

2025-12-21

Why Jesus Came to Earth #4 – Salvation

Mathew 1:18-25

If God were to ask you for some advice on how He should come into the world to reveal His grace and truth, what would you tell Him? Because we know how God did it, we would probably tell God the Christmas story we know. But if we did not know how God would come, what would you tell Him? Would we suggest to God that, when He comes, bring a flood upon the earth, not the whole earth, just in certain places that are the most wicked, with earthquakes and volcanic activity. Maybe people would be more ready for His appearance. Or, would we suggest to God that He should rain down fire from heaven on Rome like He did on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah when He comes. Maybe people would repent of their sins and turn to Him when He immediately appears. Unfortunately, that will not even work upon His second coming (Revelation 9:20-21). My guess is we would suggest to God that He should come in all His splendor and glory. He should come in His mighty power and establish His kingdom in Jerusalem. He should come as an adult and bring judgment upon all the nations and rule over all the world. We know that is not what God did at any time He intervened in history yet. God had a plan and a purpose for why He came the way He came. His plan and purpose were established before creation. Let's read the announcement of God's Incarnation in Luke's gospel first.

Luke 1:26-29. *“Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, ‘Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!’ But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.”* If you were Mary and the angel Gabriel came into your house and told you *‘Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!’* How would you respond? Maybe you would be excited and encourage the angel to bring it on, thinking God was going to give you wealth and status. Instead, Mary is greatly troubled and was very hesitant, wanting to carefully think through this angel's announcement. She was afraid and rightly so. She had never encountered an angel before. Why would a mighty angel of God appear to an engaged teenage girl in Nazareth now? If Mary knew anything about the history of her people, the Hebrews, she knows the greater the calling, the greater the cost.

Gabriel sensed Mary's fear so he said to her, *“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of*

the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end” (1:30-33). Mary probably knew she was from the line of David. More than likely, she had enough biblical knowledge of the history of her people and many prophecies. But I doubt that she thought that she would be a mother to a king of Israel someday. There had not been a real king of Israel for hundreds of years. And Mary knows that her fiancé is only a carpenter. Now Mary is told that she is going to have a son and he will be a king. He will not be just any king. **He is going to be The King of Israel**, the Messiah. This was the most important calling a young woman could receive from God. Of course, Mary is a very pragmatic woman. She is not married yet. She knows how children come about. Was the angel tempting her to do something immoral?

“Then Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I do not know a man?’” (1:34). You know what Mary is saying. She is a virgin. Though she is engaged, Mary has never had any sexual relationship with a man. The way things are and with her moral standard, Mary knows that **it is impossible for her to have a child**. The angel did not remind her of the prophecy in Isaiah about a virgin giving birth (Isaiah 7:14). The angel declared to her the power of God. *“And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God’”* (1:35). The language that is used here is the same type of language used in Genesis 1:2 when the Holy Spirit hovered over the face of the waters in creation. Then God spoke and creation happened. Just as the Holy Spirit hovered over the waters during creation, the Holy Spirit overshadows Mary. And by the power of God there is life.

The angel Gabriel continued saying, *“Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible”* (1:36-37). Gabriel had to make an announcement to Mary about her relative Elizabeth. Mary did not know that Elizabeth was pregnant. She is already six months along. Mary will go to visit Elizabeth and stay with her for three months (1:56). Both Mary and Elizabeth will view their pregnancies as miracles of God accomplished in different ways. Gabriel convinced Mary to believe God by telling her, *“For with God nothing will be impossible.”* The scriptures do teach that **there is one thing that is impossible for God to do**. We know that it is impossible for God to lie (Hebrews 6:18). God always speaks the truth! Jesus did teach that **there is one thing that is impossible for people to do**. After the rich young ruler walked away from Jesus because he loved his riches and his rich lifestyle more than God, Jesus said *“It is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven”* (Matthew 19:23). After some discussion, the

disciples were astonished wondering, “*Who then can be saved?*” (19:25). Jesus then told them, “*With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible*” (19:26). What is impossible for men? **It is impossible for us to save ourselves.** It is impossible for anyone to save themselves. We are sinful. God knows this. He knew all this before He created everything. God had a plan to redeem those of His creation who are made in His image and believe (Ephesians 1:4-11). That is why Jesus came to earth. Our salvation is only possible because Jesus lived the perfect life that Adam did not so that He could pay the price for us with His life. The author of Life took on a physical body that would die, so that those who are dead in their sins can live.

Why did God come to earth? It was His mission to save us from our sins, from the judgment that is coming. **Jesus’ mission was to be in submission to God.** He was the second Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45). Since the first Adam did not submit to God. Adam sinned and brought death to all people (Romans 5:12). Jesus did not sin. He did everything required of Him so that His sacrifice for our sins would be acceptable to God. God wants us to be like Jesus. It is our mission as well, to live in submission to the will of God for His glory. Why did God make you? Why are you here? Why are you alive? **We are alive to glorify God.** Everything we do should bring glory to God (1 Corinthians 10:31). Mary responded to the angel Gabriel, “*Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word*” (Luke 1:38). No matter how difficult life would be, Mary agreed to follow God’s will. Then Mary goes to visit her relative Elizabeth for three months. My guess is that during those months Mary prayed a lot. She asked God to inform Joseph, her fiancé.

In Matthew’s gospel we have the next part of this story. “*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit*” (1:18). I am sure Mary tried to be as convincing as she could to Joseph. She may have even quoted the verse in Isaiah to Joseph, “*Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel*” (6:14). Joseph listened to Mary but he could not believe it. “*Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly*” Even during their year long engagement, the couple was considered husband and wife, though they were not allowed any sexual intimacy. If Mary knows what Joseph is planning to do, she may wonder why God has not revealed to Joseph what He is doing? Because of Joseph’s actions, it appears he had come to respect Mary and appreciate her, maybe even love her so he did not want her to be publicly disgraced, which could have included being stoned to death (Deuteronomy 22:23-24).

“But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins’” (Matthew 1:20-21). An angel did not appear to Joseph like he appeared to Mary, in person. Joseph saw his angel in a dream. The angel confirmed everything that Mary said. Joseph had another choice to make, believe the angel in the dream or else believe what his family and friends were encouraging him to do. Joseph listened to the angel and chose Mary. Her child would be named Jesus, which means Savior. *“He will save His people from their sins.”* Yes, Jesus did come to *“bear witness to the truth”* (John 18:37). *“He will save His people from their sins.”* That is the truth. Since Jesus saves us from our coming judgment, He takes away our sins from us. In doing so He has destroyed the works of the devil in our lives. (1 John 3:5, 8). Now we can enjoy real life, a life at peace with God (Romans 5:1).

“So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ‘Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, ‘God with us’” (Matthew 1:22-23). What a shocking gift! God revealed the truth. He kept His promise. God took on human flesh so that people could hear Him, see Him, touch Him and observe His every move (1 John 1:1). **He descended to us so that by believing in Him we can ascend to Him.**

“Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus” (Matthew 1:24-25). Joseph believed and obeyed. His life was forever changed. Joseph and Mary experienced rejection and hardship from the world, but acceptance and peace from God. God calls every person to believe Him, glorify Him and serve Him.

Questions to ask yourself: Do you believe in God through Jesus? Does your life, your choices, your actions and thoughts glorify God? How are you serving Him?

Actions to take: Commit your life to knowing Jesus. Grow in Him everyday.

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