

Joseph – the earthly father of the Creator

We hear many teachings about Jesus' birth, shepherds on the field who came to visit Baby Jesus in the stable, and what about those three wise men who also came to see Baby Jesus? However, the nativity scene is not exactly correct. What is the problem with that picture? We will talk about that, but we are mainly going to learn and about the man named Joseph.

A. YOUR SON IS GOD'S SON, JOSEPH

Matt. 1:18-24 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife

Before we get into the study of Joseph, the earthly father of the Creator of the universe, let me ask you a question: What is Jesus' last name? Have you ever seen Jay Leno's Tonight Show? Some episodes have a section called, "Jay Walking" where Leno goes out to the streets of LA and stops people who pass by and asks them some simple and easy questions. If other countries people see that program, I bet they think that all the Americans are nothing more than a bunch of idiots. The people's answers are between pathetic to pure ignorant.

Back to my question, the answer is: Jesus' last name is NOT Christ. It is His title. Christ is a Greek word for the Messiah which is from Hebrew word and both means "The Anointed One." What is the meaning of Jesus? It was very common name among the Jews at that time. Jesus is the Greek word of Joshua, which mean "the Lord saves."

We can summarize the character of Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus as "righteous and obedient." That is what we see in these verses: v19, the Word tells us that Joseph was a righteous man and v24 says that Joseph did what he was told with an obedient heart over his own logical ration.

How would you act if you find out that your fiance is pregnant out, and you've never known here intimately? In other words, you had nothing to do with that pregnancy. How would you act? Don't answer that too loud and too quickly. I can almost hear you. Like you and me, Joseph did not buy Mary's story. I am sure Mary told him one day, "Hon, guess what? I am pregnant. It was totally awesome. The Holy Spirit came upon me and put a baby in my womb." I can imagine Joseph's mouth dropped and his eyes popping, his blood from his face was drained and his knees are getting weak. The first thing in his mind was, "Who is this scum who touched my woman?" Next thing he felt that she is impure. But he was righteous and still

loves that girl. He didn't want to embarrass her by telling everyone which brings an immediate death for her as an adulteress since engagement was treated as important as actual marriage and terrible reputation to her family.

But when he saw an angel showed up in his dream and told him to take Mary as his wife, he did. No argument, no fuss, no whatever. You might say, "Hey, if I had a visitation by an angel, I would do the same." You and I have the very Word of God, the Bible, which is better than the words from the angel on our laps. Whenever we pray to God as born again Christians, He is all ears. Moreover, we have the very God Himself in our hearts where He resides everyday wherever we go. Should we not obey Him as He teaches us through His Word?

Matt. 1:25 and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

This is one of the verses that shows that Mary had a normal sexual relationship with her husband, Joseph unlike Catholic's claim that Mary remained as a virgin until she died. Just for your information, on TV news several years ago, Catholic Pope John Paul declare that Jesus is not the only way to get to heaven. Hmmm! The Word of God vs. Pope, which one should I trust?

B. FACE TO FACE WITH GOD

Luke 2:1-7 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

After Mary delivered the Baby Jesus, I am sure that she was exhausted and fell asleep in that dirty and smelly sheep stable. Joseph looked on a reddish infant's face, then he realized that he was looking at God's face. I wonder how he felt? He touched that little tiny hands and fingers that flung the stars into the universe. When the Baby cried, he heard the voice of God. I wonder what was going through this simple carpenter's mind. God who created everything including Joseph himself, is now sleeping in his arms. He had to be nursed, changed, taught and protected from others. What an awesome task Joseph was honored to carry! Was it because he was highly educated and influential? Was it because he was loaded with money? Or was it because he was simply obedient to God's call and trusted Him?

The reason why they couldn't stay at the inn, because there was no room. Did you fill up your heart with all the other stuffs than Jesus, so He cannot find a room in your heart today? Often, we pack our schedules so much in doing something for ourselves or even helping somebody during this time of the year, we completely forget the true reason for the season. We push aside our God for the sake of others. No room in our hearts for Him. What is more important, God or the other stuffs whatever that is?

A woman who was out Christmas shopping with her two children. After many hours of looking at row after row of toys and everything else imaginable, and after hours

of hearing both her children asking for everything they saw on those many shelves, she finally made it to the elevator with her two kids. She was feeling what so many of us feel during the holiday season time of the year—overwhelming pressure to go to every party, every housewarming, taste all the holiday food and treats, get that perfect gift for every single person on our shopping list, make sure we don't forget anyone on our card list, and the pressure of making sure we respond to everyone who sent us a card.

Finally the elevator doors opened and there was already a crowd in the car. She pushed her way into the car and dragged her two kids in with her and all the bags of stuff. When the doors closed she couldn't take it anymore and stated, "Whoever started this whole Christmas thing should be found, strung up and shot." From the back of the car everyone heard a quiet, calm voice respond, "Don't worry. We already crucified him."

For the rest of the trip down the elevator it was so quiet you could have heard a pin drop. Don't forget this year to keep the One who started this whole Christmas thing in your every thought, deed, purchase, and word. If we all did it, just think of how different this whole world would be.

C. IN THE BACKGROUND

Matt. 2:13-23 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son." Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: "A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more." But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Throughout the four Gospels, Joseph was mentioned in only four chapters. It seems that he was not important in the birth of Jesus, of course he had nothing to do with the conception itself. But he was another obedient vessel of God. Whenever I see dad Joseph, the carpenter, I see him simply obeying God's instruction without any fuss, comments, or suggestions. Simply obedience and following God! What an example! God does not find someone who has all together, but He finds someone who is willing to obey, then He equips that person.

Obedience is choice we make. Ignoring what we want for the sake of God's commands we receive, it requires humble hearts & faith in God. Jesus set aside His glory to be the Atoning Sacrifice for all mankind with obedience to the Father. God desire our obedience more than our sacrifices in money or time or whatever we try to substitute. Because obedience requires our hearts.

D. APPLICATIONS

1) Obedience is something we must have to please the Father in heaven.

As Joseph took the words of the angel as its value, we must take the Word of God at its value with complete obedience.

2) Let's keep our God in the best room in our hearts.

If we do that, He will put the rest of our priorities in order for us.