

The Man God Chooses

The Journey of Joseph

Key Passage: - Luke 2:1-7; Matthew 2:13-23; James 1:2-4

Key Term:

Journey - traveling from one place to another; progress from one stage to another

Prior to finding out about Mary's pregnancy, Joseph's life was already on a journey. He was growing, learning, becoming skilled as a *tehton* (carpenter), and preparing for a marriage. Not an unusual journey for a man during this time. In fact, this could be considered a good journey for Joseph.

However, Joseph's journey was about to change. He finds that his betrothed is pregnant and decides to divorce her quietly. Now a different journey begins for Joseph. Joseph takes a nap, an angel appears to him and says, "*don't be afraid to take Mary home as your wife*" (Matt. 1:20). In this moment of difficulty, Joseph says, "*yes!*" to God resulting in a different kind of journey for him. A different kind of journey spiritually as well as geographically as he travels from Nazareth to Bethlehem to Egypt and back to Nazareth.

Joseph's yes to God and a new journey reminds us that our yes to God does not mean that our journey in this life will always be easy. Just like Joseph's journey (physical journey's & emotional journeys) was full of hardships, difficulties, and heartache; we can expect that our yes and obedience to God will take us on a similar journey.

Joseph's journey is not one that he ever imagined or one that he wanted. His situation is one that represents what happens in life. All of us will find ourselves on journeys we don't want to take. Often these journey's will happen because of somebody else's choice or action. The journey's may be painful and we can find ourselves discouraged, feeling defeated, and heart broken.

In those days of hard journey's, we may question why we said yes to God. Here's the thing, God never said that saying yes to Him would result in the easy life. Joseph teaches us that often our yes to God will result in difficult journey's and are not to be walked away from.

Joseph said yes, when he could have said no. He could have walked away from Mary, leaving her as a single mom. But, if Joseph would have walked away, he would have missed out on being part of the greatest redemption story ever told. Joseph's journey is a caution tale for each of us who are considering walking away from a difficult journey and hard situations. Joseph's journey is a reminder to us that our journey's are not just about us or about recognition, power and accumulating wealth, but about saying yes to God and serving him and serving others.

My life has been filled with difficult journeys...pre Jesus and after giving my life to him. During those hard journey's I'm reminded of these words the angel spoke to Joseph, "*The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel (which means God with us)*" (Matt. 1:23). This is a call back to Isaiah 9:6 where Isaiah says that the weight of the world, the "weight of the government will be on his shoulders." You see, in our difficult journeys we will fill the burden of it, we will feel the weight of the circumstance, but we are not alone, God is with us! He is walking with you and me on our journey's and he will strengthen us.

Table Time:

1. What journey are you on right now?
2. What weight are you carrying on your journey?
3. How are you being shaped by the journey you're on?