

## BACKGROUND:

As we approach Christmas, we are again reminded that much of the Old Testament speaks of the coming Messiah, the coming Christ! Last week, we looked at Matthew 1 & Luke 1 and the miraculous conceptions of both John the baptizer and Jesus...Some skeptics today have charged God with being a cosmic rapist for causing Mary to conceive Jesus in her womb against her will...Reread Luke 1:26-38...Is that a fair charge?

We ended our time last week by asking the question, “What can we learn by the “un-wed” teenager Mary’s response to finding out that God had chosen her to give birth to the long prophesied Messiah?”. What are your thoughts about the virgin Mary?

Tonight, we continue in Matthew and Luke, beginning at Matthew 1:18 with Mary’s betrothed “husband” Joseph’s response...

## PRAY:

## SCRIPTURE:

**Matthew 1, Luke 2**

**December 12, 2018**

## OBSERVATIONS:

Matt 1:18. What do you suppose everyone in Nazareth would assume when Mary returned from visiting her relative Elizabeth in the hill country of Judea and was starting to “show” (that she was pregnant)?

Matt 1:19. As a betrothed man waiting for the day of his marriage ceremony, what did Joseph have the legal right to do with Mary under Jewish law?

Matt 1:20-25. What do you think of Joseph’s response?

Now turn to Luke 2...

Luke 2:1-7. But what about the part with Mary being 9 months pregnant and riding into Bethlehem on a donkey and having to give birth in a stable because there were no rooms available for them in the town’s inn? And why didn’t Joseph’s relatives allow Joseph and Mary to stay with them, especially with Mary in the fragile condition that she was in? For that matter, why didn’t any even complete strangers offer to take Mary and Joseph in? Wasn’t their culture known for its extreme hospitality back then just like it is today? Well, in fact, it was...And no doubt Joseph’s relatives would have given them a place to stay too! So what’s the deal? Well, it all comes down to a cultural misunderstanding in the development of our Western view of the nativity scene...and a couple of Greek words...

pandocheion: An inn; a commercial inn where travelers can rent a room and sleep.

katalyma: An inn; a guest room behind the room where the owners of a house and their animals sleep.

Guess which Greek word is found behind the word “inn” in Luke 2:7...katalyma!

Now re-read and discuss Luke 2:1-7 with this understanding of “inn” in mind...

So whudya hear?

APPLICATIONS: And so what...How can we apply it to us today?

## PRAY: