

# The Promised Saviour

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- [ 0 : 00 ]     Let us sing now to God's praise from Psalm 98. Psalm 98, at the beginning, sing the first four stanzas.
- O sing a new song to the Lord. For wonder she hath done, his right hand and his holy arm in victory hath won. The Lord God his salvation hath caused to be known.
- His justice in the heathen's sight he openly hath shown. He, mindful of his grace and truth, to Israel's house hath been.
- And the salvation of our God all ends of the earth have seen. Let all the earth unto the Lord send forth a joyful noise. Lift up your voice aloud to him.
- Sing praises and rejoice. And so on. O sing a new song to the Lord. For wonder she hath done. O sing a new song to the Lord.
- [ 1 : 15 ]     For wonder she hath done. His right hand and his holy arm in victory hath won.
- The Lord God his salvation hath caused to be known. The Lord God his salvation hath caused to be known.
- His righteousness in the heathen's sight. His right hand and his holy arm in victory hath been.
- His right hand and his holy arm in victory hath been. All of His creation through earth, to His sins Thou shalt gain.
- As the salvation of the God, all ends of the earth come sin.
- [ 2 : 47 ]     Let all the earth unto the Lord, send forth a joyful noise.
- Lift up your voice, call out to Him, sing praises and rejoice.
- We're going to turn for a short while to the passage that we read. In Matthew chapter 1, we can read again at verse 18.
- Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise, when, as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.
- Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in hers of the Holy Ghost.
- [ 4 : 21 ]     And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins, and so on.
- This evening, for a short while, I'd like us to think for a short, just give some consideration to this passage that we have read together.
- The opening chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, and seek to draw attention to some of the main points that we have there, some of the main thoughts that we might consider of significance, which we can reflect upon.

We can, first of all, identify the author of this Gospel as Matthew, or Levi, as he is sometimes called, one of the Lord's disciples.

And the Lord called him to himself at the receipt of customs, if you remember.

[ 5 : 44 ] He was a tax gatherer, and humanly speaking, he was not what you would call an ideal candidate to be somebody who would popularise this new ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He's not the kind of person that you would select to go out in the name of Christ, and associate himself with the Lord.

simply because of his trade. He is clearly a Jew, but he has identified himself, by reason of his role, with the Roman authorities.

And most of his compatriots would consider him to be a traitor to the Jewish cause. So in that sense, when you think of his calling by Christ, and of this very prominent role that you will have in gathering together the Gospel, and proclaiming it, and disseminating the truths that are contained there, you would think that he is a poor choice.

And yet that is the very person that the Lord chose. Now as you can see, the Gospel begins with a genealogy. And it is one of two extensive genealogies we have in the Gospel.

[ 7 : 38 ] This one in Matthew, and the other one we have in Luke's Gospel. And the purpose of having the genealogy is simply to firmly place the Lord Jesus Christ within the purposes of God for his people.

The theologian Robert Gromachki sums it up like this, that the purpose of Matthew or Levi is to demonstrate that Christ is the rightful heir to the promises of Abrahamic and Davidic covenants.

God promised Abraham a great nation, material prosperity, personal greatness, divine protection, and the land of Palestine.

Promises made to Abraham and to his seed, even Jesus Christ. So, by beginning the Gospel with this genealogy and placing the Lord Jesus within that genealogy, the reader is immediately understanding for themselves the place that Jesus has.

Throughout the Gospel, if you like, throughout this Gospel of Matthew, what you find is that Matthew reminds us that Christ is to be recognized recognized as one that was promised by God for the salvation of Israel.

[ 9 : 34 ] That is the place that he has. That is how he is to be understood. I suppose it's summarized in the words of verse 21. He shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins.

Our thought is repeated throughout. That is what he is in the world. Whatever else he is to do. And there are many things that draw attention to Jesus.

His miracle working, his words of wisdom, his sermons, and Matthew clearly brings us the detail of what is entitled the Sermon on the Mount from verse 5, chapter 5 onwards.

That is all as if it were additional to the main reason for his coming into the world which was for the salvation of the lost.

In the Gospel of Luke we have a second genealogy which differs from this one in that here the focus is on the line of Joseph.

[ 10 : 58 ] It begins and leads us to Joseph the husband of Mary whereas in Luke's Gospel what we find is that the genealogy terminates with Mary his mother and although there is that difference within the genealogies and there are other discrepancies that are identified by various theologians as to names that are excluded or names that are included that you wouldn't expect to have included.

essentially what we are reminded of is that Christ appears within this line of promise and it is God that has made the promise and God that is bringing to fruition that promise in the person of his son.

we read in the Psalms and in the interpretation that we have of these Psalms that we have the mystery of David's son identified as David's Lord as we have it in Psalm 2 and we have again throughout the gospel reference to the messianic title son of David being given to the Lord and he is identified as this Christ that is to be born into the world and who is to be a son of Mary.

The next thing we can note is that the place that we find given to Mary herself now I suppose many of us are guilty who preach the gospel not to spend too much time speaking about the mother of the Lord and one of the reasons for that is the inappropriate place that Mary the mother of Jesus is given within Roman Catholic theology there is within that theology a veneration that is given to her that attributes to her divinity at one level she is prayed to if you look at the various Roman

Catholic theologies you will find that when prayer is to be offered it is possible to offer prayer to Mary and Joseph and Jesus in the one breath it is as if when you are praying that trinity if you like is equally empowered to answer prayer on the part of the church the truth is that the scripture does not allow us to give Mary any other place than the place that she possesses as the mother of the Lord John Murray in his own writings speaks about the Roman Catholic doctrine he says mireolatry is untarnished idolatry worship which belongs to God alone and closely related to mireolatry is Rome's dogma of the immaculate conception that Mary the mother of our

[ 14 : 59 ] Lord was not conceived in sin like other members of Adam's progeny and strangely enough you might imagine that such a doctrine would have been in the church for centuries and yet it only became part of Roman Catholic doctrine as late as 1854 but it is no part of Roman Catholic teaching that Mary herself was not conceived in the way other beings were conceived other humans were conceived she is identified as this person who had an immaculate conception however that being said because of this negativity that surrounds her person because of the error and the false teaching that is associated with her we tend to ignore her altogether which is completely wrong we cannot and we must not fail to recognize the unique place that she has in the history of the world and in the life of the

Lord she was to be the mother of our Lord he could only have one mother and she was the one who was ordained by God to be that one in Luke the account that we have there the angel came in unto her and said hail thou that art highly favoured the Lord is with thee blessed art thou among women this is the word of the Lord concerning her there is no greater place that could be given to any woman than the place that she is given to be the mother of our Lord God and while the errorists and those who are heretic in their in their conveying of truth that is not the truth of the scripture they do her an injustice because by supposedly giving to her powers that are not her they ignore the place that the

Lord himself gives to her and that the word of God gives to her God gave her this place to occupy according to his promise she as we see in verse 22 and verse 23 all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying behold a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel which being interpreted is God with us a quotation from Isaiah chapter 7 and verse 14 Mary is the fulfillment of God's promise she occupies this place that is uniquely hers that nobody else has and never can have it doesn't make her divine it doesn't make her able to answer prayer on behalf of anyone but she had this role as the mother of her

Lord through her womb he was brought born into the world through her ministration as his mother he was raised and taught within the faith that was his faith one preacher explains it like this it was the most wonderful relationship that God could ever have asked of any woman that she should be the mother of his son and that she could bear in her body the very life of the saviour of the world and scripture occasionally brings that to our attention and we do her a disservice when we ignore it the next thing we should notice is the nobility of Joseph it is not often something that we refer to or think of verse 19 says it all

Joseph her husband being a just man and not willing to make her a public example was minded to put her away privily and the description of him there as a just man suggests to us that he loved Mary to whom he was espoused and and you can understand the inevitable disappointment and sorrow that he would feel to discover that this woman that he was espoused to was with child that she was expecting a child and that he knew that it was not his child that there was an instant experience there of sorrow and yet his response was not to declare publicly his shame or her shame and to put her away we're told very much the opposite he was not willing to make her a public example but was minded to put her away privily but we're told that the

[ 21 : 11 ] Lord intervened and that an angel came to speak to him in a dream now there's no question but when we look at the place that Joseph has that he always appears as it were in the shadows he doesn't come to her attention very much and we find ourselves often when we speak of him as the father of our Lord Jesus Christ correcting ourselves instantly because we know that biologically he was not his father but doubtless he was everything a father was after the flesh in the sense that he looked after him as his son and you can notice that the times when the angel came to speak

Mary and Joseph after Jesus was born he addressed the instructions that he had to Joseph not to Mary but to Joseph because Joseph was the head of the household and Joseph was the one who would need to act upon the instructions that was given so chapter 2 and verse 13 we read there just as an example when being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod they departed into their own country another way and when they were departed behold the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream saying arise and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt and be thou there until I bring thee word for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him and again at verse 19 when Herod was dead behold an angel of the

Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt saying arise and take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel for they are dead which saw the young child's life now what I'm saying is nothing more than emphasising this unique place that Joseph had yes he was not the father of the Lord Jesus Christ in a biological sense that was not his role Jesus was the son of God he was born of a virgin he was the product of the Holy Ghost and that in a miraculous way but that should not allow us to overlook that he had a unique place within the life of the

Saviour because in his youth he would have been raised within a Jewish environment in the home where his instruction at his father's knee at his mother's knee would have been dual and would have been very much in the order that you would expect it to follow we're not told very much about Joseph it is suspected that he died when the child was young and that we're not given that information we can speculate I suppose but that is dangerous but we need to remind ourselves that like Mary we cannot ignore the place that God gave them to God gave to them in the order of his own unfolding of his providence and in the unfolding of his purposes in bringing a saviour into the world and the final part that we have in this passage is this magnificent statement that we have in verse 21 onwards

Mary shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins we are given the reason for his birth into the world we are in one sentence meant to understand that whatever else that was in the life and experience of the Lord Jesus Christ this was why he experienced the incarnation this was why he took out nature this was why he came into the world he shall save his people from their sins and no other reason for that name many within the Jewish faith were given that name but only one person could live up to that name dr mcdonald ferrentosh spoke the following words the human nature of christ and its union to the divine is a most inaffable display of infinite power and wisdom a human nature to be in eternal union to the godhead to magnify the law to bear divine wrath to be a model of excellence to be exalted above all created nature and to be the repository of all grace mary was the mother of one such all according to the promise and the provision of god a name that we are told is above every name a name that we are encouraged to put out believing that speaks of the sweetness of the name of

[ 27 : 45 ] Jesus to the believer and when we think of why that is all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet and when we see this chapter an opening of the gospel if you like a preamble to the gospel a preparation for the gospel there are so many things that are touched on briefly that help us understand how much is involved in it that we barely give a thought to it the provision of our saviour involves so many things that may appear to us to be secondary but in reality in the intricacy of the working out of

God's provision everything comes together in such a way that Christ and God will have all the glory these words are simple words no doubt but they are words that are essential to our understanding of what the gospel brings to us and to our attention let us join together in prayer let's pray Lord our God we give thanks that you are a God who is intimately aware of the needs of this world in which we live a world that is lying in sin and that was the world into which you sent your son a world into which he came and he did so willingly the miraculous incarnation born of a woman and by the power of the

Holy Ghost so that his birth and his conception was without sin and we give thanks that his life and labors were sinless and his death was equally so although he suffered for the sins of his people we give thanks for the gospel that speaks to us of him and for the place that it should occupy in our attention we pray for your word that it might have free course to go out amongst us and we touch the hearts and minds of all who are in the world even those who are in need of succor and encouragement and enabling we pray for those of our congregation who are currently unwell and thankful for the advances that have been made that allows us to believe that that even though there is a measure of sickness attached to the covid virus that because of inoculation and the impact of it that it won't affect us so severely we we pray for those who are affected we pray for others who suffer from other illnesses or various descriptions we pray for the elderly amongst us who may be fearful more so today than they have latterly been we pray that you remember each one cleanse from every sin in

Jesus name forgiveness of sin we ask all things amen we're going to sing in conclusion from psalm 68 in gaelic psalm 68 at verse 18 Kafka by Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 33 : 24 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.