

The Gospels

A VERSE-BY-VERSE STUDY OF THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW – WEEK TWO

Last week we reviewed the Genealogy of Jesus from Abraham. We discovered the women noted in His family line and highlighted their stories along with other notable Old Testament figures, but none will prove as important as the woman who is barely mentioned in Matthew's Gospel. Jesus' Mother Mary.

Last week we learned the inclusion of women in His family line is a pre-cursor to the way Jesus would defy the cultural norms of His day reaching out to and including women all throughout His life and ministry. This along with the idea that God uses unlikely people and circumstances to bring about redemption leads into our next discovery! Today, be watching for moments when a revelation or instruction is given, an immediate act of obedience follows and a prophecy is fulfilled.

MATTHEW | CHAPTER ONE & TWO

Joseph's Son

- **The Birth of Jesus Christ**

- *The genealogy of Jesus we studied last week establishes Jesus as Joseph's son.*
- *Matthew also marks Mary's child, whom Joseph will name Jesus, as being conceived by the Holy Spirit.*
- *Mary & Joseph had been betrothed. A Betrothal Ceremony had been held between Mary's Father & Joseph. During this ceremony, the men would have negotiated a Bride price or dowry that would be paid to the father for a right*

to marry his daughter. The betrothal ceremony initiates the marriage covenant between Mary & Joseph. At the ceremony, Joseph would have poured a cup of wine and set it before Mary, if she drank the wine it meant she accepted his proposal of marriage. The wine represents a blood covenant. From that moment on Mary and Joseph were considered married. They would have had to divorce to marry another.

After the betrothal ceremony Joseph would have left Mary with her family and returned to his father's house where he would build on an addition for he and Mary to live in. While he's away building the house, Mary is back with her family making herself ready for the day when the friend's of the Bridegroom come and call her to go to her husband. There is a ceremony at the groom's house and then --- really, this happens --- the couple goes a tent, called a hoopa, where they consummate the marriage while everyone stands outside waiting for the act to be completed. (Talk about pressure! 😊)

This is important to understand for many reasons: 1) Mary being found with child before the actual wedding ceremony is a BIG DEAL. 2) There are beautiful parallels that we can highlight in these natural reality traditions that mirror spiritual realities for Christ and His church.¹

- *Mary is found to be with Child. Again – this is a big deal! The act of getting pregnant with someone other than your bridegroom was adultery, the punishment was STONING! Can you picture yourself in that moment as Mary trying to explain to Joseph what had happened?*
- *Joseph's love for Mary is evident in his initial response: He wanted to protect her from the scandal that would ensue if her pregnancy was discovered. He decided to divorce her quietly without make a spectacle of her.*

- *God sends the Angel, Gabriel, to intervene on Mary's behalf with Joseph. Gabriel assures Joseph that what Mary has told him is true. The child conceived in her womb was brought forth by the Holy Spirit. He instructs Joseph to take Mary as his wife and to name the baby Jesus, Yeshua in Hebrew. His name means God will save people from their sins.*

WHEN A WORD IS DELIVERED FROM GOD, AN IMMEDIATE ACT OF OBEDIENCE FOLLOWS AND PROPHECY FULFILLED. AS WE READ MAKE NOTE OF THE VERSES THAT DEMONSTRATE THIS REALITY AND WHAT PROPHECIES ARE FULFILLED.

End Notes:

¹*Wild Olive blog, <http://www.wildolive.co.uk/weddings>*