

8.12.24 am Good news for Jacob and Joseph

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Date: 08 December 2024

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good morning, a warm welcome to the service this morning and a special welcome to those who are visiting with us or any who might be with us for the first time today.

It's especially good to see new faces and familiar faces who are coming back home. So a warm welcome. There's tea and there's coffee at the end of the service. If you're able to stay behind, please do so.

So the intimations, the notices have been on the screen before the service and you'll have the email. If you don't have the email, then speak to Gordon and he can sort you out for that. A couple of notices just to draw attention to. One is to remind you that the community lunch is on tomorrow. It's usually on on a different date, but we've got it on tomorrow, this month, and that's 12 till 2. And I think it's a festive, well it certainly looks like a festive community lunch.

I'm not sure there's out roast turkey and stuffing sandwiches. I'm not too sure. People are shaking their heads, but yeah, who knows, the day's young. Community lunch tomorrow, 12 till 2, and be encouraged to come along to that.

[1 : 10] The services next Sunday, as usual in terms of the times, 11 and 6. Just to note that next Sunday evening, as we did last year also, we're going to have a communion service, an evening communion service, which I'll lead myself, God willing.

So take note of that. Be encouraged to come along to that. And for any who may know the Lord and trust the Lord, but haven't yet come forward and professed faith and come to the table, be encouraged to come forward.

Remember, it's something that the Lord Jesus tells us to do. He says, if you are believing in him that you are to do this, remember him by taking the bread and taking the wine.

And you've got a note also of the services over the festive period. So take note of that. Be encouraged to ask people to come out to these services when maybe other times of the year they're less willing to come.

But there's opportunity to ask folk to come to church at this time of year who will remember the birth of Jesus Christ. Let's sing now to God's praise.

[2 : 24] And we will worship God singing from Mission Praise 493. The words of all the praises are on the screen. And this is a hymn which looks forward to the coming of the Messiah, the coming of Jesus.

O come, O come, Emmanuel. And in a moment we'll stand to sing to God's praise. O come, O come, Emmanuel.

O come, Emmanuel.

Emmanuel. Emmanuel. Emmanuel. Emmanuel.!

O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on skylight's tide.

[4 : 10] In ancient times didst give the Lord, in proud and majesty and awe.

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou rod of death, see free, thine own from Satan's tyranny.

From depths of hell thy people stay, and give them victory, O the king.

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

[5 : 34] O come, thou Christ, be calm and cheer, as spirits by thine advent here.

Dispare the gloomy clouds of night, and despise shadows good to fight.

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou lucky, O David, come, and open wide, O heaven behold.

O come, thou may, O Israel, may save the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.

[6 : 59] Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Let's unite our hearts in prayer together. Let's pray. Let's pray.

You are Emmanuel, the God who was promised through the generations ever since man fell into sin.

There was that promise of one who would come. And he would come to give people, his people, freedom from sin. Freedom from the penalty that sin carries, which is death.

We thank you that there was the promise of one who would come to chase away the darkness and bring light and bring life into our experience.

[8 : 36] We thank you for the promise of one who would come to turn away the wrath of God and bring to us grace and mercy.

One who would be called the Prince of Peace. One who would show to us the, in the most powerful way possible, the character and the nature of God.

And one who would make it possible for us to be saved. To experience the sweet taste of salvation and eternal life in this world.

A life that Jesus described as a life in abundance. And then the sure and certain hope of life in fullness.

Life eternal. When we go from this world. When we go from this world. We thank you that all that is promised to those who believe in Jesus. All that is promised to those who are able to say that Jesus is their Savior and their Lord.

[9 : 50] All that is promised to those who confess their sin. And ask Jesus to be Lord of their lives. And so we pray even at the beginning of this service.

That we would be people of faith. That we would be sitting here this morning. Not just because it's part of our routine.

And not just because there's an expectation and pressure from others that we would come into this place. But we pray that we would come here with that expectation that we will meet with God.

That as we draw near to you. You will draw near to us. And we pray that on the Lord's day. That we would be in the spirit of worship. And we pray that every one of us here.

May be able to say that the Lord Jesus is our Savior and our Lord. Pray for anyone who is even at this time.

[10 : 54] Although in the room. Outside of Christ perhaps. In the habit of coming to church. But never yet having cried out. Lord have mercy upon me a sinner.

We thank you that a prayer like that. Is a prayer that brings salvation to our souls. And so we pray that every one of us. I would say even in these moments.

Lord take away my sin. Be my Savior. Be the one who will rule over my life. And we thank you that we have the promise in your word.

That everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved. So we ask that we would know that salvation. And for any who are at a distance from you.

Who perhaps are saved. But who have drifted from you. And no longer have the joy of salvation.

We pray that you would draw each one back. That our hearts would rejoice.

[11 : 52] In the reality of Emmanuel. God with us. We pray for this community. And especially over this season. As we gather for special services.

As the children will meet in clubs and in school. As the familiar story of Christmas is retold. We pray that you would open hearts.

And that we would as a community. Be drawn to the Lord Jesus. That we would understand. That he is God. God the Son. God who came to be with us.

God who lived for us. That perfect sinless life that we cannot live. God who died for us in our place. To pay the penalty of our sin.

And God who rose from the dead. And who promises resurrection life to all who believe. We thank you for the hope of the gospel. And we pray that we would know that.

[12 : 48] And that we would tell others. Of the hope that is offered to them. As well as to us. We pray Lord for your help. As we navigate our way through life.

We are conscious as the hymn says. There are many dangers, toils and snares. We pray for those who are struggling at this time. That you would help them. For those who find this season a battle.

Those who struggle with addictions especially. And we ask Lord that you would give them strength. And that you would help them as they face temptations.

Which are peculiar to this season. Help them to resist. To seek strength from you. We thank you that you promise to give strength to all who ask.

We pray for those who are sick. Some even. And we can think of who may be coming towards the end of life in this world. And we ask that you would be near to them. That you would help them.

[13:47] That you would wear it's your will. Lay your hand of healing upon them. And where at a time when this world is coming towards an end. That they would know comfort and peace.

And the presence of God with them. We thank you that you are the one who promised. To be with us even in death's dark veil. You are the one who promises to take us through death's dark veil. Into life everlasting. When we are in Christ. So we pray for those who are sick. For those who are struggling. For those who are anxious. Who feel the pressure of this season.

With the commitments within family. And the tension sometimes that can be within the wider family.

We pray for your peace to be upon them. We pray for those who are grieving.

We think of those who have lost loved ones. In past days and weeks. And we bring them to you once more. We pray for Joyce. For Stuart. We pray for Emily.

[14:47] And for Anna. And for Annie. And Kylus. We pray for Alice Reid this morning. Having lost her husband. And we pray for that family. And we commit them to you.

And ask that all those who are grieving. For loved ones lost. In recent days. And distant years. Would know the comfort of God the Holy Spirit.

And we pray for a world that is broken. And especially as we see Syria. This morning. And as we see the chaos. And the unrest. Against the risk of even more danger in the future.

We commit that land to you. That land where there was so much of the gospel light. In past days and years. We ask Lord Jesus.

That your peace would be brought to bear on that place. And across all of the Middle East. Such a troubled place. We ask that you would open eyes.

[15:44] To see Jesus. The Prince of Peace. So hear our prayers. And lead us and guide us. As we seek to worship you. Cleanse us from sin. We confess that we are sinners.

The good that we want to do. So often we do not do. The evil we do not want to do. We find ourselves over and over again. Seeking forgiveness for. Cleanse us from our sin.

Empty us of all that is of self. Fill us with the Holy Spirit. And help us to worship you in spirit. And in truth. And we pray all this in Jesus name. And for Jesus sake.

Amen. Boys and girls. Would you like to come out please?NINGNINGNINGNING!

Everyone today? All good today? Good stuff. Tell me what's coming. We're getting close to something. What is coming? Christmas, Emily. Christmas is coming, so you've got your red Christmas jumper on.

[16:54] Fraser's got us the reindeers on his jumper. There's a few more Christmas jumpers there at the back as well. So we're reminded of the fact that Christmas is coming.

Tell me some of the things that you do and you expect to see and get at Christmas. Lots of different things. I'm looking for one thing, but tell me some of the things that are with us at Christmas that we don't have at other times of the year.

I'm not going to ask you yet, Michael, because you'll answer them. You'll get it right first time, every time. Benjamin. You were just trying to pull your brother's hand down, weren't you?

Finlay? Santa comes. Yes? Yeah? You look forward to Santa, parties. All the different times.

What else? What other things do you see at Christmas? Christmas puddings? Mince pies? Big fat turkeys?

[17:59] What else? What do you expect to get and give at Christmas time? Pardon? Presents.

And? Cards. I think I got the first Christmas card of the year yesterday.

I was wondering. I know I get less popular every year, but I was wondering if any ones were ever going to come. And so I think I got the first Christmas card of the year yesterday.

And so I presume it's a Christmas card. Here it is here. So over the Christmas season, we get Christmas cards. And some of us send Christmas cards as well.

I think we're sending less cards, and so we're getting less cards. But this is something that we do at the Christmas season, isn't it? We send cards to the people that we love, and we get cards as well from different people.

[19:03] Special messages sometimes are in the cards. Sometimes the cards just say, To whoever, from whoever. And sometimes they have a special message in them.

This card, Mary will be annoyed at me. She likes to check the cards, the writing, and guess the card before we open it. But this one's from my uncle, Lachie Annetta.

And it's got a special message. Wonderful counselor, mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Who's that message about? It's about Jesus, isn't it?

Here's a question. Here's a question, okay? Has God ever sent us a card? No.

We get messages at Christmas. Has God ever sent us a card or a message? He sent us better than a card, hasn't he?

[20 : 06] Because a card, we like getting cards, but there's only a very short message on a card. Where will we find a bigger, more amazing message from God?

Fraser? A book? What book? The Bible. And so when we open the Bible, we have a message, a love message.

I don't know if you send love messages to your boyfriend, Emily. Love letters. Or to your girlfriend, Fraser.

I don't know if we send messages, but this is a message. When you open this book, remember, this is a message. A huge, big message from the God who loves us.

And in this book, we find the Christmas story. And in the Christmas story, we read about messengers that come from heaven with messages from God.

[21 : 09] What are they called? Angels. And we can't really imagine what they look like. I don't think angels had frilly dresses and wee wings.

I think angels were big strapping guys. That's why they always had to say to the people that they had messages for, don't be scared. Listen.

So God, he sent us a huge, big love message in the Bible. In the Christmas story, he sent messengers from heaven. And at lots of times, he sent messengers from heaven called angels. But even better than that, who did he send? Pardon? Pardon?

Pardon? He sent Jesus. We often come back to that verse in John 3, 16, which says, for God so loved the world that he gave, that he sent, not just a card, and not just the Bible, and not just angels, but he sent his only son.

[22 : 28] And he was born into this world, which is what we remember at Christmas. And he lived for us, and he died for us, didn't he?

On the cross. And he rose from the dead. And he promises that if we believe in him, what do we have? We have everlasting life, Michael.

It's an amazing message, Christmas. And it takes us from the cradle to the cross, where Jesus died to show us how much he loved us.

Will we pray? Let's close our eyes. Let's close our eyes, and let's put our hands together, and let's talk to God. Heavenly Father, we thank you that you love us.

We thank you that you've sent us the Bible, this amazing book, this book that the Holy Spirit, God the Holy Spirit, used men and different people at different times to write, a message that was from God.

[23 : 34] And we thank you especially for the Christmas story that we read that God the Son, Jesus, was born into this world. And we thank you that he came into this world because he loved us, and he lived, and he died to take away our sin.

And we thank you that we are promised that if we believe in him, we have life that's everlasting. So help us to believe, and thank you for your great love for us.

And we pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to sing again now, Mission Praise 503. Mission Praise 503, O Little Town of Bethlehem.

! A little town of Bethlehem, as still we see you lie, Above your deep and dream bested, the silent stars go by.

Yet in your dark streets shining, its everlasting light.

[25 : 05] The hopes and fears of all the years shine in you tonight.

For Christ is born of heavy and gathered all above.

While mortals sweep, the angels keep their watch of wandering love.

O Lord, it's ours together, proclaim the holy birth.

And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

[26 : 08] Silently, as silently, the wondrous gift is given.

So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His hand.

No year may He in His coming, but in this world of sin.
There be straws, where we see them still, the dear Christ enters Him.
O Holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray.
[27 : 08] Cast the dust in and enter in, be warm in us today.

We hear the Christmas angels, the great blood-tiding spell.
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.
O come to us, aspire to be warm in us, aspire to be warm in us, aspire to be warm in us, aspire to be warm in us, aspire to be warm in us, aspire to be warm in us, aspire to be warm in us, aspire to be warm in us, aspire to be warm in us, And if you could turn please in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 1.

Matthew chapter 1 and we'll read from verse 1 of the chapter.
[28 : 47] The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.
Abraham was the father of Isaac and Jacob the father of Isaac.

And David was the father of Boaz by Rahab. And Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth. And Obed the father of Jesse.

And Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah.
And Solomon the father of Rehoboam. And Rehoboam the father of Abijah.
And Abijah the father of Asaph. And Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat. And Jehoshaphat the father of Joram. And Joram the father of Uzziah. And Uzziah the father of Jotham.
and Jotham the father of Ahaz and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh and Manasseh the father of Amos and Amos the father of Josiah and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

[30 : 20] And after the deportation to Babylon, Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel and Zerubbabel the father of Abiad and Abiad the father of Eliakim and Eliakim the father of Azor and Azor the father of Zadok and Zadok the father of Achim and Achim the father of Eliud and Eliud the father of Eleazar and Eleazar the father of Mathan and Mathan the father of Jacob and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were 14 generations and from David to the deportation to Babylon, 14 generations and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ, 14 generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.
And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord has spoken by the prophet.

[32 : 02] Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us. When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.

He took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son, and he called his name Jesus.
Amen.

And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We'll sing again now to God's praise. We'll sing from Psalm 98. Psalm 98, the first two verses of the Psalm.

We'll sing a new song to the Lord, for wonders he hath done, his right hand and his holy arm, and victory hath won. The Lord God, his salvation, hath caused to be known, his justice in the heathen sight, he openly hath shown.

These two verses of Psalm 98, we sing these verses in Gaelic, and we remain seated to sing in Gaelic, to God's praise. NINGNINGNINGNING Thank you.

[34 : 05] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[36 : 35] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[40 : 05] Thank you. Matthew chapter 1.

Thank you.

And for Joseph.

This evening. He's going to look at good news. We're going to look at good news for Mary. And for Mary. Next Sunday. We will look at good news.

The good news for good news for good news for good news. Amen. And for good news. Good news. outcasts. And that gives us an overview just of where we're going over the next couple of weeks.

[43 : 05] We want to focus in on this word gospel on the good news. And first of all good news for Jacob. So just two points this morning. Good news for Jacob that's the first 17 verses and then good news for Joseph which takes us from verse 18 to verse 25. So first of all good news for Jacob.

If you look at verse 1 of Matthew 1 it says there the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David the son of Abraham. And it's the beginning of this huge long list of names.

Abraham was the father of Isaac and Isaac the father of Jacob. And I want to pause there and underline that word Jacob. Isaac was the father of Jacob. Now if we were deciding how to begin a good news story. If we were planning out how we would begin the greatest good news story that was ever told in the history of time and could never be topped. If we were trying to work out the plan for how we would begin this amazing story. We probably wouldn't start like this.

We probably wouldn't start with a long list of names because it just seems so dry to us.

But for Jacob this long list of names was good news. Now in the evenings for those who attend here in the evenings we've been going through the book of Genesis and we've been getting to know Abraham and then Isaac and we've been recently getting to know Jacob and we've reached Genesis chapter 28 and maybe you could just take a finger and go back to Genesis chapter 28 and we'll be we'll be glancing a little back and a little forward over the course of the next few minutes.

[45 : 26] Am I a bit loud? I'm hearing myself bouncing back. Maybe turn me down just a little. Don't turn me off. Just turn me down a wee bit please.

So we've got in our studies in Genesis the Genesis 28 and there we see Jacob this character Jacob and God meets with him in this powerful way in a dream and in that dream in that vision God makes a promise to Jacob and that promise that Jacob received had passed down from Abraham his grandfather to Isaac his father and now it's given to Jacob. It passes down to Jacob and God promises Jacob in that chapter Genesis 28. He promises Jacob people, a family, a vast family, a vast family, a vast family, he's on his own but he's promised this this line of people.

He's promised peace, the blessing of God upon him and he's promised the presence of God. God promises Jacob that I will be with you and I won't leave you and it's a huge promise but at the time that it was given to Jacob it all looks so unlikely. Sometimes we get an email or we get a thing through the door and it's an offer, it's a promise and when we read it and we're amazed by it but we're thinking it's too good to be true, this can't possibly be real. And this promise that God gave to Jacob, it was immense, it was powerful, it was amazing. But at the time he received it, it just seemed so unlikely.

And yet as we move from Genesis 28 through to Matthew chapter 1, what we see, what we will see in the next few minutes, is that every part of God's promise to Jacob came true.

So three things, you've got them on the screen there. The promise of people. God promised Jacob a huge family.

[47 : 55] So if you're in Genesis chapter 28, scan down to verse 14 and we hear God's promise to Jacob and God says to Jacob, your offspring, your people shall be like the dust of the earth and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south.

So this huge promise that is given to Jacob of people, of a family and yet at this point, how many people were in Jacob's family?

None. At the point that Jacob receives this promise, not only does he not have a son or a daughter, he doesn't even have a wife.

And we can imagine Jacob thinking, this is an amazing promise, but can I really trust the promise of God?

And yet as we move from Genesis 28 to Matthew chapter 1, what do we read in verses 1 to verse 17? Well, we read a long list of names.

[49 : 17] So what is this list? Because we might open up Matthew's gospel, which so many people do when they start reading their Bible, they pick up a Gideon's Bible and start with Matthew 1 and they're thinking, what on earth is this?

What is this list? Well, it's a family line. So whose family line is this? It's the family line of Jacob. These names are the offspring of Jacob. And so that tells us that God's promise to Jacob, the promise of people, a long line, a vast array of people, the promise of a family was a promise that came true.

So these names that we find hard to read, these names that we don't really maybe have a huge interest in, I saw a few heads starting to drop off and we started to go through the names.

One or two still drop off. These names that we may not have a huge interest in have a huge impact for.

[50 : 46] They were of huge interest to Jacob. These names were good news for Jacob. And these names are good news for us also.

Because as we so often sing in Psalm 46, the God of Jacob, he is our God. He is our refuge. And Jacob is able to tell us that his God and our God, he always keeps his promises.

his word is trustworthy. J.C. Ryle says, learn from this list of names that God always keeps his word.

this God is trustworthy. So there's the promise of people that's given to Jacob and we see that promise fulfilled in Matthew chapter 1.

The second thing is there's a promise of peace. There's a promise of peace. Or to use the words of Matthew of Genesis 28, the promise of blessing.

[52 : 03] God's blessing, God's peace is given to Jacob. Verse 14 of Genesis 28, God says to Jacob, in you and in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

blessed. So the promise of peace, the promise of blessing is given to Jacob.

Now, sometimes when we pick up our phones and we're scrolling through Facebook or some kind of social media, you'll from time to time quite often see people who post something with the prefix! feeling blessed. You know, sometimes have people who say feeling tired, feeling exhausted, feeling cheesed off, feeling happy.

Sometimes people will put a post up and it says feeling blessed and then you'll have a picture that comes underneath it with big smiles and families with Christmas jumpers on and the table is spread and everybody looks amazing and everyone's smiling.

[53 : 13] It's just a perfect day. Feeling blessed. blessed. And God has given Jacob the promise of blessing. Immense blessing.

So let's think what did Jacob's family look like at the time this promise was made? We've been looking forward to the family that he didn't have but he was promised.

If we take a moment now and we look back at the family that Jacob had come through, what does his family look like at the time this promise of blessing was made?

Well, his family is shattered. His family is broken. Jacob, at the time he receives this promise, he is separated from the mother that he loved, the mother that loved Terman was so kind to.

He's separated from her. He's never going to see her again in this world. And his father can't cope with him.

[54 : 23] He's got virtually no relationship with his father. And his brother wants him dead. Which is why he's had to flee the family home.

So that's the situation at this time that Jacob receives this promise of great blessing. And where is Jacob in terms of geography position when he receives this promise?

Is he staying at the Ritz Hotel? Is he living in luxury? Well, no, he's in the middle of nowhere. And he's sleeping rough.

He's homeless. He's homeless. So he probably didn't feel that blessed. He probably didn't feel that peaceful at the time that God made this promise.

But God's promise was reliable. And if we fast forward through the years and through the generations, we get all the way from Jacob to Jesus.

[55 : 35] same line. It goes all the way from Jacob through to Jesus, the child who was born. And who was Jesus? Well, Isaiah tells us in Isaiah chapter 9 who Jesus was and is.

Isaiah chapter 9 verse 6 looks forward to the birth of Jesus. for to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Peace. So the peace that Jacob at this point did not have, the peace that Jacob longed for, the blessing that his soul thirsted for, the blessing, the peace that God promised him, it was and it still is found in the family line of Jacob.

it's found in Jesus, who verse 16 was born, and who is called Christ.

What does Christ mean? It means promised one. And so the birth of Jesus, it was good news for Jacob, and it's good news for us.

[57 : 18] Because if you and I want peace with God, if you and I want eternal peace, if we want to know the blessing of sins forgiven, if we want to know the peace of having eternal life, a place prepared in heaven, it's found only in Jesus, and coming to Jesus, and believing in Jesus.

So there's a promise of people to Jacob. Matthew 1 tells us that promise was fulfilled. There's the promise of peace to Jacob. Matthew 1 tells us that promise was fulfilled.

fulfilled. And the last thing here is there's the promise of the presence of God with Jacob. And to the people, the family line of Jacob, God says to Jacob in Genesis 28 and verse 15, behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.

So that's God's promise. He says, I am with you, I will keep you, I will not leave you. Don't fear, I am present with you, I am with your people.

That was God's promise and God's promise proved to be true as God was with Jacob, even though Jacob was a rascal of the first order. And God was with Jacob's people.

[59 : 03] We can track as we go through the generations there, the covenant faithfulness of God moving from verse 1 through to verse 17 and then if we move into verse 18 to 25, we hear the glorious fulfillment of the promise of God in the child who was born to the virgin.

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means what?

It means God with us. The presence of God, God the son with us.

So Emmanuel was good news for Jacob. Emmanuel is mind blowingly good news for us.

The all powerful God, the righteous God, the holy God who cannot look upon sin and is bound by his own justice to punish sinners.

[60 : 17] He is not against us. but he is with us. He is so with us that he sent his son into this world to live and die so that our sin could be taken away, so that we could be taken from the place of being an enemy of God to being a friend of God.

All through Emmanuel. That word Emmanuel tells us of the fact that God the son came to be with us, present with us in time so that we could be with him for eternity if we believe in Jesus.

Good news for Jacob. The promise of people, the promise of peace, the blessing of God, the promise of the presence of God, and we find it all fulfilled in Matthew chapter 1.

And secondly, and much more briefly, I want to look at this familiar story where we see good news communicated to Joseph. So if you look down at verses 18 to verse 25, Matthew, he writes the Christmas story here from the perspective of Joseph.

And if we put ourselves in the shoes of Joseph, the breaking news of the birth of Jesus at first it probably didn't feel like good news.

[62 : 16] It probably felt like anything but good news. For Joseph, the birth of Jesus, it begins with sadness, but it leads to that glorious message of salvation.

So just with these two points, let's think about these as we come towards a conclusion. Good news for Joseph starts with sadness, sadness, but it moves to salvation.

First of all, then sadness. Verses 18 and 19. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way.

When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. So think for a moment.

The danger with this is it's so familiar we don't think. Think for a moment about how this felt for Joseph.

[63 : 24] We have Luke, we know what happens. We can read on. For Joseph, think in that moment when he receives this news. It must have seemed when Joseph received this news, like everything in his world crashed in.

Everything is ruined. The girl that he loves is pregnant. And he knows that he is not the father. The wedding that he's planned is off. And now the families have to be told. the wedding invitations have to be retracted.

The hotel booking needs to be cancelled. The deposit is lost. And it's only a matter of time before the local gossips start.

And so Joseph has a new job this morning. His first job of the morning is he has to find a divorce lawyer. So that's what's going on in Joseph's life when he receives this news.

[64 : 37] So what had caused this disruption? What was behind this sadness that suddenly came into Joseph's life?

Well if we trace it all the way back the cause of all this was sin. The disruption that was caused to the life of Joseph and Mary was caused by sin.

Not their personal sin but the sin that came into the world through Adam. The sin that passed down through all the generations the sin that is with us.

See the problem of sin the problem of your sin and my sin it needed to be dealt with.

Romans 6.23 tells us that the wages of sin is death death. But remember what we're saying to the children the God who sent this book to us the God who sent this message to us he so loved the world he so loved the people that he created he wanted to save them he wanted to save us from sin and so God Father Son and Holy Spirit in a conference that we cannot grasp with our finite minds before time began God Father Son and Holy Spirit one God they agreed on a plan to save sinners where God the Son would come down to this world and he would be born to a virgin called

[66 : 44] Mary who was engaged to this young man called Joseph so we see in our mind's eye Joseph sitting at the desk looking troubled the phone book is open he's at the section for divorce lawyers and he's considering these things and he's overwhelmed at this point with sadness so let's not skim over the fact that the good news for Joseph the good news about Jesus at first it didn't feel like good news it felt like bad news the message of salvation as it came to Joseph at first it caused sadness and often that's our testimony if we're

Christians certainly it was mine I can think back to two years of sadness often in our testimony we are sad before we are happy when God the Holy Spirit begins to work in our lives what does he do he shows us our sin he shows us what sin has done and not until we see that and not until we feel that not until we understand in some measure the bad news about sin are we ready to hear and receive the good news about Jesus the Savior that's the pattern so I hope and pray I hope this doesn't sound too dark but I hope and pray that we see our sin today I hope and pray that we see that it was our sin that turned

Joseph's life upside down it was our sin that meant that Joseph went through this sadness but much more than that I hope and pray that we will see what our sin did to Jesus our sin did not just make Jesus sad our sin was the cause of the suffering of Jesus yes yes he was born into this world and yes this little bundle was laid in a cradle but over the course of time he would go from the cradle to the cross that was the plan he would go from the cradle to the cross to lay down his life so that our sin could be forgiven and our salvation secured good news for for Joseph it begins with sadness but it builds to this amazing message of salvation so think back to

Joseph in our mind's eye there he is sitting at the table finger on the section for divorce lawyers but he does the wise thing he he doesn't rush into a decision he doesn't phone a lawyer at 10 o'clock at night he waits he sleeps in it and I'm sure he was praying as he drifts off to sleep considering these things but verse 20 as he considered these things behold an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream saying Joseph son of David do not fear to take Mary as your wife for what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit she will bear a son you shall call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins all this took place to fulfill what the

Lord has spoken by the prophet behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel which means God with us when Joseph woke from sleep he did as the angel

of the Lord commanded him he took his wife but knew her not until she had given birth to a son and he called his name Jesus you know in our situation when a child is about to be born there's always lots of discussion isn't there about the name what name are we going to give this child note note that there was no discussion about the name of this baby that was to be born his name was chosen by God you shall call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins so who were his people we can go back to the beginning of

[72 : 40] Matthew 1 go back to that long list of names these are his people Ryle says some of the names we read in this catalogue remind us of shameful and sad histories his people some shameful and sad histories amongst his people we can see the name Rahab it was she she was a Canaanite prostitute his people we see the name Jacob we've been getting to know Jacob he was a schemer he was a liar he was a deceiver he was a thief he was a not so lovable rascal we see the name David he was an adulterer he was a murderer how were these people saved we might ask how can they be his people well they were saved by Jesus they may have come before Jesus but they were saved by Jesus and we today we come after Jesus but we like them we are sinners we have some sad things and shameful things in our past and maybe in our present and yet we can be saved how can we be saved

Acts 4 12 says there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved salvation is found in and through Jesus this child he was born so the message began with sadness but it was a message of the most glorious wide comprehensive salvation for all who will come to Jesus so the good news for Jacob the good news for David the good news for Rahab the good news for Joseph is good news for you and for me if we will come to Jesus he is the one who came to this world to be the saviour what you ask him to be your saviour and your lord let's pray heavenly father we thank you for your word we thank you for the wonder of the message of the gospel we thank you for how connected how joined up the whole of the bible is that we can see as we step through even sometimes what appears to be the driest section on first glance we can see so much richness of the fact that you are the god who loves us the god who is trustworthy the god who keeps his promises and we thank you that the ultimate promise that we celebrate every year as it comes round is that promise of the son that was to be born the messiah who would be born and he would live and he would die to save his people from their sins we are sinners every one of us some of us here are not saved we thank you that your word says today is the day of salvation your word says today if you hear his voice do not harden your heart help us we pray all of us to come to Jesus and to find blessing eternal blessing in him and we pray these things in Jesus name and for his sake amen we're going to sing to conclude and we're going to sing from psalm 72 and in psalm 72 we have that promise of Jacob that we sing of all nations let me just read the verses 17 to 19 his name forever shall endure last like the sun it shall men shall be blessed in him and blessed all nations shall him call this is a promise of God that passed to the generations that is found fulfilled in Jesus we need to be in him we need to be trusting him so let's stand to sing verses 17 to 19 of psalm 72 his name forever shall endure last night the sun it shall men shall be blessed! in heaven are blessed all nations shall live go now blessed be the Lord our God the God of Israel! for he for he alone! for does wondrous first in glory that excel and best!

[79 : 25] be his glorious name to all eternity the whole earth plant his glory fill Amen!

soul let to him now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forever more Amen to Mary to Mary to Mary