**Immanuel**

Matthew 1:18-25

Key Verse 23

“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” which means “God with us.”

**Introduction**

This passage is about how Jesus was conceived and born. The story of Jesus’s birth reveals both his identity and the purpose of his birth. The great event of Jesus’ birth boils down in one word, “Immanuel” which means “God with us.” This passage tells us how our Lord Jesus Christ took our fragile nature upon Himself to become man.

1. **Read verse 18-19. What situation was Mary in? (18a). How did she become pregnant and what does this reveal about Jesus? (18b) What kind of person was Joseph? (19a). How did he want to deal with Mary’s pregnancy? (19b) What do you think this shows about him?**

**1-1, Read verse 18-19.**

*18 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. 19 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.*

**1-2, What situation was Mary in? (18a).**

* *This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about*: The story about the birth of Jesus tells us the true origin and identity of Jesus. The way of the birth of Jesus was unique and different. When we meditate about his birth, we come to know who Jesus Christ is.
* *His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph*: Mary was an ordinary country girl. She kept purity and had faith in God. She was ready to obey God by faith. She was pledged to be married to Joseph. It was God’s divine arrangement to fulfil his promise (Ge 22:18, 2 Sa 7:11-16). Christ will be born as a descendant of Abraham and King David and he will reign over his people as a king.

**1-3, How did she become pregnant and what does this reveal about Jesus? (18b)**

* *but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.:* Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit. This fact teaches us several things.
* It was the fulfilment of God’s plan to send the Savior as an offspring of woman (Ge 3:15)
* It was the fulfilment of prophecy about Messiah (Isa 7:14) *14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.* God spoke through the prophet Isaiah that he would send the Savior though a virgin.
* The origin of Jesus: Being conceived by the Holy Spirit reveals that the origin of Jesus was not human, but God. Jesus is the Son of God.
* The incarnation of the Christ: Jesus wore human flesh and became a human being born through a virgin: Mary.

**1-4, What kind of person was Joseph? (19a).**

* *19 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.*
* Joseph her husband – Joseph was considered to be Mary’s legal husband because Mary was pledged to be married to him. He had the right to deal with this situation as her husband.
* Joseph was faithful to the law; a just man(KJV), a righteous man(ASV). – He was a righteous man who lived according to the law. Even though he was not a perfect man, he struggled to observe God’s law faithfully.

**1-5, How did he want to deal with Mary’s pregnancy? (19b)**

* Yet he did not want to expose her to public disgrace - The woman who committed adultery was to be stoned to death according to the law (Dt 22:23-24).
* Joseph could expose Mary to the public. He must have been in pain not knowing how things had happened. But he didn’t want to expose her to public disgrace because of his merciful heart for her.
* He had in mind to divorce her quietly: As a righteous man who was faithful to the law he planned to divorce her quietly. It is a beautiful example of godly wisdom, and consideration for others.

**1-6, What do you think this shows about him?**

* He was a righteous man with merciful heart. He was faithful to the law but kept mercy in his heart as well. He didn’t take action according to his personal feelings of frustration or anger but wanted to deal with the situation in a way that was right before God. It shows his maturity.
* It reminds us of heavenly wisdom in James 3:13-18. Joseph was indeed a righteous man.

1. **Read verses 20-21 What did an angel tell Joseph in a dream? (20) What name did the angel tell him to give to the baby and how does the name indicate the child’s mission? (21)**

**2-1, Read verses 20-21**

*20 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. 21 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.”*

**2-2, What did an angel tell Joseph in a dream? (20)**

* *But after he had considered this*: Again he didn’t take action quickly. Rather he must have thought about it deeply to come up with the best solution. He might have had a hard time doing it by himself. However he was not alone but was helped.
* *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.*
* The angel told Joseph that the child was conceived from the Holy Spirit. The angel’s message cleared out Joseph’s wonder and agony. When Joseph endeavored to deal with the situation in a righteous way, God gave him a clear message to guide him.
* *Joseph son of David* – Joseph was a descendent of David and Jesus would be born in the line of King David as God promised.
* *Do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife*- God wanted Joseph to complete the marriage by taking Mary home so that Jesus may grow as his son and be protected.

**2-3, What name did the angel tell him to give to the baby and how does the name indicate the child’s mission? (21)**

* 21 *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.”*
* ‘Jesus’ means “Jehovah is salvation.” ‘Jesus’ (Greek) is Joshua in Hebrew. Jesus came to bring the salvation of God to the world. He is the Messiah and the Savior whom God sent to save the world.
* *He will save His people –* Jesus saves his people as their king and reigns over them. His people refer to the people who accept Jesus as their king and savior.
* *From their sins-* The ultimate purpose of Jesus’ coming was to save people from their sins. The true salvation is the complete and perfect salvation from sin. It is because sin is the ultimate cause of all the world’s problems. Sin causes separation from God and eternal death. It is the great news that the Messiah would save people from their sin and restore their relationship with God.
* On top of saving men from sin, he saves them from all the consequences of sin such as God’s wrath, curse, and all misery. After Jesus saves us from sin, the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts to sanctify us continually. He gives us rest in our soul and spirit. He will ultimately give us a glorious body at the last day.

1. **Read verses 22-23. What prophecy was fulfilled through these events? (22-23, Isa 7:14). What is the meaning of the name Immanuel? (23). What do you think the name ‘Immanuel’ reveals about Jesus and God’s grace?**

**3-1**. **Read verses 22-23.**

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

**3-2. What prophecy was fulfilled through these events? (22-23, Isa 7:14)**

* *All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet-* God fulfilled all the prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament to reveal that Jesus is the promised Messiah whom he sent.
* Jesus’ birth through the virgin Mary was the fulfillment of prophecy as told by the prophet Isaiah about the Messiah (Isa:7:14) *14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel*.
* When the army of Aram and Israel attacked Judah, Ahaz, the king of Judah was fearful and asked for God’s help. Then God told him to ask for a sign of salvation. But he refused to do it because of his lack of faith. Then God himself decided to show the sign, which is Immanuel.
* God gave the sign to him and his people to direct them to look forward to the Messiah, who was to come of the people of the Jews, and the house of David.

**3-3. What is the meaning of the name Immanuel? (23)**

* *they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”)*: ‘God incarnated among us’. It teaches us that Jesus is the God who came this world to stay with his people. He is the incarnated God – The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us (Jn 1:14).
* God incarnated among us. And so God, now reconcilable to us, was at peace with us, and took us into a covenant and communion with himself.
* Through his incarnation God brought reconciliation between God and man so that God may be with us.
* He was among his people, and has been with his people until now, and he will be with them to the end of the age.
* Jesus sacrificed heavenly glory to be with us. *“Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross! (Php 2:6-8)*
* He is with his people to save, help, protect and lead them. He is with each of us as the Savior, the King and the Shepherd. He is with us even when we don’t recognize it. Now we should be with him by obeying him and having faith in him. Then we can experience the grace of Immanuel all the time.

**3-4. What do you think the name ‘Immanuel’ reveals about Jesus and God’s grace?**

* Jesus is the Savior who is God himself. He has the power and authority of God. He came to the world and become a man to be with us. God could judge the world because of its sin. But God loved the world and sent his only Son instead to save sinners. Jesus sacrificed his life to save sinners and stays with his people. This is God’s amazing grace.

1. **Read verses 24-25. What does Joseph do when he wakes from the dream? (24) What does Joseph name the child? (25) What do you think we can learn from Joseph?**

**4-1. Read verses 24-25.**

* *24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.*

**4-2. What does Joseph do when he wakes from the dream? (24)**

* Joseph obeyed what God had told him to do through the angel. - He obeyed God immediately. By taking Mary home as his wife, Joseph became Jesus’ legal father.

**4-3. What does Joseph name the child? (25)**

* He gave him the name Jesus: Jesus became Joseph and Mary’s legal son and the Son of Man.

**4-4. What do you think we can learn from Joseph?**

* He was a righteous man and obedient to God. By faith he became Jesus’ legal father and provided care and education for him.

**Conclusion**

Jesus is the Savior and incarnated God who came to this world to save his people from sin. He had a nature like our own in all things but sin. Although Jesus was "with us" in human flesh and blood, He was also God almighty. This is good news for all people. Let us share the truth of Jesus’ birth with others.

**One word: Immanuel**