

# The Unplanned Pregnancy That Was Planned

## Matthew 1:18-25

Pastor Arlyn

Message Transcript

[00:00:00] We want to get into the word today. And if you will turn with me to Matthew, chapter one, in your Bibles. Can you believe those words came out of my mouth? [00:00:11][11.8]

[00:00:12] I didn't say Luke. I said Matthew. Matthew, chapter one. Just over two years ago, we embarked on a chapter by chapter, verse by verse study through the Gospel of Luke. And it was in November of twenty eighteen that we started that. And where did we start? Luke, chapter one. So we began with the Christmas story, the story of the birth of Jesus, through the perspective of Luke. That was a very long time ago. But when we covered it, we covered it very thoroughly. And that's the passage that's most commonly used, most commonly read, in churches and even in homes during Christmas time. That Luke passage. It's just classic, it's beautiful, it's thorough, and I love it. [00:01:01][49.5]

[00:01:01] But to keep things fresh for us today, to sort of mix things up a little bit, and get a different take on it, I've decided to take a look at Matthew's account of the birth story. And we're going to look at [00:01:17][15.4]

[00:01:19] verses [00:01:19][0.0]

[00:01:21] eighteen through twenty five. We're going to borrow some verses from Luke. So don't get too excited about being away from Luke today. We're going to be in Luke a little bit. You can't really do the Christmas story if you're not at least touching upon some verses from Luke. So we'll be in Luke a little bit, too, but mostly Matthew, chapter one, verses eighteen through twenty five. Now, the Bible teacher in me wants me to go through the first seventeen verses, the genealogy of Jesus Christ, and pull out the full histories of every single name, and give to you in expanded form, the significance of all of the things we find in those first seventeen verses, the genealogy of the King of Kings, Jesus Christ, the King of the Jews. But the Sunday morning pastor in me is constraining me to verses eighteen through twenty five. So that's what we're going to do. If I start talking about verses one through seventeen, you make sure to shout me down and get me right back on track. Matthew Chapter one verses eighteen through twenty five. So let's start reading at verse eighteen. All right. This is the Christmas story. I know you know it well. I may not teach you anything today and I'm OK with that. That's not my calling as a pastor, as a preacher, as a teacher. My calling is just to constantly either teach you or put you in remembrance of the things that you already know. Just like the apostle Peter said in his writing. [00:03:06][104.4]

[00:03:07] So I am quite content to do that today, just to put you in remembrance of the things you know about this story, the birth of Christ. It's our duty, isn't it? It's Christmas time. We've got to go through the Christmas story. I'm going to wrap this up next week, next Sunday. And I would encourage you to bring some new folks with you, because I think, as the Lord is leading me right now, I'm going to hit on a topic that I think should hit home with a lot of people. And that is the fact that Christ came as the light of the world to lift us out of our gloominess. So if you have depressed friends, if you have people that are down or low, this is the time of year for it, isn't it? If you know people like that, try to get them here next week and we want to share the light with them. But verse 18, Matthew, chapter one, reads like this: Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: after his mother, Mary, was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together (and consummated the

marriage), she was found with Child of the Holy Spirit. What we're going to do in this message is we're going to establish two intersecting truths. Two intersecting truths. Those have been fully revealed in the message title that we sent out earlier today and threw up on the overhead here. Those are going to be our two major points, and yet we're not going to be dealing with those exclusively today. I want to just go where the text takes us. But we do see those two intersecting truths, and they're big ones, and they're mind blowers for people who don't understand the sovereignty of God. Let me just lay them out for you here from the beginning and get the ball rolling. Intersecting truth number one. Or I should say the first of those intersecting truths, is that the pregnancy of Mary was unplanned. Anyone have a guess on what the second of those intersecting truths might be? Truth number one, the pregnancy of Mary was unplanned. Intersecting truth number two, the pregnancy of Mary was planned. Now, you probably know exactly what that means. If you don't, don't feel bad. I'm going to lay that out for you in plain terms before this is all said and done. But I'm sure that for the most of you, you know exactly the meaning of the title, the message in these two intersecting truths, that I just mentioned to you. With verse 18, we are well on our way to establishing the first of those two truths, that this pregnancy completely caught Mary off guard. She is now an expectant mother and she was not expecting that. I mean, you pretty much know if you're going to get pregnant, you pretty much know if there's a chance you're going to get pregnant. Mary and Joseph are not husband and wife yet. They are in the betrothal period. And that is something that we do not practice in twenty first century relationships. You all should know this truth from November of twenty eighteen. But let me just share it with you again. The way we do things is we date, we get engaged and we get married. That's where it's supposed to stop. I won't talk about divorce. I won't go any further then. We date, we get engaged, we get married. But they did things quite differently in this culture. They began with engagement. That's right, before dating, without dating, they began with engagement. Then they moved into the betrothal period, which was that period of one year before the wedding day. And then they had the wedding. So they had engagement, betrothal (that one year period), and then their wedding day where they became officially man and wife. As you probably know, marriages on most occasions were arranged marriages. The parents got together, they struck deals. They said, your son's going to marry my daughter. Sounds good. Here's the terms. Let's do it. Shake hands. And that was the deal. So you could be 12 years old and be engaged. You could be eight years old, four years old, two years old. You could even be engaged while you were in the womb. You could spend all of your youth on the playground with your future spouse knowing that you were engaged to that person. That was a decision made by the parents, which I think is extremely wise and something we need to resurrect in our day and age. Let's start that movement right here at Anchored Fellowship. We can't leave such a big decision to the lack of wisdom of youth, and the running wild of emotions that take place during youth. So I think parents should have that responsibility. Well, the betrothal period then was when things kicked into gear and really got serious that one year period before the marriage. That was a very binding aspect of the engagement of the couple. It was almost as if they were married. They were considered, in a sense, husband and wife, during that time period, only they were not living together, and they have not consummated the marriage in any way. It was just a real serious and binding portion of that relationship. So binding that to get out of a betrothal to a spouse or a future spouse, you had to what? You had to go through the process of divorce. You couldn't just say, changed my mind, I don't like the way this person's looking, don't like the way this person's acting, and I'm out of here. No, you had to go through the process of divorce. So it was very binding. That is the period that Mary and Joseph find themselves in here. They have not been living together. They have not consummated the marriage. And it is during that period, the betrothal period, that the Angel Gabriel shows up, according to Luke (and let me put this in my own words), he shows up and says, surprise, it's a boy.

[00:10:04][417.3]

[00:10:06] Wait, what are you talking about? Mary, [00:10:09][2.9]

[00:10:11] you're pregnant. You're going to have a child. You're going to have a boy. That word "found" that Matthew uses, I think that really drives the nail home. [00:10:20][9.3]

[00:10:21] She was "found" to be with child. [00:10:26][4.5]

[00:10:29] She wasn't being unfaithful to her relationship. She wasn't consummating that relationship with Joseph. But she found out that she was pregnant. So she wasn't having intimate relations. [00:10:43][13.9]

[00:10:46] She wasn't expecting this. But she finds out she's expecting now. [00:10:53][6.7]

[00:10:53] Don't you wish you could have been a fly on the wall to hear that first dinner conversation between Mary and Joseph? I hope when we get to heaven, there's like some kind of rewind function. I know there won't be VHS tapes. I mean, we even got rid of those. Probably won't be DVDs. I hope there's some kind of rewind function so that we can go back and just watch this conversation unfold, as Mary comes in to Joseph to tell him what's taking place. And you can just picture the conversation. Honey, [00:11:28][35.3]

[00:11:30] Joey bear, my love, now, listen, I got big news for you, and it would be best if you let me completely finish talking before you say anything. Honey, I'm pregnant, but it's not what you're thinking. I'm pregnant. But I wasn't unfaithful. It wasn't an earthly man that did this. I've been faithful to you. [00:12:03][32.6]

[00:12:03] I've been faithful to God. But in the process of being faithful to you and being faithful to God, I found out that I'm pregnant. [00:12:12][8.9]

[00:12:14] But it's the Lord, it's the Lord that is doing this. Now, you know how tough that would be to believe. I mean, I'm just going to tell you straight up, if my daughter ever tries to pull this one on me, it is going to take more than one angel to convince me that she's telling the truth. It is probably going to take the Lord himself delivering that message. This would be a tough one to swallow. This would be a tough one to believe. And that's what's communicated to us in verse 19, as we start to look at Joseph's side of the story. We're seeing the disbelief. When you read verse 19 and you're seeing Joseph dealing with the disbelief of the story, as Mary told it, that implies that Mary told it. That implies there was a conversation. And it implies that Joseph isn't buying it. And rightfully so. What I like about verse 19, what I like about Matthew, is that it is Joseph's side of the story. I love the fact that Joseph gets the airplay here, that Joseph gets the attention. Luke, he gives us Mary's genealogy and Mary's story. And Mary's always the star of this drama, isn't she? She gets all of the attention. I like Matthew's Gospel because Matthew's gospel gives us Joseph's genealogy and Joseph's side of the story. You guys know what this is like. We always get the short end of the stick when it comes to what we go through during the creation, the procreation, the birth of our children. We men get overlooked, and the women get the showers, and the cards, and the gifts, and the women get the pats on the back, and the women get all of the offers for help. But what about us men? Stop and think of all we have to go through. Let's be real here for a minute. Anchored can we be real? [00:14:33][139.5]

[00:14:35] We men, we are the ones that have those pregnancy hormones aimed at us. We are the ones making all the trips at midnight to the kitchen for pickles and peanut butter, or whatever weird thing our spouse is craving. [00:14:54][18.9]

[00:14:58] We're the ones that have to deal with the anger of our spouse while she's in labor and she looks at you, that sweetheart that you married, and she says, Don't you ever come near me again. [00:15:13][15.0]

[00:15:15] You're a monster. You did this to me. This is your fault. [00:15:20][4.6]

[00:15:21] So I just feel personally vindicated and personally affirmed by reading Joseph's story and getting in the mind of Joseph a little bit. He is worthy to have his story told. Let me tell you something, Joseph was an

incredible man, incredible man. And that just leaps off of any bit of writing that you read about Joseph in the birth story of Jesus Christ. So this is Joseph getting his due. All right, men, can you give me a good amen? All right. Verse nineteen. Let's read. Then. Joseph, her husband (see, he's called her husband because they're in the betrothal period. Joseph, her husband...) Being a just man and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away (or literally to divorce her) secretly (or privately). This is the betrothal period. Again, I'm pointing out to you that during the betrothal period, to break off that relationship, to stop that thing from going to marriage, you had to file for divorce. But there is an added caveat to that. In the Jewish tradition, in the Jewish custom, if at any time during the engagement period or the betrothal period you found out that your wife was being unfaithful to you, you had the right to publicly charge her with the sin of immorality. And then here's what would happen. Very different time, very different culture. If a man charged his wife publicly of having committed sexual immorality (unfaithfulness on the marriage), the townspeople would meet with that couple in the city square, they would make that woman stand in cow dung, a box of cow dung, that was about knee deep. And the townspeople would stone her to death until she fell down (face down) in that cow dung. Now, that is an ugly option. I can't tell you how many times that it happened. I would guess it probably didn't happen very often. But I just want you to know that was an option that Joseph was sitting on, at this point, because he does not believe, at least initially, the version that Mary had delivered to Joseph about how she got pregnant. So he had that option in the Jewish tradition to go public and air the dirty laundry and make the charge for the sin of immorality, and see this fiancée of his put to death. But he did not choose that route. Now listen. We, I think, quickly read past these words and don't let them sink in. This verse told us that Joseph was a just man. Here's what that means, that means he was a moral man. He was concerned about right and wrong. He was concerned about justice being done. So he was a moral man. And it is not because he was a just man that he chooses to divorce her secretly rather than outing her openly in public. It is contrary to the fact that he's a just man. He's a just man, he's a moral man, and because he's a just and moral man, he is not about to let Mary slide on this seeming infidelity upon the relationship. And so his plan is to divorce her. And it shows us another side of Joseph. [00:19:35][254.4]

[00:19:36] Not only is he a just a man wanting right and wrong separated, wanting the morally correct thing to be done, not only is he moral, but he is merciful. [00:19:48][12.8]

[00:19:50] And that's why he chose to do this privately. Oh wouldn't it be wonderful if we lived in a world where when people were separating from their spouses, you didn't have to hear about it publicly on Facebook and Instagram? [00:20:04][13.9]

[00:20:06] Wouldn't that be wonderful, if people could be both moral and merciful? OK, I'm moral. So the relationship has to come to an end. But I'm also merciful, so I'm not going to make the public accusation. I'm not going to shame the person before all the people of the world openly and publicly. [00:20:25][18.6]

[00:20:26] Wouldn't that be wonderful? You know who our best example of this is (of being moral and merciful)? The child that's getting ready to be birthed in this story. The step-son of Joseph. Jesus himself. We are told in John chapter one, verse 17, that the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. That's another take on the moral and merciful aspect of Jesus. [00:21:00][34.6]

[00:21:01] Jesus was the embodiment of having that perfect balance struck between moral and merciful, between truthful and gracious. [00:21:12][10.6]

[00:21:13] And he's a good one to pattern your life after, when you're trying to strike that balance in your own life. Should I tell my Facebook friends what my ex did? Should I let them know why I left her? [00:21:24][11.5]

[00:21:26] Moral and merciful. [00:21:28][1.4]

[00:21:29] Truth, but grace. So you can keep that in mind if that fits your current scenario in life. But now let's leave Joseph here for a second in the narrative. We're leaving him with his doubts. We're leaving him with his plans to terminate the relationship. We're going to leave him there for just a second. And before we move on to verse 20, let's answer the question that resurfaces every Christmas season, just like Elf on the shelf.

[00:22:03][33.2]

[00:22:03] There it is again every year. Mary, did you know? I want to answer that question. [00:22:12][8.5]

[00:22:12] In fact, let's just let verse 20 answer that question. Mary, did you know? [00:22:17][4.4]

[00:22:17] OK, I'm going to read to you the words of Gabriel to Mary during the announcement of the birth of Christ, as it was delivered to Mary from Gabriel. This is Luke, chapter one. Sorry, we're back in Luke and we're starting over. Luke, Chapter one. We didn't even get through it. We're back in the beginning of it. Verse 31. This is what Gabriel told Mary. He said, Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a son and shall call his name Jesus. Now, just keep in mind that right there is an information dump. That's a download to inform Mary about who this child is going to be. That name Jesus is transliterated from the Greek name Iesus.

[00:23:08][51.0]

[00:23:10] Stay with me. Which comes from the Hebrew Aramaic. Yeshua. [00:23:18][7.8]

[00:23:20] Which comes from the original Hebrew Ya'hoshua. Or as we would say in English, Joshua. So, yes, the name Jesus, though it sounds way different after having made that transition from Hebrew to Hebrew/Aramaic to Greek, and then transliterated into English, though it sounds completely different, that name Jesus is the same name as the Old Testament name Joshua. If we were to say it in Hebrew/Aramaic, it sounds closer. Yeshua. Yeshua. And what that name Yeshua means (Jesus), it means the Lord is salvation. Or literally Yahweh is salvation. Split the name of Yeshua. Yah is the shortened form of the name Yahweh. And then shua is the word for salvation. Yah/shua. Yah (the Lord, or Yahweh), shua (is salvation). So that is the name of Jesus that is given to her. That is quite a reveal. And if you're still struggling with whether or not your salvation is dependent on your works, though I keep trying my best to get that out of you [00:24:37][76.7]

[00:24:38] almost every time I get up here and speak, let me just tell you, the Lord stuck a dagger in that misconception when he gave his son the name Jesus, which means the Lord is salvation, not you.

[00:24:51][13.1]

[00:24:52] Nothing you can do about your own salvation. If it is up to you, if it depends on you, you will not be saved. But thank the Lord, he sent Jesus, the Lord, to be our salvation. So that's an information download for Mary. But let's read on. Verse 32, Luke one. He will be great. Again, one of the great understatement of scripture. Jesus is going to be born. He's going to be great. Alright? And will be called the son of the highest. Listen to the titles. OK, this is giving Mary information. Who is the highest? That would be God the father, right? The most high, the almighty. So this son of yours, Mary, he's going to be the son of the highest.

[00:25:41][49.1]

[00:25:43] And the Lord will give him the throne of his father, David. Uh oh, here's some revelation about Jesus being the Messiah. This is the messianic role. That leader, that prophet, that would arrive and take over the throne of his ancestor David. And reading on. Verse 33. And he (Jesus) will reign over the house of Jacob forever. And of his kingdom there will be no end. [00:26:11][28.1]

[00:26:12] That means both in geography and calendar. There's not going to be an end to the spread of his kingdom. It's going to take over the globe. He's going to rule the world. And there's not going to be an end of the calendar for his reign. Yes, he's going to reign for a thousand years on the earth and then the earth is going

to pass away with a great noise. That doesn't mean his kingdom stops, does it? His kingdom relocates. There will be no end in geography or calendar to the reign of this Son that's going to come from your womb, Mary. And she said, Verse 34. Mary said to the angel, How can this be? Since I do not know a man. Well, isn't that the statement from every woman that has ever walked the Earth? Lord, I don't know a man. I can't figure men out whatsoever. No matter how hard I try. Well, that's not what she means here. She means, I don't know a man sexually. How can I be pregnant. In verse 35. 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 (God incarnate). Answer the question, church. Mary, did you know? Mary knew. At least to a great extent. Now she may not have known the specifics that the song questions us about. She may not have known that one day her baby boy would walk on water. She maybe didn't know that one day her baby boy would give sight to the blind. She should have, if she understood Old Testament prophecy that was predicted. She may not have known the specific that one day her baby boy would calm a storm with his hand. But she knew enough to know that all of those things, every question in the song, he would be capable of, if he so chose to do so. Because, just collect the information that Gabriel gave to Mary. What does she know about her son, Jesus? She knew that her son would be conceived by the Holy Spirit, not by a man, but by the Holy Spirit. A divine birth. She knew that her son would be king over Israel. She knew that her son would be the messiah. Old Testament Hebrew word Moshiah (Messiah), which we transliterated. New Testament word for the same thing: christos. We transliterate that as Christ. So Messiah and Christ is the same word. What does it mean? It means the anointed one. So when you're using the term messiah or Christ, they mean the same thing. And what's that speaking about? It is speaking about his anointing. Now, let's carry that thought out. Let's take it all the way. We came this far. Might as well not turn back now. Who was to be anointed in the Old Testament and even in the New Testament days? There were three categories of people that were to be anointed. That would be prophets, priests and kings. If you were a prophet, a priest or a king, you were to be anointed with oil as a symbolic statement of the ratification of your ministry, and an acknowledgment that the Holy Spirit was on your life for that function of prophet, priest or king. Now, in the Old Testament, you weren't you weren't allowed to be all three yet. You had to pick a lane. You couldn't be a prophet, a priest and a king. I think the closest person that came to striking that balance of hitting all three would be King David. But officially, he wasn't a prophet. He wasn't considered the official title role of a prophet. Jesus. However, he came along and he broke all the rules. He smashed all the records. And Jesus shows up in all three roles. When he comes to Earth, we see him as the prophet, not just a prophet, the prophet. We see him as the priest, the high priest. And we see him as the king, the king of Israel, the king of the world. By the way. Parenthetically, I don't know if you caught it or not, but in our last several messages in Luke, when Jesus came into the city of Jerusalem, that final trip, we saw Jesus in all three roles. In just those few chapters, we saw him as the king when he rode in triumphantly into the city. We saw him as our high priest as he was yanking tables and pulling chairs, cleansing his temple. And we saw him as the prophet when he gave us that parable of the vineyard and predicted his soon coming death. So we saw him in all three roles. And certainly he is the prophet, the priest and the king. I just want you to realize, Mary understood all of that. We just technically got that information deep in our Luke study. But Mary understood all of those things from the beginning. So, Mary, did you know? Yes, to a great extent Mary knew. All right. Here's another question.

[00:32:11][359.5]

[00:32:13] What about Joseph? [00:32:14][0.4]

[00:32:16] Joseph, did you know? Joseph, just what did you know now? Mary? She knew a lot. Mary knew. Joseph what did you know? By the way, don't let me talk you out of liking that song, Mary did you know. I love that song? It's a beautiful song. And there's nothing wrong with the words of that. Don't misunderstand me

that when Buddy Green and Mark Lowery wrote that song, they wrote those questions as rhetorical questions. They were supposed to be thought provoking questions. And they are. They're beautiful questions that really get you to think. You know, Mary, from the beginning when you sat down to think about this child that was coming, what did you envision? [00:33:00][44.6]

[00:33:03] You know, did you know one day he'd be controlling the elements of nature? [00:33:08][5.3]

[00:33:10] Speaking to the storm and walking on the water? [00:33:12][2.0]

[00:33:14] Did you realize the extent of the salvation that he was bringing? So all of those wonderful things that are all of the good reasons you should continue to love that song, if you do, just as I do. [00:33:24][10.4]

[00:33:26] But, Joseph, did you know? Before you write the song, let's find out what Joseph did know.

[00:33:32][6.2]

[00:33:35] This is going to be Verse 20. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, Joseph, son of David (ancestor 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. Verse 21. And she will bring forth a son and you shall call his name Jesus (Yeshua), for he will save his people from their sins. [00:34:18][42.9]

[00:34:19] So what does Joseph know? [00:34:20][0.9]

[00:34:22] Joseph knows essentially the same things that Mary knows about this child. He gets all of that information, too. And what the angel didn't personally tell him, I would sure have to think that Mary discussed those issues, and those situations, and those truths, with him as they got together and talked about this crazy thing, this unique thing, this unthought of thing, that was taking place in both of their lives. [00:34:51][28.9]

[00:34:51] So Joseph knows. Now, whew, thank goodness he knows she wasn't unfaithful to him. He knows he can keep that betrothal period and end up marrying that woman that he loves. Her story checked out. It just took an angel to prove that. So the story checks out, he knows Mary's been faithful. [00:35:16][24.6]

[00:35:16] He knows that this child is going to be named Jesus. He knows that this child is going to be the savior. And I'm sure Mary would fill in the rest of those blanks for him. So now it is time to shift gears and change our perspective. Verse 22 does that for us. So let's read Verse 22. So all this was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet saying, Verse 23. Behold the Virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which is translated God with us. [00:36:05][48.3]

[00:36:05] It is essentially the same thing as calling him the Son of God. To call him the Son of God, that means God is walking the Earth in human flesh. It's God incarnate. This is God with us. [00:36:19][13.2]

[00:36:20] The quote that is referred to here by Matthew was taken from Isaiah, chapter seven, verse fourteen. It's almost a direct quote. I'm going to read it to you. OK, Isaiah seven, verse fourteen. Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel. Now, for some reason, there is a lot of controversy over this verse. I don't know if this whole controversy started with the translation choice of the RSV, the revised standard version, or whether it started before that point. [00:37:03][42.8]

[00:37:04] But the word that is used here for the Hebrew word "alma" translated as "virgin" in the new King James and the King James version. There is a side of the equation, a side of the argument, that says that that Hebrew word alma should not be translated as virgin, that it should be translated as a young woman. So there's been a raging debate over that for, I guess, centuries. Big question, should Isaiah 7:14 say... well, let's

read it, okay? Let's just humor that side of the argument and let's read that Isaiah seven passage translating that word alma as a young woman. Listen. Therefore, the lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son. [00:38:05][60.7]

[00:38:08] Does that make any sense to anyone? What is a sign? [00:38:12][3.7]

[00:38:15] I think I lost you guys already, I recognize those stares. [00:38:19][3.4]

[00:38:21] No, I'm kidding. What is it? What is a sign? It's going to be something outside of human nature, outside of planetary nature. [00:38:33][11.6]

[00:38:34] It's going to be something that is divine in origin. [00:38:36][2.3]

[00:38:37] It's going to be something unusual, something that stands out as having a supernatural earmark on it. That's what a sign is. So when you're reading Isaiah seven 14 and you start with this, the Lord is going to give you a sign. He's going to give you something that has a divine earmark on it, [00:39:00][22.7]

[00:39:01] then does it make sense for the rest of the statement to read, here's what that divine sign is going to be, a young woman is going to have a son. [00:39:07][6.0]

[00:39:10] How is that a divine sign? [00:39:11][1.2]

[00:39:14] That happens approximately one hundred and ninety two thousand five hundred times a day. According to statistics, three hundred and eighty five thousand times a day a child is born on this planet, split that approximately in half. That's how many young women every day have a baby boy. So there's nothing significant. [00:39:38][24.0]

[00:39:40] There's nothing sign-like about a young woman having a boy. [00:39:44][4.3]

[00:39:46] That's procreation, that's human nature. [00:39:48][2.6]

[00:39:51] So if we just use a little bit of reason, a little bit of logic, all right, and if we had that word alma and someone told us it can mean two things, it can either mean young woman or virgin. And they were fighting over that. One side said it means young woman and one side said it means virgin. If you just read that verse in its context, looking for a divine sign, which way would you translate it? You'd translate it to say virgin. No question about it, right? Now, when you come to the New Testament and you read Matthew's words on this, we're leaving logic now, we're leaving reason, because admittedly, that's not always the best way to translate the Bible. The best way to translate the Bible is let the Bible translate itself. All right, so we're going to do that now. When we get to Matthew, chapter one and Matthew quotes that verse, he's writing this in Greek, which is just brilliant for us to settle the issue of what alma means. He's writing this in Greek. And when it comes to that word, alma, in Hebrew, to translate that into Greek, he uses the Greek word parthenos. Does that word sound familiar to anyone in this congregation? Anchored, you sat through five studies with me on singleness, marriage, divorce and remarriage, and maybe you don't remember right now, let me rekindle the fire of your memory. First Corinthians, Chapter seven, when we talked about First Corinthians, Chapter seven, every time you see the word virgin in your new King James translation or your King James version translation, Paul put the Greek word parthenos behind that word. Parthenos only means one thing. Virgin, or if you take and use that in the extrapolated sense, it could mean someone that hasn't consummated a marriage. But it means just that: virgin. That is the absolute, without a doubt, meaning by translation of that word, parthenos or pathenoi (the various forms of that word). So what I'm telling you is our New Testament authors have made sure we didn't miss this. The sign wasn't that a young woman would have a child and call him Emmanuel. It's not a sign



to call your child Emmanuel. You can name your child anything you want. That doesn't make it God sent. Alright? So very, very clear. The New Testament has helped us to see and settle that debate. [00:42:37][165.4]

[00:42:37] This was a virgin that conceived a child planted in her not by a man, but by the Holy Spirit. [00:42:46][8.5]

[00:42:46] And that is a sign. That is a big deal. [00:42:52][5.2]

[00:42:53] You don't believe me? You single ladies, prove me wrong. [00:42:56][2.2]

[00:42:57] No cheating either. [00:42:58][0.6]

[00:43:01] No sexual relations. No artificial insemination. Prove me wrong. You can't, because it never happens. We're not asexual. Procreation takes a man and a woman. This was a miracle. Leave the man out of the equation (all the ladies said amen) and use the Holy Spirit to give conception to that child in the womb of Mary, so that she could be the oven to bake that little boy and bring him into the world. Now, [00:43:31][30.8]

[00:43:38] we've come to the second intersecting truth of this little message this morning, and that is that though this pregnancy was very much unplanned by Mary and Joseph, [00:43:54][15.6]

[00:43:56] according to verse twenty two, and verse twenty three, it was very planned by God. That verse I read to you, Isaiah, chapter seven, verse 14, that talked about the sign of the virgin birth that was written years and years and years prior to the passage that we're reading in Matthew of where the birth account actually takes place. This was something that God knew about, not just when Isaiah was writing in Isaiah Chapter seven, but before the foundation of the world even, Jesus was slated to be our messiah. He was slated to be slain on the cross. [00:44:45][48.4]

[00:44:45] The scriptures tell us that he was slain before the foundation of the world. So God knew this before he even created that first little creep that messed it all up. [00:44:58][12.6]

[00:44:59] He knew it. [00:45:00][0.4]

[00:45:02] He knew about the virgin birth. [00:45:03][1.3]

[00:45:05] He shared that information with the prophet Isaiah. God could have been as specific as he wanted to. He could have named Mary and Joseph. He could have named Jesus. [00:45:15][10.2]

[00:45:17] He could have told us in Isaiah 714, how many pounds and how many ounces Jesus would be at birth. [00:45:23][6.0]

[00:45:25] Could have given us as much detail as he wanted. Listen, that's not a new thing in scripture. I share with you just a different story from Isaiah, where Isaiah gets pretty specific in his prophecy because the Lord got pretty specific with what he revealed to Isaiah. It's in Isaiah, chapter forty four, verse twenty eight. [00:45:50][24.5]

[00:45:50] You can look this up later. In that prophecy, [00:45:53][2.5]

[00:45:56] God gave Isaiah the prophecy about Cyrus, who would be the king that would release the nation of Israel from their bondage up North in Babylon. So in Isaiah, 44, God through Isaiah, named that very king, approximately one hundred and seventy years before the days of Cyrus. God said, I'm going to use Cyrus to do this. He named him one hundred and seventy years before Cyrus. He named him well before the nation was drug up there in bondage. He already had the plan and he already named the guy that would bring the plan and set it into motion. So God could have done that here. That's how well he knew this situation that was

unfolding. And he could be that specific with all Bible prophecy. I wish he was. But he chooses not to be most of the time, because the purpose of Bible prophecy is not to feed all of our curiosities. The purpose of Bible prophecy is to give you just enough prophecy so that you understand the general direction of where things are going and that you can see enough from the fulfillment of prophecy to be able to go like this. [00:47:27][90.2]

[00:47:28] Oh, I get it. Nothing happens by accident. [00:47:31][3.4]

[00:47:33] Everything that takes place, God already knew about it and God already has a plan for it. Either to have it serve as good immediately or to have it turn for my good in the future. That's the purpose of Bible prophecy. To give us comfort. Just to get us to come to that basic truth of trust in God. [00:47:56][23.1]

[00:47:59] And so I know, man, I wish there was like the book of Arlyn that I could just read and know, OK. Monday, December, the whatever. Here's what Arlyn did. OK, great. Prophecy. [00:48:12][12.7]

[00:48:13] That's what I'm going to do, I have my direction. But he gives us enough to develop our trust in him as sovereign, as all knowing, and as all powerful. And man, what a story we have going here, in how we see that sovereignty put into action. Verse 24. Let's finish this up. Worship team, if you want to come up. It says. Then Joseph being aroused from sleep (and oh, that's just the beginning. Wait till that child comes along. You're going to be aroused from sleep if you're lucky, five times a night, probably more. Joseph being aroused from sleep...), did as the Angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife. Verse 25. And did not know her till she had brought forth [00:49:00][47.5]

[00:49:02] her first born son. And he called his name Jesus. Now this is actually a pretty powerful little section of verse. Let me read it again. Joseph took her as wife. He married her. And did not know her sexually till she had brought forth her first born son. And he called his name Jesus. I love what Joseph did there.

[00:49:32][30.1]

[00:49:35] He recognized that God was doing a very powerful and unique work [00:49:43][7.6]

[00:49:46] in the life of his wife. He recognized that. And Joseph was the kind of man that wanted to support that work that God was doing, and accommodate that work that God was doing in her, and strengthen that work that God was doing in her. And he did not want to hinder what God was doing, or interfere in any way. So he stayed out of it altogether until God was finished, completely finished, with that work. That speaks something so powerful to me. Because husbands, if we could be less like lunkheads and more like men of God, that were dialed in to God, spiritually sensitive enough to see the work that God is doing in our spouse, and be wise enough to not interfere with what the Lord was doing, to just stay out of it and let God do his thing, and come alongside her and support her and encourage her and edify her, but not interfere with what God is doing in her. Husband's have a tendency to do that. [00:51:01][75.3]

[00:51:02] The women come home from their women's meeting all hyped up. I don't know if it's the sugar or the message. Because, man, do they eat snacks in those meetings. I've seen the spreads. [00:51:12][9.9]

[00:51:14] They come home all hyped up, all excited, about what the Lord is doing. [00:51:19][4.7]

[00:51:21] And you go right back to your griping and your grumbling and you're nit picking. [00:51:26][5.2]

[00:51:27] And your wife, who was up here on a spiritual plane, a spiritual height, you just drug her right back down. What if you could be like Joseph, men? Ah, see, I turned this message on you. You were excited guys, that we were taking Joseph's side of this story. And I turned it right on you to use it against you. What if we could do that men, and not drag our wives down, not interfere with what God's doing, but support and bless that. [00:51:56][28.7]

*[00:51:58]* And now let's just expand that out. In closing, what about all of us as a congregation? If we could get so spiritually tuned in to what God is doing in the congregation that we could employ that same that very same tactic? *[00:52:14][16.3]*

*[00:52:16]* Lord, I see it. I recognize what you're doing in this one and that one. Lord, I see the work that you're doing. *[00:52:22][5.4]*

*[00:52:23]* Lord, use me not to get in the way, not to interfere, not to impose my will. But Lord help me to come alongside of these ones that I see God working in. And Lord use me as a Joseph in that person's life, to just come alongside of them and add my blessing to what you're doing, and support what you're doing, and encourage them in that. *[00:52:45][21.7]*

*[00:52:48]* And in closing, if you'll stand with me, that's what I want to be as a pastor. *[00:52:53][5.3]*

*[00:52:54]* I don't want to drag you down. I don't want to ruin your love for songs like Mary did you know. I don't want to discourage you. I don't want to weigh you down. I don't want to offend anyone. You know that. I don't. I would never intentionally want to offend someone. All I want is to be able to support you and to help you and encourage you. So we're going to close in a world of prayer. We're going to sing a song while we're singing. If there is some way that I can do just that, help you, support you, encourage you or pray for you, would you make your way forward, come down one of the aisles, meet with me up front and we'll do that. Let's see how we can help you. Let's pray for you so that the Lord can work in your life. *[00:52:54][0.0]*

[3013.7]