

## 12-8-19 THE QUESTIONS OF CHRISTMAS Series #2 of 5

### *What Should I Do?* -- "JOSEPH" Matthew 1:18-25

Last week: We considered "how" Zechariah and Elizabeth responded to the remarkable event of Elizabeth's 'miraculous' pregnancy and subsequent birth of the child who was to grow to become the character that we now know as, "John the Baptist."

We saw that, at first, Zechariah CHOSE to be cynical and doubt God's intervening act AND we saw that Elizabeth CHOSE to praise God and EMBRACE ALL THAT GOD WAS DOING IN THEM, AROUND THEM, and THRU THEM.

Today our 2019 ADVENT SERIES CONTINUES as we consider "JOSEPH." We will consider his feelings when he learns that his fiancée, Mary is pregnant. I imagine the feelings of BETRAYAL were overwhelming and we read in the Gospel of Matthew that he is pondering the decision, "WHAT SHOULD I DO?"

He has a choice. What and how will he decide?

#### Today we will consider:

1. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT JESUS (GOD INCARNATE) TAKE-ON A HUMAN NATURE – hence, WHY A "VIRGIN BIRTH?"
2. WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?
3. CAN WE RELATE TO THE FEELINGS & POSITION OF JOSEPH?
4. WHAT DOES THE ANGEL SAY?
5. WHAT DOES JOSEPH DO? WHY?

#### MAIN POINT:

1<sup>st</sup> ---- WE HAVE THE FREEDOM & ABILITY TO CHOOSE HOW WE RESPOND TO LIFE. WE ARE ABLE TO CHOOSE & WITH GOD'S HELP, CONTROL & DETERMINE OUR EMOTIONS & RESPONSES TO LIFE.

2<sup>nd</sup> ---- JOSEPH WAS MOVED FROM OVERWHELMING FEELINGS OF BETRAYAL TO AN OVERWHELMING CONFIDENCE OF BEING "CHOSEN" BY GOD FOR A VERY SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

1<sup>st</sup> --- "WHY" is it important that God, in Jesus – God incarnate— come to planet earth?

1. TO HELP US TO SEE AND KNOW GOD --- TO REVEAL A MORE ACCURATE & TRUER GOD TO PLANET EARTH
2. THE DAMAGE OF SIN & BROKENNESS --- OF A "SINFUL" HUMAN NATURE -- (a nature predisposed to and committed to hurt & broken relationships with God, ourselves & others) **MUST BE SYSTEMICALLY RESOLVED BY HUMANITY** (from within the system)
  - a. The 'perpetrators' need to responsible -- & 'the fix' needed to come from within the system.
  - b. A SYSTEMIC FIX is BETTER THAN A 'CASE BY CASE' PARDON

**JESUS PROVIDED AN 'OPEN DOOR' TO LEAD TO A FULLY RESTORED RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THAT WAS LOST LONG, LONG AGO –**

+ JESUS OVERCAME THE POWER OF SIN

+ JESUS OVERCAME THE POWER OF THE CONSEQUENCE OF SIN --- DEATH ITSELF

3. TO SHOW US "HOW TO LIVE" rightly & 'in the spirit'

**THEREFORE ----** since humanity was and is unable to resolve the problem of sin & death --- we needed help, yet the resolve had to come from the ranks of humanity... Jesus accepted the position of being born 'human,' yet with a divine & holy seed, with all human frailties & exposures that he may do what we could not do for ourselves.

WE can imagine the disruption in nature when such an intrusion of the DIVINE entered into the natural world of planet earth.

- + Needed a prophet to help announce & explain
- + Needed a human birth, yet, not a 'broken' or 'flawed' human nature --- the only way was a DIVINE CONCEPTION ---  
THEREFORE MARY & JOSEPH HAD CRITICAL ROLES TO PLAY in the ONETIME ANOMALY

THE GOSPEL WRITERS NEEDED TO EXPLAIN THIS TO THEIR AUDIENCES --- HERE IS MATTHEW'S PRESENTATION:  
NEEDED TO PRESENT AN EXPLANATION OF "DIVINITY" & HUMANNESSESS ----

**MATTHEW 1:18-25:** This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

<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."

<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel (which means "God with us").

<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 did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

CAN YOU RELATE TO JOSEPH'S EMOTIONS & FEELINGS OF BETRAYAL?  
WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

### WHAT DID THE ANGEL SAY?

**THE ANGEL'S WORD:** DO NOT BE AFRAID, TAKE MARY AS YOUR WIFE

**THE ANGEL'S PLAN:** Mary WILL GIVE BIRTH to a son  
She will call him JESUS (Greek of Joshua)  
He WILL SAVE his people –  
NOT FROM ROME BUT FROM SIN!!!

**THE ANGEL'S PROPHETIC REFERENCE:** to help people see the correlation of this supernatural event in terms of their religious beliefs ...

ISAIAH 7:14

ISAIAH 8:8-10

### **AND WHAT HAPPENED?**

JOSEPH GOT UP (APPARENTLY 'AT PEACE') AND DID WHAT WAS NEEDED

- + LOVED, PROTECTED & CARED for MARY & JESUS
- + PROVIDED AN EARTHLY & LEGAL FATHER

JOSEPH WENT FROM BEING "BETRAYED" TO BEING "CHOSEN"  
ALL THAT CHANGED

---- A DIVINE ENCOUNTER

---- A CHOICE TO ACCEPT & EMBRACE GOD'S PLAN

KEY --- WE SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY WHEN WE ENCOUNTER GOD AND CHOOSE TO ACCEPT GOD'S PLAN --- WE MUST CHOOSE!!!!

ARE YOU BEING CHALLENGED?

MAY GOD BE INVITING YOU TO BE A PART OF HIS DIVINE WORK EITHER IN YOUR OWN LIFE OR THE LIVES OF THOSE CLOSE TO YOU?

WHAT IS YOUR PRAYER TODAY?

ARE YOU PREPARED AND ABLE TO SAY "YES?"

... TO LET GO OF THE CONFINES OF THE LIMITED OPTIONS OFFERED BY THE WORLD AND LOOK FOR GOD'S DIVINE BEST FOR YOU & FOR OTHERS?

... TO MOVE FROM FEELING BETRAYED TO REALIZING THAT YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN BY GOD FOR A SPECIAL WORK & A SPECIAL PLACE?