

## Matthew 1:18-24

# THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO JOSEPH

- I. The historical setting.
  - A. The history of Joseph and Mary's engagement is the first historical evidence that Jesus is Immanuel.
    1. "Espoused" or "betrothed" is a legal promise and commitment to marry - more than our engagement.
    2. Only after this period of time, which ended with the ceremony, could the man live with his wife in sexual union.
  - B. A very surprised Joseph learned that Mary "was found with child."
    1. He "thought on these things" (20), i.e., turned them over in his mind, struggling under the burden of his thoughts.
    2. Joseph is identified as a "just man" (19) meaning that he was regenerated and godly.
- II. While contemplating what to do, the angel appeared to him in a dream (20b).
  - A. As was the norm for God-sent angels, he comes out of divine mercy.
    1. He began with a command (reflecting God's will for His own): "Fear not."
    2. And "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife."
    3. The angel gave a reason: "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."
  - B. In this way Jesus can be the Savior and Immanuel.
    1. God conceived this child so he can be God.
    2. This is the truth which must be believed to be saved unto eternal life (John 3:16-18).
  - C. The wonder of grace grows: He is "Jesus" Jehovah salvation (21).
    1. Jehovah salvation is to "save His people from their sins."
    2. That He saves from their sins explains the manger and the cross.
    3. The great joy of Christmas is exactly that He came precisely to deal with the reality of our sin.
- III. The responding faith: Joseph believed and obeyed (24).
  - A. God graciously worked in Joseph what He works in us: the ability to believe the impossible.
  - B. God performs this wonder in our hearts this morning too when we see the Baby in the manger and we worship Him.