

REVELATION THAT DEMANDS RESPONSE

Matthew 1:18 text (12-25-05)

INTRO: All of Scripture really, is about revelation and response. God is at work in all of it. There are times, however when it does not appear so. When the heavens seem to have stopped opening. When the revelation at best seems like a very distant wish of religious fanatics and their hype. The motivational speakers become tiring. The shouting out promises that never seem to come into my life are literally wearing. “Keep on keeping on” makes you wish the guy who said it would “move on” because it just isn’t showing itself in my life. Funny thing, all of those dark times are the very foundation and forerunner of the “event” and they are just as much the working of God as the event itself.

THE REVELATION

The First Genealogy: Matthew 1:1 is a spectacular verse. “The book of the genealogy (origin, source, nature) of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.” One verse displaying that 42 generations of *day in day out activity* that could seem so far removed from the Promise, has been the consistent and unaltered hand of God bringing about His fulfillment. Let’s read a few begot’s. I am intrigued by verse 6. That verse shows the way in which God will even use your messes to bring about His revelation. Forty two seemingly endless, boring facts of little importance, and suddenly out of all of that, verse sixteen screams out “of whom was born Jesus, who is called the Christ.” **He will appear out of the mundane “begot’s” of your life.**

The Second Genealogy: Matthew 1: 18 becomes this startling change in the day after day, year after year, generation after generation activity of life. Suddenly, there is this word NOW, which is the conjunction BUT in the original language. All of these people have fathered or begot the next generation BUT something new is happening now. It is a whole new genealogy. This is how it was before, but here is a whole new and very short genealogy. “She was found with child by the Holy Spirit.” This word “by” is a preposition *ek* which means the point of origin from which motion or action proceeds. God has injected Himself directly into the day to day workings of life and Mary is found with this child. Yet, all of the seemingly mundane dragging on of life before this has been to bring about this whole second life, not carried on by men but OF the Holy Spirit. This is a new deal and it is going to continually demand response. **Are you ready for a second life today?**

THE RESPONSE OF JOSEPH

The First Response: Joseph is doing what we all would do. I’ve got to have a plan to explain this thing. I’ve got to protect my family (v. 19). And while he is plotting out this response in a manner that is in his will, (*boulomai*) another BUT shows up. Joseph has “minded” (willed, determined, decided, etc), to hide the plan, and then even his response is interrupted by God. An “angel of the Lord” showed up and said in a paraphrased sort of way, “slow down Joseph, this whole thing is not a mistake, I am in control and this seeming disaster is part of my deliverance plan.” Do you have matters in your life that demand a response, and you keep planning and fixing and tweaking it in your mind? You say, “well I have to do something, don’t I”? All I am asking here, is that you place your determination, deciding and will under submission to His. Be sure that you are not determined to **do**, in such a way that God can’t interrupt your planning with His message into your life.

The Second Response: This revelation of God’s plan had come to Joseph in a dream (vs. 20-23). Verse 24 is another revelation of sorts. “Then Joseph being raised (or aroused) from his sleep..” This is not an act of Joseph, this is an act of God. “Being raised” is in the *passive voice* where Joseph is acted upon. He has a spiritual “bucket of water” dumped on his head and he awakes and THEN, after the message, after being raised, “DID” as the angel of the Lord commanded him. This was a doing out of what had happened to him, not what he was causing to make happen. This was not Joseph laying awake planning, this was Joseph having his rest invaded by God to inform him of the Lord’s plan. *There is no doubt that Joseph had a seeking heart*. What a difference. In the previous verses we get two indications of why God could act upon Joseph. “He was a just man,” and “that it might be fulfilled.” If I am open to right things in my life, God will make things right in my life. If I am not, He will move heaven and earth to bring me to a place of being forced to respond, one way or the other, His will or mine, His purpose or my plan. *There was revelation and there was response.*

THE REVELATION AND RESPONSE OF THE WISE MEN

(*Matthew 2: 1-2*) What an amazing thing. These Gentiles no doubt had been anticipating this event. They “saw His star in the East.” The literal translation of this word East would be more “*at it’s rising*” or “when it rose,” or “the rising.” They didn’t just see it casually, they saw it when it appeared. They had obviously known through the ages that this event was to take place. It is believed these men were from Persia, where Daniel hundreds of years before had been placed in charge of all the Magi. Can you imagine the amazing plan of God to take Daniel in a foreign country and use captivity of Daniels people to illuminate religious and world leaders to the plan of God for a King and a Savior? Remember, God will use you even in secular territory to carry out HIS purpose. What’s important is that it is clear, whatever the wise men’s theology, whatever their heritage, they had “*seeking hearts.*” They put all else aside for up to two years, just to focus on finding the King, this new born King. They were seeking a King. When they found Him they were exceedingly joyful and they worshiped Him, and the word used here is “bowed, prostrate, as a dog licks it’s master’s hand.” *There was revelation given to them, and there was a response.* And God then gave them Divine direction in all their activity following. Little did they know they would be the first to announce this to government officials. Imagine their surprise to find that *instead of jubilation, there would be, little or no awareness or anticipation.*

THE REVELATION AND RESPONSE OF HEROD

(*Matthew 2: 3-7*) Here it comes, another BUT. Herod wasn’t seeking truth, but you see the *revelation of truth however it comes, demands response.* One way or another. Herod was troubled, (agitated) *and all Jerusalem with him.* This isn’t just Herod. The whole city instead of being triumphant, is troubled. I believe that means the religious leaders and common folk also. Why? Could it be that it’s about kingdoms? Herod’s kingdom was threatened. He has to have a plan to protect his wants, his way, his will. I wonder about the religious leaders who Herod called in. Herod knew they had enough knowledge to help him, but I wonder if he also knew their positions would be more important to them then getting excited about a new *revelation.* It troubles me that there were no dreams or warnings from the Lord for the religious leaders. Seems those kinds of thing come to *seekers only,* or at least to those who aren’t protecting a kingdom of their own. Herod’s got all of these secret plans going. He is pretending to want to worship, but his worship is already established. He has been given accurate information by the religious leaders, but there is a huge difference between accurate information, and truth. I can preach “truths” (accurate information) all day long, and it may never become truth. That is because truth is a Holy Spirit matter. It is the Holy Spirit that **guides into all truth.** The rest of this chapter (*Matthew 2*) is constant revelation, and response. It is seeking to bow to Him, or seeking to protect self-thrones. It’s worship or self will. It’s worship or war against Him. No in between.

*John Gibson, a popular anchor for the Fox News Channel, has been digging up evidence about activists, lawyers, politicians, educators, and media people who are leading the war on Christmas. And he reveals that the situation is isn't just hype. For instance: ! In Illinois, state government workers were forbidden from saying the words "Merry Christmas" while at work ! In Rhode Island, local officials banned Christians from participating in a public project to decorate the lawn of City Hall ! A New Jersey school banned even instrumental versions of traditional Christmas carols ! Arizona school officials ruled it unconstitutional for a student to make any reference to the religious history of Christmas in a class project. “That’s not me” you say!! Where is your kingdom today? Is He a threat to your lifestyle? Do you have *thrones in your life* that you must protect? There are only two responses you know to revelation: SEEK HIM with your whole life, or SEEK to squeeze Him out of your territory. Only one, can have the throne, SELF or the SAVIOR. **MAY THE REVELATION OF THE KING, BRING YOU TO THE RESPONSE OF SEEKING HIM...WHICH LEADS TO WORSHIP AT HIS FEET. THE FEET OF THE KING!!!***