find a curious phrase "the Child and His mother Mary." The question seems to keep bubbling up from Matthew's words, "Whose Son is this?" It is not until we get to chapter 2:15 that we see a glimmer. There, Matthew writes, "Out of Egypt I called My Son." But it is still hinting. A ringing confirmation to drown all doubt is provided in Matthew 3:17 where we read, "*and behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'*" Who spoke from heaven out loud? God the Father! Jesus is the Son of God!

Not only is Matthew's goal accomplished in verses 24-25 by showing that

Jesus was not the son of Joseph in the biological sense, but Matthew's goal is repeatedly confirmed later throughout Matthew's whole Gospel account - that is, Jesus' origin is traced to God Himself. Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Savior, the newborn Child of Christmas, is none other than the divine Son of God! Jesus is rightly called Immanuel, God with us! God is His biological Father, which hasn't happened since Adam was formed directly by God from the dust. This is exactly why Jesus Christ is called the Second Adam in 1 Corinthians 15 and in Romans 5. The Son of God had come into the world to take on human flesh as the second Adam and the last Adam to reverse what damage was caused by the first Adam in the Fall into sin. Simply put, Jesus the Son of God had come to save His people from their sins. He went from womb to manger to cross to tomb to the skies, has given us His Spirit, is coming again, and commands us to worship Him!

**CONCLUSION:** What does it mean to worship this Jesus? To be convinced that you cannot make it through today without Jesus. That is truth. That is dependence. That is worship.

If you are not relying on Jesus to get you through today, you are relying on something else. Are you convicted about your sins and tired of feeling guilty and stuck in bad patterns? Jesus came to rescue us.

Are you outcast and lonely? God is with us – Immanuel.

Are you waiting on God to answer prayers? Jesus fulfills all of God's promises to us.

Are you hurting and vulnerable? Jesus is the King, the Son of David, who protects us.

Do you want to be part of something big and meaningful? Jesus is building a kingdom and Jesus is selecting people to work for Him. Apply in the church.

Do you hunger for love? 1 John 3:1, “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the children of God! And that is what we are!”

Since the baby Jesus is the King, we must bow before Him and obey his commands, just as Joseph did. Since the baby Jesus is the Son of Abraham, the Child of promise, who came as promised, we can believe that He will come again as promised. Since the baby Jesus is the Son of God, we can worship Him. Let me leave you with two questions: Since the baby was called Jesus because it is He who will save His people from their sins, let me leave you with this question: has He saved you from your sins? If no, then ask Him now. If yes, then my 2<sup>nd</sup> question - are you, like godly man Joseph, obeying God, in the way that God commands? **Son of David, Son of Abraham, Son of God, we must worship and obey Christ.**