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The King is Born
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The King Is Born

We have the wonderful privilege and joy of going through the mountain peaks of the Gospel of Matthew, the first book in the New Testament. The book that really sets the tone for the New Testament, the new covenant which was, as we know, ratified in the blood of Jesus Christ.

At the time the New Testament was originally written, Israel was under Roman domination and Roman occupation. One of the features of that occupation was the crushing and hated Roman tax system, it was cruel, it was relentless, it was systematic, and it extorted money out of an already poor group of people. Jews, unthinkably so, were hired by extorting Romans to collect taxes from their own people. These Jews, who also gouged their own countrymen to make a profit at their expense became synonymous with traitors and were grouped always with heathen, highwaymen, murderers, and prostitutes.

In fact, if you wanted to say someone was the scum of the earth, you said they were a tax collector, and to make matters worse, at the time of the ministry of Jesus Christ there was crisis, a financial crisis in Rome which must have even increased the tax burden in Israel. One such tax collector was a Jew by the name of Matthew Levi and he sat at his tax post on the road one day and Jesus came by.

He was never the same after that, that day was the day in which the tax collector was transformed into the Apostle. Such was the miracle of Matthew who then became the writer of the first Gospel, and Jesus called that tax collector into the inner circle of Disciples, a relationship so utterly unique that only 12 men ever so walked on earth with the Living God. What a privilege, and especially what a privilege for such an outcast.

No doubt Matthew had plenty to sacrifice, like all the rest of the tax collectors, he probably had become wealthy and he had to leave everything to follow Jesus, everything. He must have been a man of great influence, a man of great power, a man who had accumulated around him a comfortable lifestyle and prosperity that would have set him well for the years of his life that remained. It's evident how wealthy he was because after having confirmed his faith in Christ and been called to follow Christ, he wanted to celebrate his commitment to the Messiah and he wanted to introduce his old friends to his new Master and he put on a big time celebration. It must have cost him a lot; it

indicates to us that he probably had a lot. That celebration is recorded in the 9th chapter of Matthew where we also read about his conversion.

Now we don't when Matthew wrote exactly but we do know why he wrote. In fact, we know exactly why he wrote, he wrote this Gospel to tell the story of salvation, to tell the story of Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of sins, for the whole world and to demonstrate that Jesus of Nazareth was God in human flesh, the promised Messiah, the Christ, the King who was rejected by His own people, who was then accepted by the Gentiles, Jesus who died, who rose again, who ascended to heaven and who will return someday to set up His Kingdom and reign. That's why he wrote to tell the story of Jesus Christ, the story of salvation.

In writing about Christ, Matthew really sweeps through three major aspects. There are three emphases in this Gospel, first is the King revealed. Matthew focuses on the revelation of God in human form in the person of Jesus Christ and the person of Christ is painted in royal colors all the way through. His ancestry is traced through a royal lineage, His birth is dreaded by a rival king, wise men offer Him royal gifts because they affirm that He is indeed a King, His own herald, the last of the Old Testament prophets, John the Baptist declares that upon His arrival a Kingdom is at hand, and Matthew, even looking at his temptation sees in the temptation that amazing, final act of Satan whereby he promises to give Jesus Christ the Kingdoms of the world, even himself acknowledging the right that Jesus had to reign.

Matthew records the great sermon of the King, the manifesto of the King in the Kingdom which we call the "The Sermon on the Mount," which sets forth the standards of entrance and life in His Kingdom. To Matthew, the miracles are His royal credentials and the parables are the mysteries of His Kingdom. He is hailed Son of David, a Kingly title; he claims freedom from paying taxes to earthly kings, because He Himself is a King's Son. He makes a royal entry into Jerusalem and claims indeed to be a King and even while facing the cross He predicts that He will rise from the dead and someday all will crown Him King. He claims power to command legions of angels and His last words are a Kingly claim and a royal command. He says, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and in earth, go Ye therefore." He is presented as King, the King revealed.

But secondly, Matthew emphasizes the King rejected. Matthew, more then any other Gospel, casts this relentless shadow of rejection over everything in the life of Jesus. The shadow never lifts. Before He was even born His mother was in danger of being rejected by Joseph. At His birth all Jerusalem is troubled and Herod seeks His life, and there on the plains of Bethlehem no angel choir sings, but mothers weep in anguish as their baby sons are slaughtered in an attempt to kill the King.

In His early childhood, He is hurried away to live in obscurity in a village called Nazareth up until the age of 30. His forerunner and His cousin is put into prison and beheaded. He Himself has no home once His ministry begins; He has no place to lay His head. Even His parables show that His Kingdom

will not be accepted, not in this age, and in His death He was forsaken by God. No penitent thief is praying in Matthew's Gospel, no word of human sympathy is recorded by Matthew, and those who passed by revile and mock, and soldiers are even bribed to lie about His resurrection, and so the shadow of rejection never really lifts. No other Gospel so chronicles the bitterness of the rejection of the Messiah as does Matthew.

But Matthew emphasizes not only the King revealed and rejected, but he also emphasizes the King returning. There is more in the Gospel of Matthew about the Coming of Christ then the other three Gospels. No other writer says so much about the second coming and lays such heavy stress upon it. So in the end it is the Gospel of triumph, it is the Gospel of glory, the King is revealed, the King is rejected, but the King is returning.

As the Gospel of Matthew begins, of course it begins with the Revelation. In fact, it starts with the birth of Christ, the Messiah, that's where it has to start because if He is to be revealed as King, then the book must begin with proof that He is indeed royalty, and so Matthew does that. In the first 17 verses of the first chapter, Matthew gives the royal lineage of the King, the genealogy of Jesus coming from Abraham, the Father of the Jewish people through David, the great King, who's Son would be the Messiah.

The genealogy shows that He is from Abraham through David's line down through His father Joseph, and in Matthew it is a lineage, I should say, that is a descending lineage. It descends from Abraham through David, through Joseph, to Jesus. The other New Testament lineage, located in Luke by the way, chapter 3, is an ascending lineage that starts with Mary and goes back through David, so you have a descending and an ascending lineage. Both are very important; first of all, the right to reign came through the Father. You gained Your right to be the King through Your Father and so it was essential that Jesus be proven to be the son of Joseph, He had to come through Joseph. It was also essential that He have royal blood, and since He didn't get His royal blood from Joseph because Joseph was not truly His father since He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, He had to get His royal blood through Mary, so Mary had also to be from the line of David as she was, so Matthew focuses on the lineage of Joseph, which is from David because there comes the right to the throne and Luke focuses on the lineage of Mary, because there comes the royal blood. Through both of them He descended from David.

Matthew is concerned about His legal descent; Luke is concerned about His royal blood. Either way He is King by right, He is King by blood, He is King by virtue of Joseph being His legal father. Now we don't have time to go into that genealogy but it is an incredible genealogy to understand. I would only point out that the thing that leaps out of this genealogy is the graciousness of it. It gives us a wonderful note of God's grace and at the very outset, in the very genealogy of the King, as the lineage is laid out we can sense at the very beginning that this is a King of grace. You say why is that so? Because in His genealogy are listed four outcasts, four of them in the line of the Great Messiah.

First, is listed a woman by the name of Tamar, guilty of harlotry and incest. Second, is listed Rahab, guilty of harlotry, a prostitute and idolatry in a pagan society. Third, Ruth from the Moab area, a Moabitess, and by the way, the whole line of Moab was cursed because it descended from an incestuous relationship, and than a fourth woman is mentioned in the genealogy, her name is Bathsheba, she an adulteress. Two prostitutes, a lady from a line that was incestuous and had been cursed, and an adulteress in the genealogy of the Messiah, and so the King even before His birth identifies with sinners.

But as wonderful as this genealogy is as a credential, and it's a necessary credential, there is a greater credential for His Messiahship even down that lineage and it His birth. Let me read for you chapter 1 starting at verse 18 to the end of the chapter, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows, when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit, and Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her desired to put her away secretly. But when he had considered this, Behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, 'Joseph, Son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit and she will bear a son and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.' Now all this took place at what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled saying, 'Behold the Virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son and they shall call His name Emanuel, which translated means God with us,' and Joseph arose from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took her as his wife and kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a son and He called His name Jesus. There Matthew presents the birth of the King, a birth like no other birth, before or since, the genealogy declares Him to be the Son of David, the Virgin birth declares Him to be the Son of God, and if Matthew 1:1-17 was all that was said, Christ might have had the legal right to the throne, but He never could have redeemed sinners. For that He had to be God and the Virgin birth proves that He was."

The narrative which I just read to you out of those few verses at the end of the chapter give some amazing realities about the birth of Christ. The facts are clear, Joseph and Mary were engaged to be married, they had had no sexual relationship, but Mary was pregnant, and Joseph knew the child was not his. The child was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and Joseph was commanded to marry Mary and keep her a Virgin until the child was born and than name the child Jesus. Those are the facts of the birth.

Looking more deeply into those facts we find the significance of the Virgin birth. First of all, let's look at the Virgin birth conceived, verse 18. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows, "When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit." Matthew tells us that the birth of Christ was in this manner, and than he introduces us to Mary, and really we don't know anything about her, that is about her background, we

don't know anything about her family, although John 19 verse 25 eludes to her sister and we also know that Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist according to Luke 1:36 was related to her, but we don't really know anything else about her. We know she came from the small village in Galilee called Nazareth, a sort of non-descript place which most people believed could yield no great person.

Mary grew up in obscurity, probably in poverty and a life of hard work; she was certainly a teenager at this time. We do know a little about her character, Luke chapter 1 tells us something of the kind of woman she was. In verse 38, "And Mary said, 'Behold the bond slave of the Lord, be it done to me according to Your Word,'" and there's her own testimony to an angel that she had given herself over as a slave to God. It will be safe to assume then that this lovely, young, teenage woman was indeed a true believer, a saint, one who had come to know the Lord.

In Luke 1:45 she says, "And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord." In other words, she believed, when the angel came and gave the message, she believed, she was a woman who had committed herself to be a servant of the Lord and she was a woman believed what God said.

Same chapter, verse 46 and following shows her Godliness as she says, "My soul exalts the Lord, my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior," and than she goes on in that marvelous, magnificate to celebrate the greatness of her God. So we don't know much about her family life, but we do know something about her heart before God.

Then back in Matthew chapter 1 and verse 18, we are also introduced to the young man to whom she had been engaged by the name of Joseph. It tells us that he was a righteous man in verse 19 and again that means he was right with God, he was a just man before God, he had been declared righteous on the basis of his faith, which means he like Mary had repented of his sin and believed in the true God and faithfully was walking in obedience to God, but that's all we know about him. He was in the line, as we said, of David.

The text of the New Testament indicates to us that he was a carpenter, the same word is used of a brick layer or a mason, so he was in construction work, beyond that we know nothing. We notice the word betrothed there, I need to comment on that. A Jewish marriage actually fell into two formal stages, the first was a betrothal and the second was the actual marriage, but unlike engagements which we have today, a betrothal was legally binding. It was the promise of marriage according to Deuteronomy chapter 20 and verse 7, and the reason they had a betrothal period as a legally binding period was that it acted as a probation period to ensure the bride's virginity. It was long enough so that if she had been unfaithful and were to be pregnant indeed it would show up in that period of time.

That is exactly what happened. Before they came together, during that probation period, she was found to be with child and it was by the Holy Spirit, this had never happened, but it happened in this

situation and she knew that. She was not at all in the dark about how this child came to be in her womb because it says in Luke 1:26, "In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth to a Virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David, and the Virgin's name was Mary," and coming in he said to her, "Hail favored one, the Lord is with you." She was greatly troubled at this statement and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might be and the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid Mary, for you have found favor with God, and Behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you shall call His name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High and the Lord God will give Him throne of His Father David and He will reign over the House of Jacob forever, and His Kingdom will have no end."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be since I am a Virgin?" and the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you and for that reason the Holy offspring shall be called the Son of God and Behold even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age, and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month for nothing will be impossible with God. Not an older woman becoming pregnant, not even a virgin becoming pregnant." So Mary knew, she knew the child was from the Holy Spirit, but Joseph didn't know. What a shock for Joseph to find in this probationary period, which was to prove her purity that she was pregnant, and a betrothed woman found unfaithful, according to Deuteronomy 22, could be punished by death.

She must have been at least three months pregnant since Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit six months after John the Baptist, as I just read. So here is this lovely young woman, the apple of the eye of Joseph, and the one he is sure is as pure as the driven snow, and spiritually committed to God as he is, and all of a sudden a cloud of suspicion and aura of shame and scandal is hanging ominously over her and him, and in all of human history there has never been a virgin birth.

Although it might have been expected because it does say in Genesis 3:15, "That one will come who is called the seed of the woman," and everyone knows the seed is in the man and not in the woman, but it had to be this way. You see if Jesus had no human parent then he couldn't have been a man. He couldn't have taken on human flesh, He wouldn't have been David's Son and He couldn't be our substitute, man dying for man, so He had to have a human parent, but if Jesus had two human parents He could not have avoided the contamination of sin, He could not have been the spotless sacrifice that satisfied God, He could not have been God, so He had to have one human parent and one Divine parent.

He was born of a sinner, yet born of God. Deity canceled the curse of humanity, and than we see the Virgin birth confronted in verses 19 and 20. Immediately this miracle is confronted by Joseph, he finds out about it, he is jolted by it; there is Mary's inexplicable unfaithfulness, and the implication obviously of his own complicity. Anybody looking at the scenario is going to assume that not only is

she guilty but so is he. Verse 19, "He knows that it's not him," and it says that Joseph her husband, "Being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her desired to put her away secretly."

Now two things are said, first of all, that motivated him to do what he plot to do. First motive, he was a righteous man, an unrighteous man might have tried to hide it, somehow cover it up, maybe you could pull that off you know with heavy long robes, get her out of sight, don't let anybody know, but he was a righteous man and he wanted to make sure that he stood before God as righteous, and that if there was sin that sin was confronted and dealt with. He was so righteous that he desired to do what was right before God. This refers to his heart, by the way, as well as his conduct. He was a true Old Testament saint. He had been justified before God, he was walking in obedience, he wanted to honor God. Mary was precious to him but God was more precious; Mary was the girl of his dreams and the girl of his hopes, but he had to do what was right before God so he had to act.

But there was a second motive, not just that he was righteous, but secondly it says, "Not wanting to disgrace her." He was also compassionate. There was really no bitterness there, there was no anger there, and he must have understood that even the best are frail and weak, and his heart while broken was not hostile, and so he didn't want to disgrace her.

He had to two courses open to him. The harshest course was to make her a public example, to expose her to public shame and ignominy, to charge her openly with sin. Originally this meant stoning her death, but in the laxness of this day, instead of stoning all that was required was a legal document that amounted to a lawsuit which rendered the betrothal null and void, that would be public and it would expose her to disgrace and scorn.

But apparently the law also allowed a quiet, private bill or document, or divorce that could be given to her privately and she could just go on her way. I would think that this would assume that she would repent when confronted and so there would be no reason for the public scandal. The documents that I read about that private divorce indicate that all it had to have was the two parties and two witnesses, and Joseph opted for that, according to verse 19, "And desired to put her away secretly."

By the way, the word to put her away, , was the New Testament word for divorce, because betrothal as I said was a legally binding commitment. It's hard to imagine how he felt as he was pondering these things, such a crushing burden for him to bear, so absolutely and utterly unthinkable and inconceivable and not like the Mary that he knew. Well he didn't have to worry for long verse 20 says, "When he had considered this, when he was pondering this, musing about it, and planning what he would do, Behold and angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream." There he is meditating and at the point of his meditation he must have become exhausted or wearied and he fell asleep while he was mulling over the tragedy and so Joseph confronted the Virgin birth with confusion and grief.

But that takes us to the third point, the Virgin birth clarified. At this point Joseph desperately needs some help, so an angel of the Lord appears to him in a dream and the angel says this, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife." That's what he wanted to do, that's what he planned to do, that's what they dreamed together to do, but it had all come to a grinding halt because she was pregnant, but he doesn't need to be fearful of taking her because, "That which has been conceived in her," says verse 20, "Is of the Holy Spirit." She hasn't sinned.

If her sin was, her apparent sin was shocking to Joseph, then how shocking was this announcement? It's probably why the Lord put him to sleep before he gave it to him, it probably would have knocked him out anyway. Startling, shocking, astounding, astonishing, amazing, and comforting, that child was conceived by the Holy Spirit, could this be? The rabbis had said, by the way, Messiah is to have no earthly Father, it's in the Talmud; and in John 7:27 the Jews said, "Whenever the Christ comes no one knows where He is from." So the Jews had this notion that the Messiah would have some kind of miraculous arrival.

Now Joseph may have immediately had another fear when that one's settled and that fear would be this, do I dare touch her? I mean if this is a woman chosen by God to bear the Messiah, this is a woman who has been a given a life from the Holy Spirit and she's going to give birth to a child of the Spirit of God, and I'm going to marry, I'm going to marry this woman and probably the rest of my life I'll have to wave at her. I mean this woman is going to be too holy for me to take as my wife. I'm not dealing with a woman here, I'm dealing with an icon, something beyond a normal woman, someone who's been overshadowed by God.

So comfortingly, the angel commands him in verse 24, "To take her as his wife, just keep her a virgin until after the birth of the Messiah," which must have been comforting news because of his great love for her. Then the glorious reason comes for the Virgin birth, the marvelous reason in verse 21, "And she will bear a son and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins," but you know this. The angel is talking to Joseph in this vision in his sleep, "And she will bear a son," not you.

Not like Luke 1:13 where the angel comes to Zachariah and says, "Don't be afraid Zachariah, your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son," that's different language. She's not going to bear you a son, she will bear a son. This is Mary's son and God's Son, not your son and the language protects any misunderstanding.

Throughout this chapter, Matthew identified Mary as the Mother of Jesus. All through - I should say chapter 2 as well. Chapter 2 verse 11, verse 13, verse 14, verse 20, verse 21, always Mary is the Mother of Jesus. Joseph is never designated in chapter 2 as the father of Jesus. To warn Joseph, for example, about Herod's hostility, the angel said to him, "Arise and take the young child and His mother and flee into Egypt," verse 13.

Why didn't the angels say take your child and your wife? Later the angel used the same command and changed only the destination in verse 20, "Arise and take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel." The child and his mother, verse 21 in chapter 2 repeats it again. Yes, Jesus was God's Son not Joseph's son.

Joseph was then told to name the child, "And you shall call His name Jesus, the Yeshua, Joshua, it means Jehovah Saves, call Him Jesus for it is He who will save His people from their sins." It is God who is the Savior; the Bible repeats that over and over again, particularly in the wonderful epistle to Titus. Chapter 1, "God our Savior," chapter 2, "God our Savior," chapter 3, "God our Savior," 1 Timothy chapter 4, "God who is the Savior of all men especially those who believe," and Paul writing to Timothy, "God our Savior," chapter 2, "Who will have all men to be saved. It is God who is the Savior, He's the only One who can us from our sins, call His name Jesus, He is God who will save His people from their sins."

In Acts chapter 4, the wonderful familiar words of verse 12, "There is salvation in no one else for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved only the name of Jesus." Who is able to save? Who is mighty to save? Who can forgive? Only the Virgin born God, man, Son of David, Son of God.

So the Virgin birth conceived, confronted, and clarified and than fourthly, the Virgin birth connected and this is a very important word, verse 22 Matthew says, "Now all this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the Prophet might be fulfilled saying, 'Behold the Virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son and they shall call His name Emmanuel,' which translated means God with us." Now here Matthew connects the Virgin birth and he connects it to the most important thing in the life of the Jews, and that is the Old Testament. The Virgin birth shouldn't be thought of as something novel, something new, it's connected to the Old Testament.

This gives me the perfect opportunity here to comment and to tell you that 50 times in the Gospel of Matthew the Old Testament is quoted over 75; 76 times it is alluded to. Over 125 times there is reference in this Gospel to the Old Testament and this is the first one. Matthew reaches back for an Old Testament text as prophetic support and commentary for the narrative of the birth of Christ.

Notice he says, "All this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the Prophet might be fulfilled, it might be accomplished." What was prophesied is now accomplished and than he gives the quote in verse 23 and it is directly from Isaiah chapter 7 and verse 14. That would be a prophesy 700 years before Christ was born, and the Prophet said "The Virgin shall be with child."

Some translations back in Isaiah 7:14 translate that word, young woman, young girl. It is a word that means maiden, it is never used of other then an unmarried woman throughout the Old Testament,

and obviously then is a synonym for a virgin. A virgin shall be with child and here Matthew makes it very clear what Isaiah meant by using the term *parthenos*, which means virgin and that interprets the Old Testament intent of Isaiah and tells us that the prophesy has been fulfilled, and that Son shall be called Emmanuel, that translates God with us, the last two letters E-L, God L, Emanu with us and so the Virgin birth is connected to the Old Testament prophesy regarding the Messiah. Conceived, confronted, clarified, and connected; we then come to the Virgin birth completed, verses 24 and 25.

Joseph arose from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took her as his wife, and kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a son, and he called His name Jesus. Well Joseph abandoned his original plans didn't he? No secret divorce, no public shame, quite the opposite. He took her as his wife, what does that mean? They had a wedding, they went from the condition of betrothal to marriage, but having married her he kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a son.

Now some people think, wrongly, that she was a virgin until she died. That Joseph's worst fears indeed came to pass, but that's not what the New Testament tells us. Even Matthew records for us, in chapter 12 and verse 46, "That Jesus was speaking to the multitudes and as He was speaking," Matthew writes, "Behold His mother and brothers were standing outside seeking to speak to Him and someone said to Him, Behold Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to you."

In the 13th chapter of Matthew and verse 55, Jesus was teaching parables coming to His home town in verse 54, he began teaching them in their synagogue so that they became astonished and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" and than listen to this, "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary and his brothers James and Joseph and Simon, and Judas, and his sisters, are they not all with us?" This is nobody special, we know the family.

No, Mary was not a perpetual virgin, not at all and at first John tells us in his Gospel, chapter 7, that his own brothers didn't even believe in Him. We might be able to understand that, I mean how would you feel if you had an older brother who was perfect? You might resent him but after the resurrection they believed in Him.

Now all that is the story of the incarnation and it tells us that this child is more then the Son of David, this is the Son of God. That's the narrative of the incarnation; would you like to hear the spiritual side of it? The theology of the incarnation to go along with the history of it? Here it is, Philippians 2:5-8, "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus. Who although he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond servant and being made in the likeness of men, and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled Himself."

Becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross; that's the spiritual side of the historical record. He already existed in the form of God, the very essence of God, but He didn't hold that equality with God tightly, He was willing to let go of it and divest Himself of the prerogatives of His deity, take the form of a bond servant, doing what the Father asked, become made in the likeness of men through birth from the womb of a woman, be found in appearance as a man, humbling Himself even to the point of death and the most horrible death of all, death on the cross.

This is the birth of the inhuminated God and such a supernatural birth is the only way to account for the marvelous works that He did and His sinless life, and His atoning death, and His bodily resurrection. This is His credential, its one thing to be a Son of David, it's quite another to be Son of God.

An unbeliever once asked a Christian, if I should tell you that a child had been born without a father would you believe it? The Christian quickly answered, yes if he lived and accomplished what Jesus did. That's right, there is no other explanation, none whatsoever and so as the Gospel of Matthew opens the King is revealed, "And his birth proves who He is. In Christ, God came to dwell on earth, to dwell with the sick to heal them, to dwell with the demonized to liberate them, to dwell with the poor in spirit to bless them, to dwell with the meek to give them the Kingdom, to dwell with the anxious to comfort them, to dwell with the critical to warn them, to dwell with the lepers to cleanse them, to dwell with the diseased to cure them, to dwell with the hungry to feed them, and most of all to dwell with the lost to seek and save them." Emmanuel, infinitely rich became poor, assumed our humanity, entered our sin polluted atmosphere without ever being tainted, took our guilt, bore our grief's, carried our sorrows, was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our inequities, rose for our justification, ascended for our intercession and will return for our eternal glory.

Through His poverty we are made rich and it all began with a child conceived by the Holy Spirit whose name is Emmanuel. Let's bow in prayer, our Father, how our hearts rejoice to think about the great and glorious reality of the birth of our Savior and King the Lord Jesus Christ. We are the sick and the demonized, we are the poor in spirit, the meek, the anxious, the critical, we're the hungry, and we're the lost that He came to save. We thank You that He is not just a man, not just the noblest of men. We thank You that He is God, man yes, born of Mary that He might be touched with all the feelings of our infirmities, that He might be tempted in all points like as we are that He might be sympathetic to our pain, that He might feel all that humanity really means, but God as well born of the Holy Spirit that He might rise above humanity, that He might redeem humanity, that He might conquer sin and death, and hell.

We bless You for the gift of Emmanuel, the wonder of His birth is the only explanation for the Glory of His life and we thank You that by faith, in His death and resurrection, He has become our God and our Savior and we glorify Him, and praise You with thanksgiving for this unspeakable gift of Jesus

Christ, in whose name we pray, Amen.

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