

## CHRISTMAS - Christmas Proves the Love of Jesus

Matt. 1:18-25

Some gifts you can give this Christmas are beyond monetary value: Mend a quarrel, dismiss suspicion, tell someone, "I love you." Give something away-- anonymously. Forgive someone who has treated you wrong. Turn away wrath with a soft answer. Visit someone in a nursing home. Apologize if you were wrong. Be especially kind to someone with whom you work. Give as God gave to you in Christ, without obligation, or announcement, or reservation, or hypocrisy. Charles Swindoll, Growing Strong, pp. 400-1.

Nearly two millennia's ago a young Jewish virgin by the name of Mary (Miriam) gave birth to a baby they called Jesus (Yeshua).

Strange events began to occur after Joseph, a Nazareth carpenter discovered his fiancée was pregnant. Not having had sex with her, he became upset and prepared to end their marriage plans quietly. Espousal was a legal contract and infidelity, a serious matter. Mary could have been disgraced and even stoned under Jewish law, if found guilty.

While considering the dilemma, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him with assurance of her innocence and God's plan for their lives. *"Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son and thou shalt call Him Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."* (Matt. 1:20-21)

The Bible states that Joseph obeyed and abstained from sexual intercourse with Mary, until she had brought forth her first born son.

The Hebrew word Yeshua means 'salvation or Saviour', which is translated Jesus, while Miriam is called Mary.

There were other unusual events like: Wise men coming from the East to worship Him, being led by His star, and shepherds visited by an angelic host and told of His birth in a stable in Bethlehem.

Hebrew prophets had foretold His coming for thousands of years before He arrived. Isaiah prophesied His virgin birth 700 years before it happened. Daniel pin-pointed the very year of the Messiah's death.

Micah named Bethlehem as the place of His birth, Zechariah foretold His wounding and both Daniel and David prophesied His scourging and death by crucifixion hundreds of years before that method of execution was introduced to Palestine by the Romans.

## **GOD'S PROMISE**

God's first promise of "the Redeemer" was given in the garden of Eden after Adam and Eve's transgression. Speaking to Satan, God said, *"And I will put enmity between her seed and thy seed, it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel". (Gen. 3:15)*

The "seed of the woman" was Jesus Christ, the King Messiah! And when He died on Calvary's cross, Satan's dominion over mankind was destroyed.

The Bible says, *"He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."* 1 John 3:8, NKJV. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."

God's prophetic Word is documented hundreds of times concerning the birth, life, death and resurrection of Messiah, and these hundreds of prophecies have come true in the person of Jesus.

God's promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob foretold Messiah's involvement in the salvation of all peoples. *"... in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."* (Gen. 12:3)

Daniel speaks of "Messiah the Prince". Haggai calls Him, "The Desire of all nations" and Zechariah declares Him to be "the Shepherd against which men will lift their sword".

**THE WRITERS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ADD THEIR WITNESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS MESSIAH, ACCORDING TO THE OLD TESTAMENT.**

John stated that he and the other disciples heard Him speak, saw His miracles and touched Him, before and after His death and resurrection. And like Napoleon, John was convinced that Jesus was more than a man. He is the Logos, the Living Word of God!

John wrote, *"We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming to our Lord Jesus Christ, but were ye witnesses of His Majesty"*.

Infidels and skeptics have said that Jesus staged many events, including His death, in order to be hailed "Messiah"!

How could anyone stage the following? 1) PLACE OF BIRTH 2) TIME OF BIRTH 3) VIRGIN BIRTH 4) BETRAYAL 5) METHOD OF EXECUTION 6) CRUEL MOCKING 7) PIERCING 8) BURIAL 9) RESURRECTION!

Prophet Isaiah stated, *"Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given"*. And John's gospel records *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life"*. (John 3:16)

## **WHY CHRISTMAS IS SO IMPORTANT!**

The fulfillment of the ancient prophecies, the message of Gabriel - the archangel - to Mary and Joseph, the wise men's "guiding star", the angelic visit to Judean shepherds and God's revelation of Jesus' identity to Simeon in the Temple, Highlighted through it all, are the hopeful words of the angels to the lowly shepherds, that first Christmas morning.

*"Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men."* (Luke 2:10-12)

### **1. IT WAS SUPERNATURAL**

**V.18** *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.*

“OF THE HOLY SPIRIT”, This evidently means that the body of Jesus would be created by the direct power of God. It was not by ordinary generation; but, as the Messiah came to redeem sinners--to make atonement for others, and not for himself--it was necessary that his human nature should be pure, and free from the corruption of the fall. God therefore prepared him a body by direct creation that should be pure and holy.

*“Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me.” Hebrews 10:5, NKJV.*

That holy thing, &c. That holy progeny or child.

SHALL BE CALLED THE SON OF GOD. This is spoken in reference to the human nature of Christ, and this passage proves, beyond controversy, that one reason why Jesus was called the Son of God was because he was begotten in a supernatural manner. He is also called the Son of God on account of his resurrection.

*“and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” Romans 1:4, NKJV.*

*“I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.’” Psalms 2:7, NKJV.*

## **2. IT INVOLVED THE HUMAN ELEMENT**

**V.19** *Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.*

A JUST MAN. Justice consists in rendering to every man his own. Yet this is evidently not the character intended to be given here of Joseph. It means that he was kind, tender, merciful; so attached to Mary, that he was not willing that she should be exposed to public shame. He sought, therefore, secretly to dissolve the connexion, and to restore her to her friends without the punishment commonly inflicted on adultery. The word just has not un-frequently this meaning of mildness, or mercy.

A PUBLIC EXAMPLE. To expose her to public shame or infamy. Adultery has always been considered a crime of a very heinous nature. In Egypt it was punished by cutting off the nose of the adulteress; in Persia the nose and ears were cut off; in Judea the punishment was death by stoning, [Le 20:10](#) [Eze 16:38](#) [40](#) [Joh 8:5](#). This punishment was also inflicted where the person was not married, but betrothed, [De 22:23](#) [24](#).

In this case, therefore, the regular punishment would have been death in this painful and ignominious manner. Yet Joseph was a religious man, mild and tender; and he was not willing to complain of her to the magistrate, and expose her to death, but sought to avoid the shame, and to put her away privately.

*“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9, NKJV.*

### **3. IT INVOLVED DIVINE INSTRUCTION**

*20 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.*

*21 “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”*

HIS NAME JESUS. The name Jesus is the same as Saviour. It is derived from the verb signifying to save. In Hebrew it is the same as Joshua. In two places in the New Testament it is used where it means Joshua, the leader of the News into Canaan, and in our translation the name Joshua should have been retained, **Ac 7:45 Heb 4:8**. It was a very common name among the Jews.

HE SHALL SAVE. This expresses the same as the name, and on this account the name was given to him. He saves men by having died to redeem them; by giving the Spirit to renew them, (**Joh 16:7 8**) by his power in enabling them to overcome their spiritual enemies, in defending them from danger, in guiding them in the path of duty, in sustaining them in trials and in death; and he will raise them up at the last day, and exalt them to a world of purity and love.

HIS PEOPLE. Those whom the Father has given to him. The Jews were called the people of God, because he had chosen them to himself, and regarded them as his peculiar and beloved people, separate from all the nations of the earth. Christians are called the people of Christ, because it was the purpose of the Father to give them to him, (**Isa 53:11 Joh 6:37**) and because in due time he came to redeem them to himself, **Tit 2:14 1Pe 1:2**.

FROM THEIR SINS. This is the great business of Jesus in coming and dying. It is not to save men IN their sins, but FROM their sins. Sinners could not be happy in heaven. It would be a place of wretchedness to the guilty. The design of Jesus was, therefore, to save from sin;

1. by dying to make an atonement, ([Tit 2:14](#)); and,

2. by renewing the heart, and purifying the soul, and preparing his people for a pure and holy heaven. And from this we may learn,

(1.) that Jesus had a design in coming into the world--he came to save his people--and that design will surely be accomplished. It is impossible that in any part of it he should fail.

(2.) We have no evidence that we are his people, unless we are saved from the power and dominion of sin. A mere profession of being his people will not answer. Unless we give up our sins; unless we renounce the pride, pomp, and pleasure of the world, and all our lusts and crimes, we have no evidence that we are the children of God. It is impossible that we should be Christians if we indulge in sin, and live in the practice of any known iniquity.

(3.) That all professing Christians should feel that there is no salvation unless it is from sin, and that they can never be admitted to a holy heaven hereafter, unless they are made pure, by the blood of Jesus, here.

*22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:*

MIGHT BE FULFILLED. It is more difficult to know in what sense this could be said to be fulfilled in the birth of Christ. To understand this, it may be remarked that the word fulfilled is used in the Scriptures, and in other writings, in many senses, of which the following are some:

1st. When a thing is clearly predicted, and comes to pass: as the destruction of Babylon, foretold in [Isa 13:19-22](#); and of Jerusalem, in Matthew 24.

2nd. When one thing is testified or shadowed forth by another, the type is said to be fulfilled. This was the case in regard to the types and sacrifices in the Old Testament, which were fulfilled by the coming of Christ. See Hebrews 9.

*23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."*

*24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife,*

*25 and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.*

In my opinion, Jim Wolf's poem 'The True Story of Christmas' says it all!

"It happened on a silent night  
Two thousand years ago;  
God sent to us His only Son  
Because He loved us so.

While angels watched from up above,  
The blessed babe was born,  
And laid into a manger  
On that first real Christmas morn.  
The shepherds came to worship Him  
The eastern wise men, too,  
To celebrate His holy birth  
As now all Christians do.

The greatest story ever told  
Is not of shopping malls;  
It's how God's Son was born on earth  
To love and save us all."

HAVE A SAFE, PEACEFUL AND CONTAGIOUSLY JOYOUS CHRISTMAS