



The DAILY JESUS NEWS #014
Jesus’ 30 Years of Preparation for Ministry
Jesus’ Birth and Growth into Maturity

Jesus’ Conception and Nativity from Joseph’s Perspective
MT 1.18-25

=====

18 The birth of Jesus the Messiah was like this: His mother Mary was engaged for marriage to Joseph, but before they came together as husband and wife, she became pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man (in terms of faithfulness to the law) and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, so he wanted to divorce her quietly.

20 But after he had deeply 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 conceive and 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 he took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not have physical relations with her until she had given birth to a son.

=====

NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*.

CONTEXT DIGEST	
Location	Nazareth, in Galilee
Time	Early in Mary’s Pregnancy
Jesus’ Life Context	Jesus’ 30 Years of Preparation for Ministry
	Jesus’ Birth and Growth Into Maturity

Title	Jesus' Conception and Nativity from Joseph's Perspective
-------	--

Today's reading is the only text in the narrative of Jesus' conception and birth to approach the events from Joseph's perspective. In 1st century Jewish culture, Jesus' legal and public standing derived from his father, so this was a crucial aspect of the record of Jesus' life. Matthew's portrait of Joseph that emerges in MT 1 and 2 is of a thoughtful, godly man who was quick to obey and trust his God, regardless of the circumstances. God prepared the life of his Son by entrusting his protection and development to a man of faith and humility.

Mary had to come to terms with the humiliation of becoming pregnant while engaged (and not by her husband) *before* it happened. Joseph, on the other hand, had to come to terms with his wife becoming pregnant (not by him) *after* it happened. Rather than rashly react to her mysterious pregnancy, Joseph took the time to carefully, prayerfully consider the situation. He was concerned about Mary and her future, and sought to protect her as much as he could while he made his decision. Thankfully, God spoke to him through an angel in a dream to confirm what Mary had already told him.

Joseph was commanded to give the name "**Jesus**" to this child. Like Zechariah with John the Immerser, this appeared to go against the common custom of naming the first-born son after the father. Jesus was the only person with that name in his entire lineage back to Adam. But actually, this name reinforces that Jesus is the Son of God... fully Divine. That is, GOD, not Joseph, was the real Father. As the first-born Son, Jesus was named after His real Father after all.

The Greek "**Jesus**" means "**YHWH who saves**" in Hebrew. All throughout the Old Testament, only YHWH is Savior... only GOD can forgive sin. So Jesus did take His real Father's Name..YHWH...the LORD! Jesus is worthy of that Name because HE is the God who saves from sin. The name "Jesus" is a powerful claim to Divinity as God's Son.

This truth was further reinforced by the title, "**Immanuel**," which means "**GOD with us.**" Jesus is GOD with us in human flesh, and He therefore brings the certainty, and unspeakable joy of God's eternal presence—Father, Son, and Spirit—to all who believe in Him as "**YHWH who saves.**"

We see Joseph's humility and obedient attitude in the way he woke up and instantly did as the Lord had commanded him. As a pregnant woman, Mary needed care. Joseph gave it to her. Joseph was serving and loving his God by taking care of Jesus' surrogate mother, even when he would be humiliated by the rumors that would swarm around the young couple because of the circumstances of the pregnancy. This was the kind of man that God could entrust his Son to.

APPLICATION:

The first and last words in Matthew's gospel about Jesus both describe His abiding presence. At his conception He was announced to be "**God with us.**" His final words to us were: "**and I am with you always... even to the end of the age.**" (28.20)

Only God is capable of being with us ALL the time, by establishing His permanent home with us. Jesus "**saves His people from their sins**" to remove every barrier to His abiding presence with us.

What will you do today to rejoice in, and constantly re-focus on God's forgiveness, and presence with you?

How do you need to obey God's instructions to you today, even when you do not understand them?