

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST AND THE DEMANDS ON MARY AND JOSEPH MATHEW 01:18–25

Jesus' birth was one of the most convulsive and disturbing events in all history (see Lk. 2:1-24).

1. There was Mary's pregnancy — the idea of her being an unwed mother (Mt. 1:18; Lk. 1:26f). Who of that day would ever believe her story? Required was a willingness to be available to God regardless of embarrassment and the opinions of family, friends, and neighbours.
2. There was Joseph's discovery of Mary's pregnancy (Mt.1:19). The shock of Mary's infidelity and of personal embarrassment was more than Joseph could bear (Mt. 1:20). Required was a willingness to forget self completely.
3. There was the child, the Son of God Himself, being born in a smelly manger (Mt. 1:25; Lk. 2:1f). Required was a willingness to be humble.
4. There was the family having to be uprooted and moved to a foreign nation, Egypt (Mt. 2:13f). Required was a willingness to obey at any cost.
5. There was the slaughter of all children under two years of age (Mt. 2:16f). The heavy weight of feeling some responsibility was bound to attack Joseph and Mary. Required was a willingness on their part to bear anything.
6. There was the visit of the wise men showing that the foreign relationships of nations were affected (Mt. 2:1f). Required was a willingness to bear the pressure of responsibility and the demands of being in the limelight.
7. There was the uproar of Herod's household traumatically affecting the lives of both Joseph and Mary (Mt. 2:7-8, 15-16, 22). Required was a willingness to stand against all odds. □