

December 25



BIBLE PASSAGE

Matthew 1:21 and Luke 2

STORY

“A New Baby and a New Beginning” (Chapter 53)

GOSPEL CONNECTION

On Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus. You know that. But you may not know the strange way Matthew begins the story of Christmas. He starts with a long list of names, called a genealogy. Genealogy is just a fancy way of saying family tree. Why would he tell the story of Christmas with a genealogy? When we read the long list of names, we're reminded of how sinful people are. There are some big-time sinners on the list.

What does all this have to do with Jesus? Well, Jesus wasn't a big-time sinner. Instead, he was a big-time Savior from sin. Even though he was fully human, he was also fully God. And even though he came from a long line of sinners, he was born in a special way so he could do some special rescuing: he was from God. And since God is without sin, Jesus could be born free from the sin that marked his genealogy.

Now here's where the story gets really interesting. Mary was engaged to Joseph. He was shocked to find out Mary was pregnant! He decided the best course was to quietly break up with her. But God sent an angel to let him in on what God was doing. “Joseph,” the angel told him, “Marry Mary, for the baby in her has been conceived from the Holy Spirit” (see Matt. 1:20). Joseph listened. The angel continued, “The baby will be a boy. When he is born, your job is to name him Jesus.” Joseph must have wondered, “Why that name? It's not a family name.” The reason was that the name means “Yahweh saves.” The angel explained, “Call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (see v. 21). Joseph and Mary obeyed the angel's orders. They got married, she gave birth and Joseph called the baby Jesus.

WATCH THE VIDEO

