

## Matthew 1:18-25 – Jesus' Birth

The beginning of Matthew laid a foundation. Jesus, the Messiah, was descended from king David. If Jesus was not descended from king David, then he could not be the long expected Messiah. Jesus had the right genealogy and he was also born in the right place. The place where Jesus was born was not mentioned until chapter 2. The account of Jesus' birth in Matthew is very different from the account in Luke. Matthew focused on Joseph. Luke focused on Mary. Combining the two accounts gives us a more complete picture of Jesus' birth.

### Read Matthew 1:18-25.

In verse 18, the word "birth" is the same word as "genealogy" in verse 1. Matthew chose to use the same word with two different meanings. According to BDAG, the word is used in other literature with the meanings "birth" or "genealogy" based on the context. KJV has "espoused" for the relationship between Joseph and Mary. That may indicate that they were married. But, ESV, LSB and NASB have "betrothed". NIV has "pledged to be married". In verse 18, was Joseph engaged to Mary or were they married? Luke used the same word, "betrothed", in Luke 1:27 and 2:5. BDAG says that the word means "betroth". BDAG says that "came together" in this verse combines "domestic and marital relations". What happened before they "came together"? This was one way of saying that Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus. (1:18)

In verse 19, how was Joseph described? ESV and KJV have "just". NASB and LSB have "righteous". NIV has "faithful to the law". What did Joseph plan to do with Mary? Why did he want to do it? Being "with child from the Holy Spirit" was not covered in my eight grade health class. Maybe the same was true for Joseph. That's a joke, son. Luke focused on Mary in the birth account. In Luke 1-2, there was no mention of Matthew's plan to "divorce" Mary. ESV and NIV have "divorce her". KJV has "put her away". NASB and LSB have "send her away". The word has different meanings. In the context of a relationship it can mean "divorce". According to BDAG, this word "divorce" was used for both married couples and couples who were engaged to be married. (1:19)

In verse 20, what happened while Joseph was still thinking about divorcing Mary? Why would Joseph have been afraid to follow through with the marriage? What did the angel tell Joseph? The angel echoed the words from verse 18, "from the Holy Spirit". Does this imply that Joseph did not believe what Mary told him or is that reading too much into the text? To say that Mary told Joseph what the angel Gabriel told her is an assumption in itself. (1:20)

In verse 21, the angel did a gender reveal. Mary would give birth to a son. Would it have mattered if Mary gave birth to a daughter? Why or why not? What name was Joseph to give to Mary's son? What is the meaning of the name "Jesus"? The name "Jesus" is from the Hebrew word which we know as "Joshua" or "Jeshua". The word is made from the name of God (Yahweh) and the word "to save". Who would Jesus save? What would Jesus save people from? (1:21)

We need to take our clues from scripture. God was declaring why he was sending Jesus, the Messiah. What are some reasons for Jesus' coming which people have made up to suit their own causes?

Verse 22 declared that Jesus' birth was to be a fulfillment of God's word through the prophet. Verse 23 contains the first direct quote from the Old Testament in Matthew's Gospel. Which OT passage was quoted in verse 22? See Isaiah 7:14. What does "Immanuel" mean? How was Jesus, "Immanuel"? The word "virgin" in the Hebrew text of Isaiah 7:14 can mean "virgin" or simply "young woman". The Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament, used the word "virgin". Luke used the same word in 1:27. Both Matthew and Luke made it clear that Mary was a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus. The translation "virgin" best fits the context. Could Jesus have been born with a sin nature? (1:22-23)

Why is it important to believe that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary? What would the implications be if Jesus was not born of a virgin? Some people believe that original sin is transmitted through the male and that is why Jesus was without original sin. This belief is not widespread. See R. C. Sproul's short discussion about the virgin birth and original sin here: <https://learn.ligonier.org/qas/if-jesus-was-born-of-the-substance-of-the-virgin-mary-how-was-he-without-original-sin>

In verse 24, how did Joseph respond to the angel? (1:24)

In verse 25, what are we told about Mary, Joseph and Jesus? ESV and KJV have "knew her not", which sticks to the original wording. This is the proverbial "know in the Biblical sense". NASB and LSB have "kept her a virgin". NIV has "did not consummate their marriage". NASB and NIV properly capture the meaning of "know" in this verse. KJV adds "firstborn" to "son". This is based on textual variants and not a translation difference. (1:25)

### **Read Matthew 2:1.**

We will cover this verse in more detail next time. I just wanted us to have the context of where Jesus was born and the approximate time in history. Where was Jesus born? Who was the king in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus' birth? (2:1)