

## Matthew 1:18-25

### - God with us - Immanuel -

**Author: Evert Jan Hempenius**

© 2020

[www.christianstudylibrary.org](http://www.christianstudylibrary.org)

For any questions about this Scripture passage or the notes, please contact us through the Contact Us tab on the website.

### Introduction

- ❖ “Immanuel” which means in our language “God with us.” How can we believe that God is really with us? If we look at all the problems the world is facing? Political, economical, ecological, health, social, relational, racial.
- ❖ Isn't the main problem human sin, the alienation from God, to be like God?
  - Matthew wrote: “Mary will give birth to a son, and you (Joseph) are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”
  - “And they will call him Immanuel”—which means, “God with us” (Mt 1:21, 23).
- ❖ This is the joyful message of Christmas. Read this message. Believe this message. Preach this message. Live by this message.
  - “And surely I am with you (‘Immanuel’) always, to the very end of the age” (Mt 28:20)
  
- ❖ This is a companion to sermon outlines of Matthew 1:1-17<sup>1</sup> and to Isaiah 7:14<sup>2</sup>.
- ❖ The context, form and structure, theological, technical and hermeneutical notes given in this sermon outline overlap with other sermon outlines taken from the Gospel of Matthew. This

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.christianstudylibrary.org/files/pub/word/Matthew%201.1-17.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.christianstudylibrary.org/files/pub/word/Isaiah%207.14.pdf>

makes it possible to use this sermon outline as a “stand-alone”. You can also fit this outline into a series of sermons.

## Literary Context

❖ The story of the birth of Jesus Christ belongs to introductory chapters of this gospel:

Mt 1:1-17	The genealogy of Jesus
Mt 1:18-25	The announcement and the birth of Jesus
Mt 2:1-12	The visit of the Magi and the announcement of the birth of the Christ in Jerusalem
Mt 2:13-18	The escape to Egypt
Mt 2:19-23	The return from Egypt

## Form and structure

❖ The form and structure of this birth narrative:

<i>Introduction</i>	<sup>18</sup> This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about:
<i>Background (verse 18, 19)</i>	His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.
<i>Scene 1 (verse 20, 21)</i>	<sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> 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.”
<i>Comment (verse 22, 23)</i>	<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”—which means, “God with us.”

<p>Scene 2  (verse 24, 25)</p>	<p><sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. <sup>25</sup> But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.</p>
--	---

## Historical, hermeneutical and technical notes

### Messiah / Christ (Mt 1:18)

- ❖ The Hebrew and the Greek word mean “the anointed.” The following provides an elaborate background to Matthew 1:1.<sup>3</sup>

#### Anointment in the Old Testament

- ❖ In the Old Testament era, kings and priests were anointed, and the prophet Elisha (1 Kings 19:16). This ceremony referred to divine election and approval (David; 1 Sam 16:1-13) and could be accompanied by the gift of the Spirit (1 Sam 16:14). The anointment could also be part of a public ceremony: the men of Judah anointed David king over the house of Judah (2 Sam 2:4), followed by the elders of Israel, who anointed David king over Israel (2 Sam 5:3).

#### A Future Davidic King: expectations in the Old Testament

- ❖ God had promised King David: “Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever” (2 Sam 7:16). This promise is kept alive by Psalm 89:
  - Psalm 89:3, 4:
 

“You said, ‘I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant, ‘I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations.’”
- ❖ And by the prophets, before, during and after the exile:
  - Isaiah 11:1, 2:
 

“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse (*the father of David*); from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord—.”

---

<sup>3</sup> See for further information: Beers, H. (2013). *Servant of Yahweh*. In J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin (Eds.); Bird, M. F. (2013). *Christ*. In J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin (Eds.); Jonge, M. de. (1992). *Christ*. In D. N. Freedman (Ed.); De Jonge, M. (1992). *Messiah*. In D. N. Freedman (Ed.); Guinan, M. D. (1992). *Davidic Covenant*. In D. N. Freedman (Ed.).

- Jeremiah 23: 5, 6:  
“‘The days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord Our Righteousness.’”
- Jeremiah 33:17, 18:  
“For this is what the Lord says: ‘David will never fail to have a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, nor will the priests, who are Levites, ever fail to have a man to stand before me continually to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings and to present sacrifices.’”
- Ezekiel 33:22-24:  
“I will save my flock, and they will no longer be plundered. I will judge between one sheep and another. I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the Lord have spoken.”
- ❖ In these examples, a future David is promised, a righteous Branch, endowed by the Spirit, who will sit on the throne of Israel, and who will shepherd the people of Israel. Other prophecies speak of My Servant (Isa 42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12, the so-called “Servant Songs”) and speak of the Son of Man (Dan 7: 13, 14):
  - “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”

#### The Messiah / Christ and the message of the Gospels and the Book of Acts:

- ❖ John records the gladness of the first disciples after they have met Jesus:
  - John 1: 41:  
“The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (that is, the Christ).”
- ❖ The purpose of his Gospel is:
  - John 20:31:  
“But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”
- ❖ Therefore,
  - “they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ” (Acts 5:32; also: Acts 18:5).
- ❖ The focus of this study is on the Gospel of Matthew. There are several references to the Jewish expectancy of the Messiah:

- Matthew 1:22-23 (= **Isaiah 7:14**):  
 “All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ‘**The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel**’— which means, ‘God with us.’” This is confirmed by Matthew 2:28: “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” See below.
- Matthew 2:4-6 (= **Micah 5:2**):  
 “When Herod had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. ‘In Bethlehem in Judea,’ they replied, ‘for this is what the prophet has written: **But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.**’”
- Matthew 4:17 (= **Isaiah 9:1, 2**):  
 “To fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah: ‘**Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, along the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.**’”
  - Although Matthew doesn’t refer to **Isaiah 9:6-7**, it is feasible that Jewish hearers/readers immediately would recall these words: “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. Of the increase 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.”
  - Luke narrates the reading of **Isaiah 61:1-3** by Jesus, the Lord: “The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me **to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.**’”
  - See also Matthew 11:2-6:  
 “When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, ‘Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?’ Jesus replied, ‘Go back and report to John what you hear and see: **The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.** Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.’”

The foundation of the church:

- ❖ Jesus declares the confession of Peter the foundation of his church:

- Matthew 16:15-18:
 

“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”
- ❖ The relation between the title “Christ” and the “Son of David” was part of the ‘theological’ discussion between the Pharisees and Jesus.
  - Matthew 22:41-45:
 

“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, ‘What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?’ ‘The son of David,’ they replied. He said to them, ‘How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says, “The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.” If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?’”

Jesus referred to Psalm 110. This Psalm plays an important role in defining the importance of the ascension into heaven and the glorification of Jesus as Lord (Acts 2:34, 35; Heb 1:13).

Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23 – a case of double fulfilment?<sup>4</sup>

- ❖ Isaiah gave King Ahaz a sign: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.” This sign was given during the days of this king. The virgin was a princess, belonging to the royal family. She trusted the Lord. She became pregnant and called her son: ‘Immanuel.’ (Isa 7:14).
 

The boy grew up. “He will eat curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right. But before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste” (Isa 7:15-16).

  - The first part of this prophecy is pointing to the second part of the prophecies. The second part of the prophecy refers to the first meeting between Isaiah and king Ahaz.
- ❖ A comparison between the historical contexts of Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23:

	<b>Isaiah 7:14</b>	<b>Matthew 1:23</b>
	<p>“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”</p>	<p>“The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel—</p>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.christianstudylibrary.org/files/pub/word/Isaiah%207.14.pdf>

		which means, 'God with us.'
Historical situation	King Ahaz vassal king of the King of Assyria.	King Herod vassal king of the Emperor of Rome.
The sign	King Ahaz didn't want a sign from the Lord, because of his disbelief.	The religious leaders of Israel didn't notice the sign God had given to them.
	God gave him a sign, the birth of Immanuel, the son of a young woman.	God gave them not only a sign, but Jesus as the true "Immanuel."

- ❖ During the kingship of Ahaz, a boy had been born and he received the name "Immanuel," as a sign of the faithfulness of the Lord. It is a prophetic name. During the days of King Herod, a boy has been born and he received the name "Jesus." He is "God with us" God incarnate.
  - There is a major difference between the two contexts. During the days of Ahaz, there was a military threat. God promised salvation from this threat. During the days of King Herod, the political situation is one of oppression. But Jesus will not free the people from oppression, he will save his people from their sins.
- ❖ "Indeed this ("Immanuel") is not a personal name but rather **a name that is descriptive of the task this person will perform**. Bringing the presence of God to man, he brings the promised salvation."<sup>5</sup>

## Exposition

### Verse 18a

- ❖ **"This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about"**
  - The Greek word order is unusual: *"Of Jesus Christ, the birth came about like this."*
    - This links verse 18 with verse 16: "the father of Joseph, **the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus**, who is called Christ." Jesus is not the son of Joseph. He is the son of Joseph by adoption.
  - This short narrative reveals several relations between heaven and earth; the past, the time of the narrative, the future; the Lord, Joseph, the Law and the Prophets; Joseph, Mary, Jesus, his people:
    - **Joseph** – Mary: "pledged to be married to Joseph." "Take Mary home as your wife."
    - Joseph – (King) David: "son of David."

---

<sup>5</sup> Hagner, D. A. (1993, p. 21).

- Joseph – Jesus: “you are to give him the name Jesus.”
  - Joseph – Law and Prophets: “Joseph her husband was a righteous man.”
  - **Angel of the Lord** – Joseph: “the angel of the Lord had commanded him.”
  - **The Holy Spirit** – Mary.  
See also Luke 1:26-38: “The angel answered, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God’ (Lk 1:35).
  - The Holy Spirit – Jesus: “what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”
  - **Mary** – Jesus: “She will give birth to a son, (...) Jesus.”
  - **Jesus** – **his** people: “he will save his people from their sins.”
  - Jesus – “Immanuel – God with us.”
  - **Lord** – Law and Prophets: “All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet.”
- Viewed from the perspective of the narrative (Mt 1:18-25):  
The past – the narrative (present) – the future:
    - The Past – “the Lord had said through the prophet.”
    - The narrative (present).
    - The future – “he will save his people from their sins.”
  - Heaven – Earth:
    - The Lord, God, the Holy Spirit, the Angel of the Lord.
    - Joseph, Mary, Jesus, his people.
- ❖ **“Jesus”** was a common name in Israel. It is the equivalent of Joshua (Lk 3:29; Acts 7:45; Heb 4:8).
    - It was also the surname of Justus (Latin = “righteous”) a companion of the apostle Paul: “Jesus, who is called Justus” (Col 4:11). The name Jesus/Joshua means “Yahweh saves” or “Yahweh is salvation.” See below.
  - ❖ **“Christ”** = “Messiah” See above.
    - Jesus is the promised one. He is the Christ. He is the Messiah. He is the servant of God and the “son of man.”

#### Verse 18b-19

- ❖ **“was pledged to be married.”** See also Luke 1:27, 2:5.
- ❖ **“they came together” = “συνέρχομαι”:** **to unite in an intimate relationship, come together** in a sexual context.<sup>6</sup>
  - Davies and Allison: “To judge from the rabbinic sources (**which may be late**), betrothal or engagement in ancient Judaism took place at a very early age, usually at twelve to twelve and a half years. Following courtship and the completion of the marriage contract, the marriage was considered established: the woman had passed

---

<sup>6</sup> Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 970).

from her father's authority to that of her husband. But about a year typically passed before the woman moved from her parents' house to her husband's house. During that time, although the marriage was not yet consummated, the woman was 'wife' (Deut 20:7; 28:30; Judg 14:15; 15:1; 2 Sam 3:14) and she could become a widow or be punished for adultery (Deut 22:23-4). Thus betrothal was the legal equivalent of marriage and its cancellation divorce. This explains the situation of Joseph (Lk 1:27). Even though he has not yet taken Mary, she is already his wife (1:20, 24); thus separation requires a certificate of divorce (1:19; Deut 24:1-4).<sup>7</sup>

❖ **"she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit"**

- **"was found".** Here the sense is **"proved to be"** or **"turned out to be"**.<sup>8</sup>
- **This is the mystery of the incarnation.** "The word became flesh" (Jn 1:14).
  - The coming of the Messiah equals to the beginning of a new creation (Gen 1:1, 2; see also Ps 104:30).
- Joseph didn't have this information yet. He will be informed by the Angel of the Lord.
- The Holy Spirit and Christ:
  - He was active at the conception of Jesus (Mt 1:18, 20);
  - He was descending when Jesus was baptized (Mt 3:16);
  - Jesus will baptize with the Spirit and people will be baptized in his name. (Mt 3:11, 28:19);
  - He led Jesus into the desert to be tempted (Mt 4:1-11);
  - He was speaking through the disciples (Mt 10:20)
  - Demons were driven out by the Spirit of God (Mt 12:28) as the sign of the Kingdom of God.

❖ **"Joseph her husband."** See above.

❖ **"Joseph... was a righteous man"**

- righteous = **"δίκαιος"**: 1. **pertaining to being in accordance with high standards of rectitude, upright, just, fair.**<sup>9</sup> Joseph lived according to the high standards of the Law and Prophets.
  - Righteousness and righteous, "along with phrases such as 'doing God's will' and 'producing fruit'<sup>10</sup> is an important theme in the Gospel of Matthew.

❖ **"he had in mind to divorce her quietly"** because

- (1) **"he was a righteous man"** > **"he had in mind to divorce her."**

---

<sup>7</sup> Davies, W. D., & Allison, D. C., Jr. (2004, p. 199). With references to the Rabbinic sources. These sources are of a later date, which means that this information must be used with some caution.

<sup>8</sup> Davies, W. D., & Allison, D. C., Jr. (2004, p. 200).

<sup>9</sup> Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 246).

<sup>10</sup> Brown, J. K. (2013, p. 464). *Justice, Righteousness*. In J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin (Eds.).

- (2) **“and he did not want to expose her to public disgrace.” > “quietly.”**
  - Joseph had two thoughts:
    - (1) divorce according to the Law: give her a certificate of divorce and send her away (Mt 19:7) or a public trial (Jn 8:1-11).
    - (2) not to expose her to public disgrace: therefore he wanted to do this quietly.
  - “He chose to do this ‘quietly’; that is, he decided to use the ‘any cause’ divorce, which did not require a public trial.”<sup>11</sup>
- There is a major problem. A pregnancy cannot be hidden, in most cases only the first three or four months. After a divorce Mary (and Joseph) still would have a problem, when the child was born.

Verse 20-21 (narrative)

- ❖ **“But after he had considered this.”** His thoughts are known unto God!
- ❖ **“An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream.”**
  - Joseph must become aware of his own thoughts, feelings, and fears before God intervenes. He must be aware of the fact that he is not the biological father.
- ❖ **“Joseph son of David”**
  - “To call Joseph ‘son of David’ (elsewhere used only of Jesus) highlights the importance of Joseph to the incorporation of Jesus into the Davidic line. The incorporation will happen through his taking Mary as his wife and the naming of Jesus by Joseph.”<sup>12</sup>
- ❖ **“do not be afraid.”** Joseph was afraid! For several reasons.
  - Maria was already his wife, but they had not come together yet. See above.
  - Maria was found pregnant. Joseph didn’t know the identity of the father.
  - He was righteous.
  - He probably loved her because he didn’t want her to expose her to public disgrace.
  - He wanted to her to divorce silently.
  - But, **a divorce, the pregnancy and the birth of a child couldn’t be kept silent.**
    - “Nothing less than the public face of the household is at stake.”<sup>13</sup>
- ❖ **“and you are to give him the name Jesus.”** Joseph is not the biological father of Jesus (Mt 1:16). By giving the child a name, he will adopt Jesus as his son (Lk 2:41-48).
- ❖ **“because, he will save his people from their sins.”**
  - **“he”** is emphatic. Others were not able to, for instance, the High Priests, he will (See Heb 4:14–5:10).

---

<sup>11</sup> Instone-Brewer, D. (2013, p. 215). *Divorce*. In J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin (Eds.).

<sup>12</sup> Nolland, J. (2005, p. 79).

<sup>13</sup> Reeder, C. (2013, p. 263). *Family*. In J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin (Eds.).

- “save” = “σῶζω”: 2. **to save or preserve from transcendent danger or destruction, save/preserve from eternal death** from judgment, and from all that might lead to such death, for example sin, also in a positive sense **bring Messianic salvation, bring to salvation.**<sup>14</sup>
  - It is not a political deliverance. Instead, “such deliverance no doubt includes forgiveness as part of a dynamic, holistic project of rescuing people from the ravages of sin and enabling them to flourish.”<sup>15</sup>
- “his people.” Jesus will inherit the throne of his father David. The people will be his people.
  - “His people” are the “lost sheep of Israel” (Mt 10:6; 15:24; also Mt 9:36). See also Matthew 2:6.
  - “His people” is “my church” (Mt 16:18). This is equivalent to the qahal JHWH of the Old Testament, the congregation of Israel. “My church” will consist of Jews and the Nations (Mt 28:19).
- “Save from their sins.” The contrast with his father David is great: “David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah’s wife” (Mt 1:6).
  - Psalm 51:1-5:  
 “A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.  
 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”  
 See also the saying of Eliphaz, who said to Job:  
 “What is man, that he could be pure, or one born of woman, that he could be righteous?” (Jb 15:14; see also: Jb: 9:2; 14:4; 25:4-6; Rom 3:8-12; 7:18; Gal 3:22; Eph 2:2, 3; Jas 3:2, 8; 1 Jn 1:8-10).
- By fulfilling all righteousness (Mt 3:15).
- By preaching: The message of John the Baptist: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” People went out to him and repented. “Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River” (Mt 3:2, 6). The message of Jesus and his disciples is the same (Mt
- By teaching and warning: “If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to

<sup>14</sup> Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 982).

<sup>15</sup> Spencer, F. S. (2013, p. 285). *Forgiveness of Sins*. In J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin (Eds.).

- be thrown into hell” (Mt 5:29, 30). “For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you” (Mt 6:14). See also Matthew 18:1-9.
- By praying: “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Mt 6:12).
    - See also the parable of the debtors (Mt 18:21-33), and forgiveness in the community of brothers and sisters (Mt 18:15-20).
  - By forgiving with authority: “Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven” (Mt 9:2-8).
    - “The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, ‘Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?’” (Lk 5:21).
  - By eating with sinners: “While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and “sinners” came and ate with him and his disciples” (Mt 9:10; Mt 11:19).
  - By removing sin from this world: “The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil” (Mt 13:41).
  - By establishing the new covenant in his blood: “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Mt 26:28). (See also: 1 Cor 11:25; Heb 9:14-22; 10:4-14, 29; 13:20; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; Rev 1:5; 5:9; The old covenant: Ex 12:13; 24:8.)
  - Salvation is the gift of God!

Verse 22-23 (comment)

- ❖ **“All this took place to fulfill.”** Matthew cites Isaiah 7:14 (Greek version, LXX). See above, where the two contexts have been compared.
  - To fulfil is passive, which implies God is acting.
- ❖ **“The virgin” = “παρθένος”:** one who has never engaged in sexual intercourse, virgin, chaste person. a. female of marriageable age with focus on virginity.<sup>16</sup>
- ❖ **“what the Lord had said through the prophet.”** The Lord has spoken. See also Luke 1:70.
  - The Lord is faithful to his promises.
- ❖ **“Immanuel”—which means, ‘God with us.’”** This is the promise of the covenant (Lev 26:12).
  - Matthew 18:20: “For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”
  - Matthew 28:20: “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
    - God with us:
      - When Jesus Christ taught the people.
      - When Jesus Christ healed the sick.
      - When Jesus Christ suffered and was nailed on the cross.
      - When Jesus Christ died our death.

---

<sup>16</sup> Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 777).

- When Jesus Christ was raised from death.
- When Jesus Christ received all power in heaven and on earth.

Verse 24-25 (narrative)

Matthew 1:20-21	Matthew 1:24-25
<p>An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,  “Joseph son of David, <b>do not be afraid</b>  <b>to take Mary home as your wife,</b>  <b>because what is conceived in her is from the</b>  <b>Holy Spirit.</b>  <b>She will give birth to a son,</b>  <b>and you are to give him the name Jesus”</b></p>	<p>When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and <b>took Mary home as his wife.</b>  <b>But he had no union with her until</b>    <b>she gave birth to a son.</b>  <b>And he gave him the name Jesus.</b></p>

- ❖ **“He did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him.”**
  - The initial fear has been taken away by the words and commands of the angel of the Lord.
- ❖ **“But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son.”**
  - According to Luke, Maria stayed for three months after the visit of the angel Gabriel, at her aunt Elisabeth (Lk 1:56), then she returned home. Was Mary already pregnant at that time? When she came to Elisabeth, she exclaimed: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” (Lk 1:42, 43 ESV). The pregnancy of Mary must have noticed early, while it was not yet visible for other people, otherwise, he could have divorced her quietly.
  - Joseph didn’t have sex with her until she gave birth to a son. “Matthew is not concerned to make any statement regarding the marital relations between Joseph and Mary after the birth of Jesus.”<sup>17</sup>
- ❖ **“And he gave him the name Jesus.”**
  - Jesus is truly man, born of a woman (Gal 4:4).
  - Jesus is truly God incarnate (Jn 1:14).  
“The gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom 1:2-4).

---

<sup>17</sup> Newman, B. M., & Stine, P. C. (1992, p. 29).

- “Jesus is both the legitimate heir to David’s throne, born to be king (Mt 2:2), and Son of God conceived by the Holy Spirit.”<sup>18</sup> And: “He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph” (Lk 3:23).

## Application

### Summary

- ❖ Matthew 1:18-25 serves to answer the question left open by the genealogy in Matthew 1:2–16: **how is Jesus the legitimate heir of David** if he is not his biological descendant? The answer is that Jesus, though conceived by the power of the Spirit in a virgin not descended from David, is Son of David by adoption, given that the Davidic Joseph fulfilled what the law required for this by taking Jesus’ mother as his wife and by naming her child ().<sup>19</sup>

### Praise

- ❖ Praise God because he fulfilled all his promises given to Abraham and David, and the people of Israel (Gen 17:5; Ps 89:3, 4).
  - He is faithful.
  - He is merciful because he has sent his son to save his people from their sins.
- ❖ Praise Jesus, the Messiah, the Christ, Immanuel, God with us.
  - The mystery of his conception, as Son of God.
  - He became man, like us.
  - He is the son of God.
  - He is God with us in his teaching, his healing, his words of wisdom, his suffering, his death and resurrection, his power in heaven and on earth, his eternity.
  - Praise him for his humbleness, grace and love, his mercy and righteousness.
- ❖ Be grateful for people like:
  - The virgin Mary and Joseph, their faith, their righteousness.

### The Holy Spirit and the birth of Jesus Christ

- ❖ “This is of great theological importance to the narrative. Mary’s pregnancy is attributed to the agency of God’s Spirit.”<sup>20</sup>
  - For the work of the Spirit. See above.

---

<sup>18</sup> Young, S. (2013, p. 74). *Birth of Jesus*. In J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin (Eds.).

<sup>19</sup> Young, S. (2013, p. 81). *Birth of Jesus*. In J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin (Eds.), following Brown (1993, 138–39): Brown, R. E. (1993). *The birth of the Messiah: A commentary on the infancy narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*. New York: Doubleday.

<sup>20</sup> Hagner, D. A. (1993, p. 17).

### Save his people from their sins

- ❖ Identify the sins of the people:
  - personal, relational, social, economical, political, religious
- ❖ Explain how Jesus brought about salvation. See above.
- ❖ Contrast this with the “salvation” promised by political and other religious leaders.
  - What is the difference between the salvation by Jesus and
    - the salvation offered by Islam;
    - Hinduism and Buddhism;
    - Traditional religions;
    - Ideologies, like capitalism, nationalism, socialism, communism.

### Quotation

- ❖ Anonymus, INCOMPLETE WORK ON MATTHEW, HOMILY: “The child was from a virgin but had [an adoptive, legal] human father. While enumerating his line, Matthew shows him to have descended from the seed of David according to the promises of God. But in explaining that his birth happened in a way quite beyond human nature, he reveals the mystery of his divinity. It was not fitting that the only Son of God should be born in the human way. For he was born not for himself but for humanity. He was indeed born into flesh that would undergo corruption. But Christ was born in order to heal corruption itself. Human corruption is not derived from the uncorrupted state of a virgin. It does not make sense that the only Son of God, who was born to heal corruption, might be born of a corrupt union. Humanity is born out of the necessity to exist. Christ, however, was not born out of the necessity of nature to exist but by his merciful will to save. He was appropriately born contrary to the law of human nature because he was beyond nature.”<sup>21</sup>

### Bibliography

Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Blomberg, C. (1992). *Matthew* (Vol. 22). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Davies, W. D., & Allison, D. C., Jr. (2004). *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (Vol. 1). London; New York: T&T Clark International.

---

<sup>21</sup> Simonetti, M. (Ed.). (2001, p. 13).

France, R. T. (1985). *Matthew: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 1). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Freedman, D. N., Herion, G. A., Graf, D. F., Pleins, J. D., & Beck, A. B. (Eds.). (1992). *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*. New York: Doubleday.

Green, J. B., Brown, J. K., & Perrin, N. (Eds.). (2013). In *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, Second Edition*. Downers Grove, IL; Nottingham, England: IVP Academic; IVP.

Hagner, D. A. (1993). *Matthew 1–13* (Vol. 33A). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

Newman, B. M., & Stine, P. C. (1992). *A handbook on the Gospel of Matthew*. New York: United Bible Societies.

Nolland, J. (2005). *The Gospel of Matthew: a commentary on the Greek text*. Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.

Simonetti, M. (Ed.). (2001). *Matthew 1–13*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Smith, J. H. (1992). *The new treasury of scripture knowledge: The most complete listing of cross references available anywhere- every verse, every theme, every important word*. Nashville TN: Thomas Nelson.