



Matthew Chapter 1:18-25 - Answers

Joseph

Jesus has many names. In the Old Testament there are many, many verses which describe our Lord Jesus, with varied and sometimes mysterious names. The people who waited for the coming of their Savior would have known so much about Him just from the names which preceded Him.

For instance, just a few:

- Son
- Wonderful
- Counselor
- Mighty God
- Everlasting Father
- Prince of Peace
- (all the above came from just one verse in Isaiah! Isaiah 9:6)*
- Maker
- Lord of hosts
- Redeemer
- Holy One of Israel
- God of the whole earth
- (all of these came from Isaiah 54:5)*
- I Am (Exodus 3:14) (John 8:24)

1. (:18) Why did the Lord make sure Matthew included the words “before they came together” in this verse? How significant is this detail in the salvation of people’s souls?

It had to be crystal clear that Jesus was not the son of Joseph. If He had been the son of Joseph He could not be the Son of God. There cannot be two actual fathers, right? If He was the son of Joseph He would not have been able to live a perfect, sinless life. If He was the son of Joseph He would not have been able to raise Himself from the dead. If He was the son of Joseph you and I would not be trusting in Him for our salvation. Instead, we would still be waiting for the Savior of the world.



2. (:18) Had any other baby in history been fathered by the Holy Spirit (God Himself)?

No. This birth was totally unique. It had never happened before, and it would never happen again.

3. What name of Jesus proves this fact?

Son of God. The Only Begotten Son of God.

Now, you might ask, aren't we (believers in Jesus) also called "sons of God"? Isn't it said in Romans 8:15-17 that we are children of God, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus?

So are we "sons of God" the same way Jesus is?

Yes, in that we, as believers, are part of the family of God.

But, no, in the sense that we were not physically fathered by God. We are not equal to Jesus, but we are related to Him. No person anywhere at any time has ever been equal to Jesus, nor ever will be. We have been adopted into His family through faith in Him, but we are not the same as Him.

Jesus is God. We do not become exactly like Jesus, in other words, become "Gods" when we believe in Jesus.

4. (:19) What was Joseph's first thought as he tried to figure out what to do about Mary's out-of-wedlock pregnancy?

His first thought was actually a kind, loving thought. He did not want to publicly disgrace her, even though he had the right to do that. If she had been unfaithful to him with another man (after all, that did happen in those times just like it does now) then he could have shouted it to the housetops and totally humiliated her and caused her to be shunned by her whole community.

But Joseph didn't want to do that. He assumed that Mary had been unfaithful. He was no doubt deeply hurt and confused by what he thought her actions had been. He knew he didn't want to marry her after learning of her immorality – or what he thought was immorality. He wouldn't marry an impure woman. But he didn't want to destroy her. He loved her. He just figured he'd have to put her away – or send her away to have this baby. He'd cover it over, protect her as much as he could, and then get on with his life, alone.



5. (:20-21) What changed Joseph's mind?

An angel changed his mind. There's just something about an angel appearing with a message from God that totally gets your attention, right?

We don't learn the angel's name here, so we don't know if this was Gabriel again. But no matter who the angel was, there was apparently no doubt in Joseph's mind that this was an angel from God, and that the message was true.

The angel told Joseph he could believe what Mary had said. The baby had been fathered by God Himself, the Holy Spirit.

The baby was a boy. And when this baby boy would be born, Joseph was to give him the name, "Jesus". This baby was going to save His people from their sins.

That was enough for Joseph. He knew then that Mary had spoken the truth, and that the actual long-awaited Messiah was on the way – being carried safely within the womb of his sweet little wife-to be, Mary.

6. What other proof did Joseph have that Mary didn't do anything wrong?

If hearing the true story of the baby's conception from an angel was not enough, the angel also helps Joseph along by quoting to him the secret password: *Isaiah 7:14*. The Word of God, spoken through Isaiah 500 years previously, sealed the deal in Joseph's mind and heart.

7. (:20) Why does the angel call him "Joseph, son of David"?

Because Joseph was a direct descendant of King David. Genealogical records were meticulously kept in the temple in Jerusalem just for this very reason. The Old Testament scholars knew that a Messiah/King would be coming and that King would be a direct descendant of King David. All along they had kept records of who "begat" who so that when the Messiah appeared it could be proved He was who He said He was. They wanted to be sure there were no fakes. They wanted to recognize their Savior when He came.

8. Do you think the fact that Joseph knew he was a "son of David" helped him in any way to accept the angel's words?

My guess is that it helped a great deal. This would take some thinking it through, but surely Joseph figured out that although the baby was not going to be his own physical son, the baby would still be legally able to claim all the privileges of the



fact that Joseph was a son of David. The baby would be, so to speak, adopted by Joseph, and therefore have a position in the line of King David.

But Joseph knew something else, too. He knew that Mary was also of the line of David. He knew that the physical mother of the baby/Savior was qualified to pass on the physical right to inherit the throne of David.

So, through both Joseph and Mary, legally and physically, Jesus was, indeed the son of David.

9. (:21) Just like Zechariah, Joseph was directly given a name for the child. What was the name to be?

Jesus.

10. Why “Jesus”? What does “Jesus” mean?

The name means “Savior”. It was not a unique name, though, in that time. In fact, it is not a unique name in our time, either. It was a common name then, and is a fairly common name now.

So Jesus was to be given a common name, almost hidden amongst his culture because it was so common.

But it meant “Savior”. And Savior He was.

Why such a common name? Why such a common Mom? Why such a common Dad? Why such a common place to grow up? (Nazareth)

I think it was because Jesus needed to grow up and live to about 30 years old before He became famous in the world. His name and his parentage gave him the opportunity to live a private life, unknown and hardly even suspected by the world of who He really was until it was time.

11. (:22-23) What prophet spoke these words?

Isaiah.

12. Why does the prophecy say His name would be “Immanuel”, but the angel told Joseph to name Him “Jesus”?

Remember how many names Jesus had even before He was born? Immanuel was one of them. But “Jesus” was His given name. It was His personal name. When Jesus was a toddler, Mary didn’t cry out, “Immanuel, come in for dinner!”.



Or..."Prince of Peace, time to do your chores!" And when Joseph taught him how to be a carpenter, he didn't say, "Almighty God, put these two pieces of wood together like this."

They called Him Jesus.

13. (:24) Had Joseph been sleeping all this time the angel was speaking to him?

Yes, it looks like it, doesn't it?

14. (:25) What did Joseph do as a result of this visit from the angel? What does that prove to us?

Joseph "did as the angel of the Lord commanded him". He went to Mary and said, "Mary, I'm so sorry I didn't believe you! You were right. This baby you are carrying is going to save the world from sin. I'm not sure what all this means, but I do know that we will marry and I will protect you and our son the best I can."

And when the baby was born, Joseph told the world His name was Jesus.

What does that show us? Joseph was a man of faith. He believed what God had said, and acted on it.

If I could just ask God a question...



Could there be another Savior besides Jesus?

Good question. Let's look at the facts: The Savior promised by God all through the Old Testament was going to be His Son. "You are my Son, today I have begotten You." (Psalm 2:7) . So what we're asking is: could God have fathered more than one Son?

We know the answer to this question from one simple phrase: Jesus is called the "*only begotten Son of God*". (*John 1:14*) There are no other begotten sons of God. Jesus is and always will be the only Son who was physically fathered by God.



One Savior/Messiah/Son of God was promised all through the Old Testament. Only One.

If there had been or could be other begotten Sons of God, then there would be many Saviors. But there was only One.

What are the implications of this, then?

- That means Jesus is the only way to salvation. There is no salvation in any other person, or in any other name. *John 14:6*, Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me."*
- And it means if anyone else ever comes along saying they are the Savior of the world, run very fast in the other direction. *"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we may be saved."* *Acts 4:12*