

# CHRISTMAS FAMILY DRAMA

December 22, 2024 -- Christmas series -- Pastor Andrew Coleman

## THE SETTING OF CHRIST'S DOMESTIC DRAMA:

- 1) Over 400 years had passed since God had spoken through the last prophet.  
(This is called the intertestamental period between the Old and New Testaments.)
- 2) The last OT prophet was Malachi (about 400BC).
  - Israel was controlled by the Persian Empire from 539-332 BC
  - Alexander the Great (Greeks) conquered Darius III (Persian) on October 1, 331.
  - Under the Greeks, the Jews had freedom of religion but lots of Greek influence (*language!*)
  - The Roman Republic rose up and defeated the Greek city-states by 146BC.
  - The Roman empire retained/adapted to Greek culture and language.
  - When Jesus is born, Israel has a 'Jewish' king (Herod the Great) but under Roman rule.
- 3) The NT begins with the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John).
  - **Matthew** and **Luke** begin with the genealogy and birth of Jesus.
  - **Mark** begins with the 'preacher/prophet' John the Baptist (about AD 25).
  - **John** begins with a brief but MASSIVE theological overview of Jesus' arrival.
- 4) There was a remnant of Jews who had true faith and were righteous before God.
  - Simeon and Anna waited in the temple for the Messiah to come (Luke 2:22-38)
  - Joseph and Mary were young, humble, obedient Jews with true faith.
  - John the Baptist preached '*Prepare the way for the Lord!*' from Isaiah's prophecy (Mark 1)

## JOSEPH, MARY and JESUS -- 'A BLENDED FAMILY'

- 1) Joseph and Mary were engaged to be married.  
Jewish marriage had two stages:
  - **Kiddushin** or betrothal -- as legally binding as marriage. Lasted 12 months.
  - **Huppa** or wedding ceremony. Lasted 7 days.
- 2) Joseph and Mary were POOR.  
Both were from Nazareth. Joseph was a carpenter/mason -- probably a house builder.
- 3) Joseph and Mary were YOUNG. Probably mid to late teens or early twenties.
- 4) Joseph and Mary were PEOPLE OF FAITH. (Matt. 1:19; Luke 1:28, 30)
- 5) Joseph and Mary were in the messianic lineage of KING DAVID. (2 Samuel 7:12-13; Luke 1:27, 32)
- 6) Jesus was Mary's son by birth but conceived from the Holy Spirit.
- 7) Jesus was Joseph's son by adoption.  
So Jesus had a mother, a step-father and half brothers and half sisters.

We do not serve a distant and detached God who shouts at us safely from the sidelines.  
NO! Our God JOINS US in our mess, takes our sin upon Himself and saves us out of all of it!

## THE DRAMA UNFOLDS -- 9 months before the first Christmas.



### LUKE 1:26-38 MARY'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL

**26** In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, **27** to a **virgin** betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the **virgin's name was Mary**. **28** And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" **29** But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. **30** And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. **31** And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, **and you shall call his name Jesus**. **32** He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, **33** and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." **34** And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since **I am a virgin?**" **35** And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. **36** And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. **37** For nothing will be impossible with God." **38** And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

- 1) **See the prominence and importance of the virgin birth. 3 times!** vs 27, 34  
The virgin birth is a sign that this is the Messiah. Isaiah 7:14  
The virgin birth is necessary for this to be the Messiah -- a perfect sacrifice.  
(Luke 1:35; John 3:16; Hebrews 10:10, 14; 1 Timothy 2:5)
- 2) **See God's sovereign choice to use Mary.** vs 28, 30  
He chose her because He preferred her. *favored one*
- 3) **Notice that all the glory is intended for God and His King... not Mary.** vs 32-33  
This isn't ultimately about Mary but Jesus.
- 4) **Notice Mary's logical question. *How?! I am a virgin*.** vs 34  
We can learn from this, that God miraculously works through the details of His plan.
- 5) **Notice the angel's answer is all about GOD'S POWER & HOLINESS!** vs 35-37  
God wants His people to know His power.  
God wants His people to know His holiness.  
His power and His holiness is the path to our rescue.  
ROMANS 1:16  
*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the **power of God for salvation** to everyone who believes,*
- 6) **Notice the immediate humility and simplicity of Mary's response.** vs 38  
It reveals her submission to the Lord.  
It reveals her faith in the Lord.  
It reveals her personal maturity in the Lord (she has self-control, not hysteria).

**KEY QUESTION:** What can you learn from God's work IN and THROUGH Mary?

## JOSEPH -- CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE!

### *Can you imagine how scandalized Joseph felt?*

His fiancé, who he knows he never slept with, is found to be pregnant.

Can you imagine his disappointment, confusion, perhaps anger and/or fear for the future?

He was sure to feel broken as everything he knew about her seemed to be shattered.

#### **Joseph has two options --**

Option 1- Bring her before the local council and condemn her publicly.

Option 2- Quietly divorce her from engagement.



## Then God shows up...

### **MATTHEW 1:18-25 JOSEPH'S DREAM WITH AN ANGEL FROM GOD**

**18** Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. **19** And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. **20** But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. **21** She will bear a son, **and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.**" **22** All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

**23** "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall call his name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). **24** When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, **25** but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name **Jesus**.

#### **1) Again see the clarity of the Scripture regarding the virgin birth. vs 18, 20, 23, 25**

This is critical to the salvation plan of God.

The Messiah was not conceived by fallen humanity but by holy deity.

This is why He lived a perfect life and could be the perfect sacrifice.

#### **2) The drama gets even more astonishing... this unborn baby is from GOD! vs 20**

He chose her because He preferred her. *favored one*

#### **3) Mary's story matches the Angel's instruction -- call Him **JESUS**. vs 21**

**Jesus** or **Yeshua** in Hebrew -- literally means 'The LORD saves.'

#### **4) Why wasn't Jesus literally named and called 'Immanuel' as Isaiah's prophecy indicated? vs 23**

**Immanuel** was not to be a proper name but a statement about Him.

Think about G.O.A.T.s in sports.

#### **5) See Joseph's obedience... he took Mary as his wife, he kept her pure, he called Him Jesus.**

### **KEY QUESTIONS:**

*What can you learn from God's work IN and THROUGH Joseph's whole experience?*

*What does this teach you about how God brings about His salvation plan?*

*How does this encourage you to handle your own FAMILY DRAMA?*