

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning

Carol Service

Date 18th December 2022

Preacher Rev Philip Knowles Ps/ Hymns 76, 77, 85, 79, Read: Matthew 1:18-23 Text Matthew 1:18-23

Title: The Birth of Jesus Christ.

The words in **verse 18** ***the birth of Jesus Christ***, are part of a full statement that follows on immediately after Christ's genealogy that started from **verse 1** to **verse 16**.

This Genealogy is the seed or family line that leads to Jesus Christ.

Luke's gospel also gives the genealogy of Christ, but he goes back to Adam the first man.

The genealogy confirms that the birth of Jesus Christ is a historical reality.

Matthew as he writes under inspiration by the Holy Spirit, shows to the Jews, Jesus is King. King of the Jews, but King of all His redeemed people, Jews and Gentiles.

Matthew begins the genealogy from Abraham, because God gave Abraham the clear promise of Messiah as Abraham's seed coming directly from Abraham's line, the father of the Jewish nation.

He traces the genealogy to show that God preserved the particular natural seed line from which the Saviour was to come.

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Boaz, David, through to Joseph, the husband of Mary.

The genealogy of Jesus Christ consists of both Jews and Gentiles, male and female to teach the family of Christ is made of redeemed sinners both Jew and Gentile who are made one in Christ.

Matthew also records the genealogy through the generations to show that all Satan's efforts to destroy the specific family line from which Christ would descend failed completely.

God's promise of Christ's birth was fulfilled.

Therefore, Matthew can write these words ***the birth of Jesus Christ***.

We come today we consider the birth of Jesus Christ.

I FIRST, THE MIRACLE OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

The Birth of Jesus Christ was miraculous and supernatural. It God was doing that which is impossible with man.

Notice, the words spoken to Joseph about Mary in **verses 18 & 20**, concerning the miraculous birth of our Saviour. "...***she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.***" "...***that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.***"

The verses confirm that before Christ was born, Mary had no physical contact, or intimate union with Joseph, her husband to be.

Mary herself said in **Luke 1:34** "...***I know not a man?***"

This is the clear meaning of the words in **verse 18** '**before they came together**', it refers to the physical union of the husband and wife.

Therefore, before Joseph and Mary came together in union "... **she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.**"

That means Christ's birth was the miracle of all miracles. The wonder of all wonders, the birth of all births.

You see the genealogy records each birth as the result of natural process between one male and one female coming together.

However, Christ's birth was supernatural without the seed of man being involved.

Why is that? Or how can that be? It is an honest question to ask, for even Mary herself said in **Luke 1:34** **unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?**

Mary understood that a life within the womb is by the natural conception of a male and female.

But by the angel's words, this would not happen for Christ's birth to take place.

To our limited understanding it is impossible.

But with God nothing shall be impossible.

The one who must save sinners must be without sin but also must be related to both God and humanity.

Therefore, if Christ was born both of Mary and Joseph, then because they are both sinners by nature then Christ Himself would be a sinner by nature, as sin came into the world by man.

It would mean Christ Himself would need a Saviour, because God will only accept that which is perfect to enter heaven.

Just as corrupt tree can only bring forth corrupt fruit, then two sinners by nature can only bring forth another sinner with the same corrupt nature.

That is why we read in **Luke 1:35** ***“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God***

It means the Holy Ghost took of Mary’s nature her substance to powerfully protect and preserve Christ’s human nature, so He was **that holy thing** or as the word translates **the Holy One** born of Mary, and as **Hebrews 4:14** states **without sin**, and as **1 John 3:5** ***“...in Him is no sin.”***

Jesus Christ is able to redeem sinners on the basis of possessing a sinless nature.

By the miracle of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, Christ is related to both God and humanity, by His divine nature and human nature.

His divine nature secured sinless His humanity.

These words define for us, the virgin birth of Christ, the incarnation. They also declare that the promised Messiah would have a real humanity.

In taking unto His divine nature our human nature without sin, Christ would come forth as man, to fulfil the great work of accomplishing redemption in order to save men and woman who have a sinful nature.

And by saving them from their sins, Christ gives a new nature, a new principle of life for entrance into heaven and enablement to glorify God.

That which we could never do in our sin, to please God, we are now enabled to do by faith in Jesus Christ.

The birth of Jesus Christ is foundational to salvation.

To Reject the birth of Christ is to reject Salvation.

To reject the birth of Christ is to reject that He lived and died to save sinners.

You will never enter heaven rejecting the miracle of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Those who enter heaven have trusted the Saviour born for our salvation.

II SECOND, THE MESSAGE OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

The angel said to Mary and Joseph in **verse 21** – “...***thou shalt call His name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins.***”

The words **sins**, shows there are many sins that we have committed everyday minute of every hour of every day.

Sins in our thought life, actions, expressions, reactions, and much more. Sins we know we have committed and sins we don't know have committed.

The word sins or sin means to come short of, to miss the mark. The mark is God own Holy Nature, His glory, His Word, His Command.

God has been sinned against and is daily sinned against.

To use God's name as swear word, an expression, a lose term is to sin against God.

God's name is a holy name, a name of honour, respect, a reflection of His own nature, which is goodness.

To say O My..... for goodness sake, my goodness, gosh, OMG, as an expression, shock, exclamation mark, a phrase, a response to news, is to be guilty of sin against God, using Christ's name in vain.

His name is trampled underfoot by the ungodly, but Sad to say by many Christians as well.

When you use the name of the Lord in vain, hear Christ's word to you as He said to Saul, **why persecutest thou me?**

I highlight the name because this passage is centred upon His name.

His name is Salvation. His name was not given by Mary or Joseph but by God. Mary and Joseph were told to call His name Jesus.

His Name is a Highly Exalted Name, wonderful, His name is given from heaven to earth for our salvation.

The song writer said it well, ***O come let us adore Him, O Jesus forever be thy Name adored***, that is worshipped, honoured, glorified.

Christ's name should be spoken to honour and worship Him.

Here is the blessed news, Jesus came to save from sins. That is sins past present and future.

The name **Jesus** means **Saviour**, or **Jesus saves**. It is the counterpart of the Hebrew name **Joshua** and it means **Jehovah saves**. The name speaks of one who is a mighty conqueror, a captain of an army.

Jesus Christ came into this world to save His people from their sins. **1 John 3:5** "...***He was manifested to take away our sins***; the word **manifested** means **revealed**.

To save His people, to take away their sins meant all the sins of all His people were laid upon Him.

Every sin had to be paid for in full.

Anything less than full satisfaction would be a failure.

Christ must save all His people from all their sins, not some of their sins.

Since God was offended by man's sin of disobeying His command, His law, His Holy Nature, then His justice demanded that all sins be paid for in full, the debt of honouring God must be paid.

Christ was the sin bearer, He suffered on behalf of sinners He was given to save. He bore or carried our sins on His own body on tree.

He came to give His life a ransom for the many and by the shedding of His precious blood He secured full forgiveness.

Praise the Lord for Jesus the gift of eternal life, our Saviour, our Sin Bearer, our Substitute, He made a perfect atonement, covering for sin, **Heb 10:12**.

Christ came to save sinners who are in bondage to guilt, to transgression, to sin's binding powers and habits.

Believer rejoice, Christ's blood not only paid and saved completely from the punishment of your sins, but His blood continually daily cleanses you from the pollution of sin.

You see if you reject the miracle of Christ's birth, then you reject the message of Christ's birth.

Oh, Christ rejector, the punishment for sin awaits you, unless you ask Jesus to save you from your sins.

Believer, the message of Christ's birth brings life and light as He has visited us with salvation.

III THIRD, THE MARVEL OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

The marvel of Christ's birth is seen in the words of **verse 23** with reference to the child born "...***they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.***"

The particular word **with** means “**together with,**” and “**sharing with.**” God with us, God together with us, God sharing with us.

Through the birth of Christ, God is with us in the sense of association, identification, companionship, comfort, and friendship.

In taking our humanity to Himself He enters our feelings; He shares in our sorrows.

In our sufferings He can identify with us.

He was made in all points like unto His brethren yet without sin. He endured every sorrow known to mankind, yet without sin

The Gospel **John 1:14** “**the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us....**” the word dwelt means to tabernacle.

Just as the tabernacle in the OT dwelt on earth, among the people, so Christ the fulfilment of the tabernacle dwelt among people.

He who is God manifest in the flesh, is pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel.

That is amazing, Christ who was born at Bethlehem is “God with us.” This is a marvellous truth in that it means the restoration of fellowship that was lost through the fall into sin.

When God sent Christ into the world, God was in Christ reconciling the world back to Himself.

He is restoring to Himself fallen sinners, from every nation. God and sinners reconciled. From ruination to restoration.

And until Christ returns to Judge the world, and Gathers all His people together, He is still saving His people from their sins.

Will you be saved today, restored back to God, and be brought into the household of faith.

Believer, give thanks with a grateful heart, and bless the Lord, who was born for our Salvation. O come let us adore Him Christ the Lord.