

Nativity Service

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[0 : 00] This is how the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, came about. His mother, Mary, was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

Because Joseph, her husband, was faithful to the law and yet did not want to expose her to the public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

She will give birth to a son and you are to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. And all this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet.

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, which means God with us. When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

[1 : 30] But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son and he gave him the name Jesus. Yes. Let's start to sing.

It might help to keep your Bible open during the talk and that will just give you a clue and a steer about where we're going with this slightly and give you a bit of hope that we're reaching the end, if nothing else.

Right. So I wonder if you've ever wondered what's in a name. Okay. So names mean things, don't they?

They tell us something about a person. So I grew up in South Africa and in South Africa we've got lots of animals and one of those animals is the mighty hippopotamus.

The hippopotamus. There you go. The hippopotamus is the herbivores and they love spending all their time in water. And what does hippopotamus mean? What does the name mean?

[2 : 34] But water horse. Yeah. And then what about another animal? A butterfly. There we go. We've got a lovely picture of a butterfly.

Why is a butterfly a butterfly? Well, because they flutter by. Everyone knows that. There's meaning in the name, isn't there? And here's another picture of a friend of mine growing up.

We called him Ox. And you can see why. Why? Because he was massively strong, wasn't he? And then I had another friend. He wasn't as strong as Ox. He was brainy.

And he's a... We call them brains. And here's a picture of brains. You can see why. Why you're so clever. He was always reading a book. And he's brainy. And then I had another friend, Snotty.

Well, I'm not going to put a picture of him up because I might ruin your breakfast. Right. So names are important because they tell us things. They tell us things about that person.

[3 : 34] Your name is important, isn't it? So now let's turn back 2,000 years to the very first Christmas and see why names and Jesus' name was important then.

So let's open our Bibles and turn to that passage again. 118 to 20. 5 for the grown-ups. And then I'll start reading there for us. This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about.

Jesus the Messiah. Whoa! Sorry, interrupting, builder.

It's not messier. It's not mess. It's Messiah. It's not mess. I know you're great at messes. But it's Messiah. The Messiah means God's promised king forever.

Messiah means the son of God. You see, God promises to send a king who will be king over his people. Forever. To care for them. To look after them.

[4 : 45] To rule them wisely. So Messiah is kind of like Jesus' job description. His title. And it means God's king forever. Right, let's get back to the true story of the very first Christmas.

So I'll carry on reading there. His mother, Mary, was pledged to be married to Joseph. Joseph. But before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

Because Joseph, her husband, was faithful to the law, and he yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had mind to disforce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife.

Because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son. And you are to give him the name Jesus.

Because he will save his people from their sins. Sins? Save us from a sin? Really? Well, yes, interrupting builder.

[6 : 04] You see, that's what the name Jesus means. The Lord saves. So sometimes we need to be saved from something silly, don't we?

Like maybe eating too much Christmas pudding, perhaps. Or maybe a really annoying spider. Or maybe the monster under our bed.

But Jesus means God saves. Because Jesus came to save us from our sins. From all the bad things we do and saying no to God.

So for saying, shove off God, I'm in charge, no to your rule. That's what sin is. S-I-N. And Jesus comes to save us.

From that. Right. Let's get back to the true story again. So all this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet. The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son.

[7 : 06] And they will call him Emmanuel. Which means God with us. Really? God with us? Well, yes, interrupting builder.

Emmanuel means, is another name for Jesus. Kind of like a middle name. It means God with us. You see, to show us that Jesus is Jesus, that he is God who saves, Jesus shows us that he is Emmanuel.

God with us. So when Jesus lived with us, he did all sorts of things that only God could do. Like he fed lots of people.

He healed diseases. He even made dead people live again. And all of this points to Jesus as Emmanuel.

God with us. Doing only what God could do. Well, that sure does sound like pretty good news to me. It's the best news, interrupting builder.

[8 : 10] It's amazing news. Where's that sheep? It's amazing. Right. So now let's carry on and finish the story. So when Jesus woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord, when Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him.

And he took Mary home to be his wife. But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Whoa! What an exciting story about the very first true Christmas ever. What good news it is to learn about Jesus' names.

Because names mean things, don't they? We've all got names, don't we? And they all got meanings, don't they? And Jesus' name means things. So we remember that he is Messiah.

King over his people. That's his job description, his title. Then we remember that Jesus is the Lord saved. So he saves us from our sins.

[9 : 15] And then we remember that Jesus is Emmanuel. God with us. Let me pray for us as we close. Right.

So I'll teach you a little prayer quickly. So punch with your right. P-R-A-Y. Father, we thank you that you sent your son Jesus as God's king forever.

We thank you that Jesus saves us from our sins. And we thank you that Jesus is God with us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Great. Well, at the very first Christmas, we remember how all the shepherds came together. And they saw Jesus' birth. And we're going to sing about that in our very next song.

As I invite the band up. How shepherds watched their flocks at night. And came to worship and adore the king. Amen. Amen. Amen.