

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

# Complications From the Virgin Birth

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Matthew 1: 18-25

**<sup>1</sup> Are you ready to obey God no matter what the risks? Here is the story of two people who were willing to do that, and it affected the rest of human history! <sup>2</sup>**

**From Matthew, chapter 1, verses 18 through 25 we read. This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: 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. 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. <sup>1</sup> <sup>3</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. 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.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The**

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 1:18-19.

virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” — which means, “God with us.”<sup>2</sup><sub>4</sub>

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.<sup>3</sup><sub>5</sub>

Are you ready to obey God no matter what the risks?<sub>6</sub>

There was . . .

## I. The Possibility of Mary’s Rejection

– v18-19

The possibility of Mary’s rejection.<sub>7</sub>

Verse 18 says Mary was pregnant. **The legal case for rejection was adultery.**<sub>8</sub>

What was the relationship between Mary and Joseph?

They were engaged to be married!<sub>9</sub>

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<sup>2</sup> Matthew 1:20-23.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 1:24-25.



**Betrothal, in ancient Jewish culture, was as legally binding as marriage. <sup>10</sup> A dowry was paid at betrothal time to protect Joseph's investment. <sup>11</sup> The betrothal period usually lasted ten to twelve months. That's a good example for us. Short engagements often result in short marriages! <sup>12</sup>**

**When did Mary's pregnancy become obvious? Probably by the time she returned from her cousin Elizabeth's home. By then, **she was found to be with child.** <sup>4</sup> She would have been three months pregnant by then. <sup>13</sup> She went to Elizabeth's home after the angel's birth announcement to her. <sup>5</sup> <sup>14</sup> Elizabeth was more than six months pregnant by the time Mary**

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<sup>4</sup> Verse 18.

<sup>5</sup> Luke 1:38-40 - "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her. At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth.

arrived. <sup>6</sup> <sub>15</sub> She probably stayed with Elizabeth until John was born about three months later. <sup>7</sup>

She probably told Joseph when she returned home since she owed him an explanation. He likely wanted to believe her, but God had not performed a miracle in over four centuries! <sup>16</sup>

Joseph had his reputation, and the reputation of his family, to protect. <sup>17</sup> He was a direct descendant of King David! <sup>8</sup> <sub>18</sub>

What were Joseph's options? Verse 19 says, **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.** <sup>19</sup> This verse says **he was a righteous man**. So he couldn't just marry her anyway. That would stain his family and his genealogy. Genealogy was important to Jewish folks! The Jewish law said he would be committing adultery! <sup>20</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Luke 1:36 - Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month.

<sup>7</sup> Luke 1:56 - Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 1:2-16.

This verse also says **he was a merciful man**; he wanted to “divorce her quietly” and not “expose her to public disgrace”. <sup>21</sup>

He could have been spiteful and full of revenge insisting on **the Law of Infidelity!** If, however, the charge is true and no proof of the girl’s virginity can be found, she shall be brought to the door of her father’s house and there the men of her town shall stone her to death. She has done a disgraceful thing in Israel by being promiscuous while still in her father’s house. You must purge the evil from among you. <sup>9</sup> <sup>22</sup>

Instead, he decided to protect his reputation, but also be merciful with Mary by enacting **The Bill of Divorce without Cause**; If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her

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<sup>9</sup> Deuteronomy 22:20-21.



from his house . . . <sup>10</sup> This divorce could be given privately in front of only two witnesses. Joseph was determined not to take Mary to court! <sup>23</sup>

What would you have done if you were him?

Joseph was in a real pickle! <sup>24</sup> So there was . . .

## II. The Necessity of God's Revelation – v20-23

The necessity of God's Revelation. <sup>25</sup>

**God honors those who honor Him!** <sup>26</sup> Scripture says, Those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained. <sup>11</sup> <sup>27</sup> Lord Jesus said, **My Father will honor the one who serves me.** <sup>12</sup> <sup>28</sup>

So, **God solved this problem by sending His angel!** Joseph had pondered this problem so much he dreamed about it that night! <sup>29</sup>

The Gospel of Matthew records four revelations during dreams. This one; to Joseph about the Egypt

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<sup>10</sup> Deuteronomy 24:1.

<sup>11</sup> I Samuel 2:30.

<sup>12</sup> John 12:26.

trip <sup>13</sup>; <sup>30</sup> To the Magi about how to get home <sup>14</sup> and <sup>31</sup> to Pilate's wife about avoiding the decision about what to do with Jesus <sup>15</sup>. God directs those who ponder His will!

What was the revelation? Verses 20 and 21, **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. 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."** <sup>32</sup>

In verse 20, **Joseph, son of David.** This was to remind him he was in the proper family to have the Messiah. <sup>33</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Matthew 2:13 - When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt.

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 2:12 - And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew 27:19 - While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him."



**Do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife. His fear of marrying Mary was to stain his family. To provide the Messiah would be it's greatest honor!** <sup>34</sup>

**Because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. Lord Jesus would become God in flesh!** <sup>16</sup> <sup>35</sup>  
**Emmanuel means "God is with us"!** <sup>36</sup>

**Nature shows us God is above us!**

**The Law shows us God is against us!**

**The Gospel shows us God is with and for us!** <sup>37</sup>

**Then, in verse 21, You are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins. "Jesus", or Joshua, means "savior". He was named after Joshua, the leader of Israel and Joshua, one of the greatest high priests. Lord Jesus became both!** <sup>38</sup>

**Jesus saves you from guilt. His blood, shed on the cross, washes you white as snow!** <sup>39</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Matthew 1:22 - 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."

**Jesus saves you from the power of sin.** His Holy Spirit indwells you to provide power to conquer sin! <sup>40</sup>

**Jesus saves you from eternal punishment.** The consequence of sin is death <sup>17</sup>, but Lord Jesus will provide your resurrection and entrance into heaven. <sup>41</sup>

## **II. The Privilege of Mary's Reinstatement -**

v24-25

The privilege of Mary's reinstatement. <sup>42</sup>

**Joseph heard God speak and he immediately obeyed!** When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. <sup>18</sup> He arose from his sleep and implemented God's plan. When God speaks to you through His word, the Bible, He expects you to arise from your sleep and do something! <sup>43</sup>

**Joseph accepted God at His word! But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he**

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<sup>17</sup> Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>18</sup> Matthew 1:24.

**gave him the name Jesus.** <sup>19</sup> He waited for Mary to give birth. You need to make God's ministry the priority of your life! He followed God's directions completely and called His name "Jesus". <sup>44</sup>

**How far have you taken God at His word? He has promised you life, abundant and eternal!**

**How much are you willing to risk for it? Are you willing to trade in your life to gain His?**

**<http://biblelifemessages.org>**

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<sup>19</sup> Matthew 1:25.