



Matthew 1:18-25 New Revised Standard Version

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do 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 as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.” ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

Notes:



“You shall give him the name Jesus...” Not Joseph or John or even James, but Jesus. “Jesus” is the Greek form of the Hebrew name “Yeshua” from which we get the word “Joshua.” It is a name which can be translated as

“savior” or “deliverer” and functions not only as a way of referring to the son born to Mary, but also as a description for who he would be for his people.

Jesus entered the world not to be a great teacher or miracle worker or continue his earthly father’s profession as a carpenter. He came in order that he might “save his people from their sins.” While Jesus certainly touched many lives and brought salvation from hunger, disease, mental illness, and such, he entered our world as God’s answer to humanity’s sin problem. The effects of sin are all around us. To sin is unfortunately for us as human beings as natural as breathing. It is serious, destructive, and inconsistent with God’s purposes for humanity.

When we speak of “sin,” we use a term which means to “miss the mark.” Last week at camp, I had the opportunity to assist with daily activities and one of those involved archery. I will admit that it was a lot of fun and, although I did place a couple of arrows in the bullseye, I had arrows here, there, and yonder. My intention was to hit the center of the target, but many of my attempts were a bit high or low, left or right. This is how sin works in our lives. However, it is by no means a game of target practice with a bow and arrow. It is much more far-reaching and destructive.

It was for this reason that God chose to become as we are in order that a once and for all solution might be made available to humanity. When we consider Jesus as the Savior needed by humanity, what do we mean?

1. Jesus is the means for reconciling our relationship with God.
2. Jesus came in order to bring us more than forgiveness.
3. Jesus proves a love which cannot watch us destroy ourselves.

Prayer Pebble: Lord, without your saving initiative, I am lost.