MATTHEW 1:1-24 - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

IMMANUEL: GOD WITH US - (SERMON MP3)

Let's talk about Messianic Prophecies. Consider how Jesus is the prophesied Son of David and also the Son of Abraham: Throughout his Gospel, Matthew presents Jesus as the kingly Messiah promised from David's royal line.

	•	Look up 2 Samuel 7:12-16 to see how the Messiah would be from David. From the very first sentence in Matthew, discuss how Jesus fulfilled this prophecy.	
	•	Matthew not only connected Jesus to David, but back yet further to Abraham. Jesus is the Seed of Abraham in whom all nations would be blessed. Discuss how Jesus is the Son of Abraham from Genesis 12:3.	
Let'	Let's talk about the two genealogies. There are two genealogies of Jesus. One is in Luke and the other in Matthew.		
		The Matthew genealogy establishes Jesus' legal claim to the throne of David through whom? The Gospel of Luke provides Jesus' blood lineage through whom?	
	•	Discuss the differences in the two genealogies and the reason behind two recorded genealogies.	
Let's talk about Tamar Rahab Ruth her who had been the wife of Uriah. This genealogy is noted for the unusual presence of four women. Women were rarely mentioned in ancient genealogies, and the four mentioned here are worthy of special note as examples of God's grace. They show how God can take unlikely people and use them in great ways.			
		Tamar: Write a short bio of Tamar from Genesis 38	
	•	Rahab: Write a short bio of Rahab from Joshua 2; 6:22-23	
	•	Ruth: Write a short bio of Ruth from Ruth 1	
	•	Her who had been the wife of Uriah: Write a short bio of Bathsheba (who is mentioned by implication in Matthew 1:6) from 2 Samuel 11	
	•	Discuss the unusual presence of these four women in the genealogy.	
	•	These four women have an important place in the genealogy of Jesus to demonstrate that He identifies with sinners in His genealogy, even as He will in His birth, baptism, life, and His death on the cross. "Jesus is heir of a line in which flows the blood of the harlot Rahab, and of the rustic Ruth; he is akin to the fallen and to the lowly, and he will show his love even to the poorest and most obscure." (Spurgeon)	

Let's talk about Mary: "She was found with child of the Holy Spirit." Matthew plainly (without the greater detail found in the Gospel of Luke) presents the virginal conception and subsequent birth of Jesus. However, the virgin birth was difficult for people to believe back then, even as it is also doubted now by some.

What verses would you use to support the prophecy and the fulfillment of the virgin birth of Jesus? Discuss your answers.

We should consider what a great trial this was for a godly young woman like Mary, and for Joseph her betrothed. "Her situation was the most distressing and humiliating that can be conceived. Nothing but the fullest consciousness of her own integrity, and the strongest confidence in God, could have supported her in such trying circumstances, where her reputation, her honor, and her life were at stake." (Clarke) What additional thoughts do you have about this situation?

Let's talk about Joseph: "Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly" (Matt 1:19)

- Joseph her husband: The previous verse told us that Mary was betrothed to Joseph. This comment shows that even though they were not formally married, Joseph was still considered Mary's husband by betrothal.
- Being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example: Being a just man, Joseph knew that if Mary had been unfaithful to him it would be impossible to go through with the marriage. Yet his nature as a just man also did not want to make this an unnecessary hardship or stigma upon Mary. Joseph made the understandable decision to seek a quiet divorce. What are your thoughts about the decision itself, and the manner it was going to be done?
- To put her away secretly: This refers to breaking an engagement by divorce. In Jewish culture of that time a betrothal was binding and one needed a divorce to break the arrangement. "Their being betrothed was a thing publicly taken notice of, and he could not put her away so privately but there must be witnesses of it; the meaning therefore must be, as privately as the nature of thing would bear." (Poole)
- Discuss verses 20-21 about how Joseph was convinced not to divorce Mary.

Let's talk about JESUS as Savior. "You shall call his name JESUS" The name JESUS ("The Salvation of Yahweh") was fairly common in that day (Josephus mentions 12 different men named "Jesus" in his writings), but it is supremely blessed in our day. As was later said by the Apostle Peter, there is no other name under heaven by which men must be saved (Acts 4:12). "For He will save His people from their sins" The angelic messenger briefly and eloquently stated the work of the coming Messiah, Jesus. He will come as a savior, and come to save His people from their sins. This description of the work of Jesus reminds us that Jesus meets us in our sin, but His purpose is to save us from our sins.

Discuss how Jesus saves us first from the penalty of sin, then from the power of sin, and finally from the presence of sin.

Discuss the following quotation: "Salvation from sins is an element in the Old Testament hope (e.g. Isaiah 53; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:24-31) and in later Messianic expectation ... but not the dominant one. Its isolation here warns the reader not to expect this Messiah to conform to the more popular hope of a national liberator." (France)

Let's talk about JESUS as Immanuel. Immanuel: This title of Jesus refers both to His deity (God with us) and His identification and nearness to man (God with us). Discuss the following implications of the name Immanuel:

- It shows how low God bent down to save man; He added the nature of one of His own creatures to His own divine nature, accepting the weaknesses, frailties, and dependency that the creature experiences.
- It shows what a great miracle it was that God could add a human nature to His own and still remain God.
- It shows that we can come to Him; if He has come to us, then we can come to Him. If Jesus Christ be "God with us," let us come to Him without any question or hesitancy. Whoever you may be, you need no priest or intercessor to introduce you to God, for God has introduced himself to you.
- "John Wesley died with that upon his tongue, and let us live with it upon our hearts. 'The best of all is God with us.'" (Spurgeon)

PRAYER REQUESTS