

# “You Shall Call His Name Jesus (Matthew 1:21)”

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An Angel of the Lord Appeared to Joseph in a Dream - Matthew 1:20-21 - Used under license

***"She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21)***

**Read:** [Matthew 1:18-25](#)

This lesson explains the meaning of the name "Jesus" that an angel of the Lord instructed Joseph to give to our Savior at his birth.

**Consider.** How does the name "Jesus" explain what his mission was to be?

The Bible verse quotations in this lesson are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless noted otherwise ([Ref. 1](#)).

## What does "Jesus" mean?

The Greek word for the name, "Jesus," is *Iésous* (pronounced *ee-ay-sooce'*), and means *Yahweh saves* or *Yahweh is salvation* ([Ref. 2](#)). Yahweh is the vocalization of the four consonants of God's name, YHWH, in the Old Testament ([Exodus 3:14 NASB, Ref. 3](#)).

"Jesus" is the Greek form of the Hebrew name, "Joshua." The Hebrew word for "Joshua" is *Yehoshua* (pronounced *yeh-ho-shoo'-ah*), and means *the Lord is salvation* ([Ref. 4](#)).

"Joshua" was a common name in the Old Testament, especially the name of Moses' successor ([Joshua 1:1-2](#)).

## What does "Christ" mean?

Jesus is distinguished from others by his title, "the Christ" ([Matthew 1:16](#)). The Greek word for "Christ" is *Christos* (pronounced *khri-s-tos'*), and means *the Messiah, the Anointed One* ([Ref. 5](#)).

## Who was the father of Jesus?

The scriptures are clear that God is the father of Jesus the Christ. The angel Gabriel told Mary before she conceived Jesus, *"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God"* ([Luke 1:35](#)). An angel of the Lord later told Joseph who was betrothed to Mary, *"Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit"* ([Matthew 1:20](#)). That is why in [Matthew 1:21](#), the angel told Joseph, "She will bear a son," and not, "She will bear *you* a son." Compare [Matthew 1:21](#) with [Genesis 17:19](#) and [Luke 1:13](#).

## Why did Jesus come to earth?

*To save his people from their sins*

Matthew 1:21 tells us why Jesus came to earth -- to "*save his people from their sins.*" The name "Jesus" fits perfectly with Jesus' mission because Jesus' name means "Yahweh [*or, God*] is salvation." To "save" means *to rescue or deliver from danger and bring into divine safety* (HELPS Word-studies - Ref. 6, Ref. 7, 1 Timothy 1:15). Jesus came to rescue believers -- we who believe in and have faith in Jesus -- from the penalty and power of sin (Ref. 6, Romans 5:8-9). The opportunity to become saved is available to all persons who will believe in Jesus regardless of their background as Jew or Gentile (Acts 4:12, Acts 8:36-37 NKJV, Acts 16:30-31).

**Apply.** Be a person who believes in Jesus Christ who came to earth to save you from your sins. Put your faith, trust, and confidence in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved (Acts 16:31). Confess your sins to him today, and he will forgive your sins and will give you the gift of eternal life (1 John 1:9, Romans 6:23).

### Related Lessons

"Why Did Jesus Come?" -- John 3:17

"What Does 'To Be Saved' Mean in the New Testament?" -- Acts 16:31

### References

1. <https://www.biblegateway.com/versions/English-Standard-Version-ESV-Bible/>
2. <https://biblehub.com/greek/2424.htm>
3. <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/encyclopedia-of-the-bible/Yahweh>
4. <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/3091.htm>
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