

# MESSIAH'S BIRTH ANNOUNCED TO JOSEPH

Matthew 1:18-25

We all face many different challenges in our lives. Some small, some seemingly insurmountable. In this section of our study, massive challenges abound for every character including our author Mathew!

## JOSEPH'S DISCOVERY (MATTHEW 1:18)

We don't know how he found out, but Joseph now knows that his betrothed wife is pregnant, and the child is not his as they had not come together sexually. This devastating discovery had to crush Joseph, and it left him with a very difficult decision in regards to Mary. Clearly she had been unfaithful and everybody can see it.

## JOSEPH'S DECISION TO DIVORCE (MATTHEW 1:19)

Joseph comes to his decision. Obviously Mary has been unfaithful, and so he has to divorce her. Matthew takes us behind the scenes here to reveal the character of Joseph and show how his character impacted his decision. He was a "just" man, meaning that he was going to do what was right, namely divorce Mary, but he was merciful in that he sought to do it quietly. Let's think for a minute about this. It is obvious to all at this point that Mary is pregnant, Joseph being her "betrothed, makes him the obvious culprit. Everyone would assume that she is pregnant because Joseph lacked the self control to wait till the marriage was completed. The typical response would be to clear his name in as public a manner as he could. There were often public trials for this sort of thing, not just to make official the divorce, but to clear his name publicly, and reveal the infidelity of Mary. He did nothing wrong, but everyone would have thought he did. It is here that we see the humility and mercy of Joseph, who decided to divorce her quietly, rather than publicly clearing his name and identifying that Mary is an adulteress. It of course will get out that they are divorced, but since it wasn't handled publicly, it is safe to assume that there will be rumors about Joseph and Mary for quite some time. He is a just and merciful man, willing to pay a personal cost to protect Mary from public shame. However, this is a serious problem for our coming Messiah. Matthew has made a point of tracing Joseph's line back through the line of David, but if Joseph isn't the father of Jesus, how can Jesus be a "son of David", like Joseph is?

## JOSEPH'S DREAM (MATTHEW 1:20-21)

As Joseph finalized his divorce plans he headed to bed to sleep on this devastating and difficult decision. Here he had an angel appear to him in a dream with some unexpected news and instructions. He is informed that the baby is a special creation by the Holy Spirit and so he can have confidence Mary has been faithful to her commitment to him, and he should not be afraid about fulfilling his commitment to her, and now to her unborn son. The angel gives Joseph two instructions, "take Mary as your wife... and call the baby Jesus". These two actions are easy to read over, but have huge significance for Jesus the Messiah. If Joseph chooses to obey the angels instructions, he will become the legal adoptive father of Jesus, and Jesus will have legal standing as Joseph's son, and a "son of David". As we studied before, had Jesus been *born of* Joseph, he would have been under the curse of Jeconiah, but being adopted by Joseph, through Joseph's marriage to Mary, and by being named by Joseph, Jesus would become Joseph's legal son and heir. Avoiding the curse yet still gaining sonship and coming into the line of David. God's masterful plan in action.

Part 1.	The Coming of the King <i>Birth Announced to Joseph</i>
Part 2.	The Authentication of the King
Part 3.	The Controversy over the King
Part 4.	The Training of the Twelve by the King
Part 5.	The Opposition to the King:
Part 6.	The Preparation of the Disciples by the King
Part 7.	The Official Presentation of the King
Part 8.	The Preparation for the Death of the King
Part 9.	The Trial of the King:
Part 10.	The Death of the King
Part 11.	The Resurrection and the Ascension of the King

## A PROPHECY FULFILLED (MATTHEW 1:22-23 / ISAIAH 7:14)

Here Matthew interjects a little commentary of his own. He says that “all this took place to fulfill...” Isaiah 7:14. Here it is very important for us to spend some time looking into how Matthew (and the other NT authors) use OT prophecy, and the term “fulfilled”. When we hear about a prophecy being fulfilled we tend to think of a “1 to 1” fulfillment (or *Psat*). For example, the angel Gabriel prophesied to Zechariah that Elizabeth would have a baby and he would name him John. Later, Elizabeth has a baby and Zechariah names him John. Prophecy fulfilled. This however is just one of four primary ways that OT prophecies are spoken of as “fulfilled” by the NT authors. As we continue our study through the Yeshua series, we will see all four ways used. The way that Matthew writes of this prophecy as being fulfilled, is an example of *Remez*. Isaiah’s original prophecy actually is “fulfilled” in Isaiah 8. The local fulfillment in Isaiah 8 is a “type” of which the fulfillment in Matthew is the “antitype”. Think of the “antitype” as the ultimate expression of the “type”. Like a balloon full of air (antitype) versus an empty balloon (type). Both are equally balloons, but one is the “ultimate expression” of the balloon. See the charts below for the four types of usage, as well as how Matthew is using the prophecy in Isaiah.<sup>1</sup>

### Four Ways the New Testament Quotes the Old Testament

<b>Type And Meaning</b>	<b>New Testament Equivalent</b>	<b>Examples In Matthew 2</b>
<i>Psat</i> - Simple, Literal	Literal prophecy plus literal fulfillment	Mt. 2:5-6 quotes Micah 5:2
<i>Remez</i> - Hint, Suggestion	Literal plus typical (type and antitype)	Mt. 2:15 quotes Hosea 11:1
<i>Drash</i> - Exposition	Literal plus application	Mt. 2:17-18 Quotes Jer. 31:15
<i>Sod</i> - Secret, Hidden	Summation	Mt. 2:23

*Remez*: Mt 1:23 quoting Is. 7:14  
Type < Antitype

Young Woman\* (Is. 7:14, 8:3) < Virgin Mary (Mt. 1:18)  
Isaiah’s son (Is. 8:3) < Jesus (Mt. 1:21)  
Immanuel (Is. 7:14) < Immanuel (Mt. 1:23)  
Preserving Davidic Throne < Fulfilling Davidic Throne

## JOSEPH’S DECISION TO MARRY AND ADOPT (MATTHEW 1:24-25)

We return to Joseph waking up with a new decision firmly in his mind. He believed and trusted the angel and his message. Here we clearly see the faith of Joseph revealed, as this whole section culminates to answer the question of how Jesus could be a “son of David” through Joseph, and indeed be the Messiah. Joseph takes Mary as his wife and when she gives birth to her son, Joseph names him Jesus. Jesus is firmly adopted as the son of Joseph, of the house of David.

<sup>1</sup> (עַלְמָה, ‘almah) in Isaiah 7:14 is traditionally translated “virgin.” Because this verse from Isaiah is quoted in Matt 1:23 in connection with Jesus’ birth, the Isaiah passage has been regarded since the earliest Christian times as solely a prophecy of Christ’s virgin birth. Much debate has taken place over the best way to translate this Hebrew term, although ultimately one’s view of the doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ is unaffected. Though the Hebrew word used here (עַלְמָה, ‘almah) can sometimes refer to a woman who is a virgin (Gen 24:43), it does not carry this meaning inherently. The word is simply the feminine form of the corresponding masculine noun עֶלֶם (‘elem, “young man”; cf. 1 Sam 17:56; 20:22), and therefore can accurately be translated as “young woman” without any emphasis on sexuality.