

The Birth of Jesus Christ

18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”— which means, “God with us.”

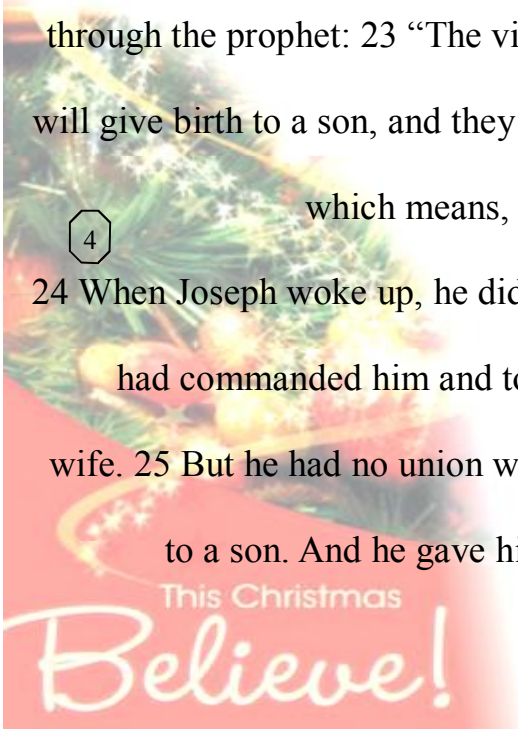
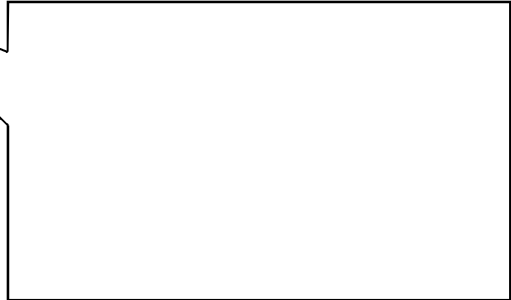
24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

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Daily Devotionals

Monday - read Mt 1:18-25

- ☺ Since this is the same passage studied this weekend, what new thing did you notice, or what did God remind you of in these verses?
- ☺ How would you describe Joseph's role in the process of step-parenting? What would have been the best and worst part of his job?
- ☺ Reread verse 24. What do you think made Joseph that obedient? How do you and I become more like Joseph?

Tuesday - read Mt 2:13-18

- ☺ After reading this episode, how important is Joseph in the history of salvation through Jesus?
- ☺ "Stay there until I tell you..." this is a difficult command for anyone. What character traits would be needed to fulfill this command?
- ☺ Most of us don't obey as immediately as Joseph does. What are the real reasons we delay in obedience? Confess these things to God.

Wednesday - read Mt 13:53-58

- ☺ Although his name is not mentioned, Joseph is referred to here with an implication: *How can anything remarkable happen in a carpenter's life?* How can this implication be an encouragement to us today about our own lives?
- ☺ What did Jesus mean in verse 57?
- ☺ Reread verse 58. Is this a scary thought? Has our limited faith ever kept us from truly experiencing what God could do through us?

Thursday - read Lk 2:1-7

- ☺ It wasn't all miracles and spiritual stuff... Joseph had to do the routine and mundane to run this family. How did going through the necessary, seemingly meaningless steps prove to be spiritually valuable (HINT: Bethlehem is in the answer)?
- ☺ Can you see the spiritually valuable in the everyday mundane of your life? Pray and ask God to show you.
- ☺ Reread verse 7. As a father/provider how do you think Joseph felt here? Yet, this was so important to the story. Can you think of anything to give God thanks for that you didn't see as a blessing originally?

Friday - read Lk 2:41-52

- ☺ After reading this story, how would you describe the parenting of Mary and Joseph?
- ☺ Mary spoke for both parents, and said they felt mistreated by their son. But, Jesus says she misunderstood. As a parent, have you ever been there? As a child have you ever been in that position? What was your response?
- ☺ Reflect on the little we know about Joseph. What is the dominant character trait you see in him. Pray that Jo-

