

Ensure fellowship with God through 1 John 1:9

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Matthew 1:18-19

(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.

(19) And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.

- Mary was betrothed to Joseph, and before they were able to consummate their union with the wedding ceremony that God designed for a man and a woman – she was found to be pregnant
- **In between verses 18 and 19:**
 - Mary has spent 3 months at the house of Elizabeth & Zacharias
 - They have discussed Gabriel’s announcement to Mary
 - Elizabeth and Mary have had great conversations
 - Zacharias has been silenced for his unbelief of what Gabriel communicated to him
 - There is great fellowship in that home with those who have believed God’s message
 - There is great anticipation, excitement, and hope that the promised Messiah is finally arriving
- Mary returns home and Joseph discovers that she is pregnant. This presents a huge dilemma because she is betrothed to him
- **Betrothal**
 - It is a binding, legal contract to marry
 - Not the same as modern day “engagement”
 - The couple meet and are attracted to one another
 - The “groom to be” approaches his father and the father suggests a bride price to pay
 - The “groom to be” approaches the father of the “bride to be”
 - Normally a meal is involved, with discussion between the potential groom and the father of the potential bride
 - The father attests to the potential bride’s purity
 - In the ancient world it was the father’s responsibility to protect his daughter
 - If she were violated, it was a disgrace upon him
 - The potential groom pays the father of the potential bride
 - The daughter is brought in (may have been present for some of the dinner)
 - The betrothal is effective and binding with the couple toasting with a glass of wine to “sign” the contract.
 - Once they drink the toast, the groom says “I go to prepare a place for you”
 - He leaves and prepares a honeymoon suite for her which can take 6-18 months
 - His father ensures everything is build to standard to include the furniture, etc
 - The bride waits for him to return, not knowing the day or hour
 - As he approaches, her maidens alert her that he is coming for her
 - As the groom is fetching his bride, the invited guests arrive at the reception/wedding supper located at the father of the groom’s home
 - The groom and bride arrive
- Joseph and Mary are at the point in the betrothal process where he is building a honeymoon suite for her

- Mary hears the message from Gabriel that she is going to bear a son
- Joseph finds out that she is pregnant – in verse 19 – he plans to send her away secretly

Matthew 1:19

(19) And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.

“To disgrace her”:

δειγματιζω

DEIGMATIZO – to make an example of [publicly disgrace her]

- Deuteronomy Chapter 22 provides the legal procedure that governs Joseph’s situation
- Background on betrothal

Deuteronomy 22:13-21

(13) "If any man takes a wife and goes in to her and then turns against her,

- When you have “taken a wife” – is when you have entered into betrothal at the wine toasting
- *goes in to her* – God’s wedding ceremony – consummating the wedding with sexual intercourse
- *turns against her* - after the marriage has been consummated with sex

(14) and charges her with shameful deeds and publicly defames her, and says, 'I took this woman, but when I came near her, I did not find her a virgin,'

- The man is charging that the woman is not a virgin
- The Father of the bride is disgraced – its his job to protect his daughter’s integrity

(15) then the girl's father and her mother shall take and bring out the evidence of the girl's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate.

- A fine linen cloth was used as evidence of a bride’s virginity.
- This cloth was placed under the two becoming one flesh
- The evidence of her virginity would stain the linen garment
- She would then give the cloth to her Father
- It was kept as a testament to her purity, and her Father’s integrity
- “*at the city at the gate*” – where all legal proceedings occurred

(16) "The girl's father shall say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man for a wife, but he turned against her;

(17) and behold, he has charged her with shameful deeds, saying, "I did not find your daughter a virgin." ***But this is the evidence of my daughter's virginity.*** And they shall spread the garment before the elders of the city.

- The evidence negates the claim, and the bride is cleared of the charges

(18) "So the elders of that city shall take the man and chastise him,

(19) and they shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give it to the girl's father, because he publicly defamed a virgin of Israel. And she shall remain his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days.

(20) "***But if this charge is true***, that the girl was not found a virgin,

(21) then they shall bring out the girl to the doorway of her father's house, and the men of her city shall **stone her to death** because she has committed an act of folly in Israel by playing the harlot in her father's house; thus you shall purge the evil from among you.

Matthew 1:18-19

(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.

(19) And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.

- In between verses 18 and 19, Joseph discovers that Mary is pregnant before they consummate the marriage
- Joseph's dilemma: Mary's breaking of the betrothal contract
- Punishable by stoning to death because it was considered adultery
- *"And Joseph her husband"* – literally "her man"
- **"Planned"** aorist passive indicative of BOULOMAI

βούλομαι

BOULOMAI – *to desire*

- Joseph desired to send her away secretly
- It is probable that Mary told Joseph what had happened – how else would Joseph have known except by Mary communicating Gabriel's message to her.
 - Joseph was afraid – he knew Mary was not faithless – he believed her, and he did not know what to do

Matthew 1:20-21

(20) 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 the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

- *"When he had considered this"* – his course of action to send Mary away secretly
- The angel's message to Joseph in a dream confirms everything Mary would have told Joseph

(21) "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

- Mary and Gabriel told Joseph confirmatory information
 - That His name would be Jesus
 - That she had conceived by means of the Holy Spirit
 - Mary would have told Joseph *when she was not even "showing"*
 - A demonstration of her great faith in God to control circumstances and protect her and her unborn child.
 - God confirms Mary's story to Joseph through **an angel of the Lord . . . in a dream**

POD: God ***always*** takes care of the believer who walks by faith and is doing the will of God.

Matthew 1:22-25

(22) Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

- A reference to the prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 7:14

(14) "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.

- Isaiah's prophecy is a reference to Mary and her Son (Jesus Christ), who would live *hundreds of years later*
- A seed verses "The Seed" (a prophecy can unfold throughout history)

(23) "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US."

- **"Virgin"** – A young woman of marriageable age who is a virgin
 - παρθένος
 - PARTHENOS

(24) And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife,

- He did not consummate the marriage
- He did not send her away secretly
- He was a righteous man with integrity, doing the Will of God

(25) but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.

- Joseph kept Mary a virgin for a minimum of 40 days after the birth of Christ as per the Law.
- He was a great man with integrity who was malleable to the will of God!

Luke 2:1-5

(1) Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth.

- ***all the inhabited earth*** (Roman Empire)

οἰκουμένη

OIKOUMENE

(2) This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

(3) And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city.

- This places the time at 4 B.C.
- The purpose of the census was to levy a property tax on the Jews
- Each to return to his own city to verify property rights with a genealogical confirmation

(4) Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David,

(5) in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged (*betrothed*) to him, and was with child.

- Mary and Joseph both are descendants of David
- The Lord is *providently directing their circumstances*
- Mary was with child

Micah 5:1-2

(1) "Now muster yourselves in troops, daughter of troops; They have laid siege against us; With a rod they will smite the judge of Israel on the cheek.

(2) "But as for you, Bethlehem *Ephrathah* (ancient name for Bethlehem) , Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His *goings forth* are from long ago, From the days of eternity."

- **"Goings forth"**

מוצאה

- MOTSAAH - *the place from which one deploys an Army*
 - CP (Command Post), or HQ (Headquarters) *in Eternity*
 - Jesus Christ deployed from the MOTSAAH – the days of eternity – the presence of God
 - Gabriel deployed from the MOTSAAH - the presence of God

Example of MOTSAAH from Daniel 9:1-23

(1) In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans--

(2) in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

(3) So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.

- Daniel prays about the problem
- Daniel 9:4-19 is Daniel's prayer and building a case for God to answer

(20) Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God,

(21) while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering.

- "Gabriel" is the *archangel Gabriel*
- Gabriel interrupted Daniel's prayer
 - Sometimes your prayers are answered before you finish!

(22) He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now *come forth* to give you insight with understanding.

(23) "At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.

- Gabriel is telling Daniel
- "At the beginning of your supplication the command was issued"
 - The command was issued to tell Daniel that his prayer had been heard and answered

- Gabriel's MOTSAAH is the presence of God
- When the second person of the Trinity or one of His angels deploy – they crack the barrier from eternity into time

Micah 5:1-5a

(1) "Now muster yourselves in troops, daughter of troops; They have laid siege against us; With a rod they will smite the judge of Israel on the cheek.

(2) "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His **goings forth** are from long ago, From the days of eternity."

- Jesus Christ deployed from the **MOTSAAH** – the days of eternity – **the presence of God, the eternal headquarters of God**
 - When He destroyed the 185,000 Assyrians
 - When He appeared in the Old Testament
- Gabriel deployed from the MOTSAAH - the presence of God

(3) Therefore He will give them up until the time When she who is in labor has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brethren Will return to the sons of Israel.

- *"When she who is in labor has borne a child" (i.e. - Mary)*
- *"Then the remainder of His brethren" (i.e. – the Jew)*

(4) And He will arise and shepherd His flock In the strength of the LORD, In the majesty of the name of the LORD His God. And they will remain, Because at that time He will be great To the ends of the earth.

- And they will remain – meaning *"in the land"*
- Messiah was going to **go forth from Bethlehem** – meaning *"they knew it"*
- Herod knew that Messiah was going to go forth from Bethlehem (Matt 2:6)

(5a) This One will be our peace.

- Where was Messiah going to go forth from? Bethlehem.

Matthew 2:4-8

(4) Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

(5) They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet:

(6) 'AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH, ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG THE LEADERS OF JUDAH; FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME FORTH A RULER WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.'"

(7) Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared.

(8) And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him."

- The people knew that the Messiah would go forth from Bethlehem at the time of His birth (John 7:42)

John 7:40-42

(40) Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, "This certainly is the Prophet."

(41) Others were saying, "This is the Christ." Still others were saying, "Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He?"

(42) "Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"

- Approximately 750 years before Messiah comes into the world by supernatural conception and virgin birth, the prophet Micah prophesized that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem
- And a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that a census be taken
- Joseph and Mary are forced by circumstances to travel to Bethlehem and register for the census
- This is a testimony to the sovereignty and omnipotence of God

POD: The Church Age Believer must discern with metabolized Bible Doctrine, prayer, and the mentorship of God the Holy Spirit whether the circumstances in life are God's providential hand to direct him in God's geographical will.

- Prayer – you must seek the Lord's will, and ask for wisdom
- The mentorship of God the Holy Spirit – with emphasis on the leading and bearing witness ministries

James 1:5

(5) But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

For Example:

"I just lost my job – should I move?" , "I'm getting a transfer."

"But I don't want to separate from my family"

- Abraham did!

A hurricane

A decree similar to the one that moved Mary and Joseph

- Micah's prophecy from 750 years earlier was fulfilled

A great fish as with Jonah

גָּדוֹל

דָּג

GADOL - great

DAG - a fish

In our case - how does a person know or discern?

- Bible Doctrine in your stream of consciousness, they have prayed about it, and are guided by the mentorship of God the Holy Spirit.
- We must discern in the privacy of *our own* priesthood – no one can do this for you.
- Unless we willing souls, God will not reveal His discernable will to us
- Even when He does, it takes ***faith***
 - *Faith bridges the gap between knowing and doing the will of God*

Luke 2:6

(6) While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth.

All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.