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## A Heartbroken Groom (Joseph) and Jesus' Birth

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# THE PHYSICAL BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST A HEARTBROKEN GROOM (JOSEPH) AND JESUS' BIRTH

## THE JOSEPH FILE

### STATISTICS ON HIS LIFE

*Father:* Jacob (Matt. 1:16)

*Spouse:* Mary

*Sons:* James, Joseph, Simon, Judas (Matt. 13:55)

*Daughters:* Several unnamed (Matt. 13:56)

*Famous ancestors:* Abraham, David, Solomon

*First mention:* Matthew 1:16

*Final mention:* John 6:42

*Meaning of his name:* "Increaser, may God add"

*Frequency of his name:* Referred to 16 times

*Biblical books mentioning him:* Three books (Matthew, Luke, John)

*Occupation:* Carpenter

*Place of birth:* Bethlehem

*Important fact about his life:* He was the godly, legal (but not physical) father of Jesus.

### STORY OF HIS LIFE

- Joseph arranged to make Mary his full, legal wife. Joseph must be considered by all standards of measurement a truly just man, with the spiritual maturity of a David, Moses, or Paul. In fact, the New Testament Joseph may be favorably compared to the Old Testament Joseph. Both had fathers named Jacob. Both had amazing maturity. Both received visions from God. Both were in Egypt. One was a type of Christ; the other was his legal guardian. In fact, had it not been for Judah's sin, Joseph would have been ruling from Jerusalem as the rightful king when Christ was born. It was he and not Herod who had the proper credentials to sit upon the throne of Israel.
- Author R. Kent Hughes describes in graphic fashion the role Joseph may have played in assisting at Jesus's birth:

"If we imagine that Jesus was born in a freshly swept, county fair stable, we miss the whole point. It was wretched—scandalous! There was sweat and pain and blood and

cries as Mary reached up to the heavens for help. The earth was cold and hard. The smell of birth mixed with the stench of manure and acrid straw made a contemptible bouquet. Trembling carpenter's hands, clumsy with fear, grasped God's Son, slippery with blood—the baby's limbs waving helplessly as if falling through space—his face grimacing as he gasped in the cold and his cry pierced the night." (*Luke*, Volume 1, Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998, p. 83)

- Joseph was the first person in the New Testament to be reminded of the greatest Old Testament prophecy regarding the virgin birth.

*"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'"* (Mt. 1:22, 23).

This prophecy was of course a fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 (see Matt. 1:23). Some have questioned (unsuccessfully) the Hebrew word *almah* in Isaiah 7:14, saying it does not always mean virgin. However, there is absolutely no doubt whatsoever about the Greek word for virgin, which is *parthenos* and always, without exception, refers to a young girl totally devoid of sexual experience.

- Both Mary (Lk. 1:31) and Joseph (Mt. 1:21) were to name the baby Jesus
- This glorious name for the Son of God is referred to over 750 times in the New Testament

A. The first is found in Mt. 1:16.

B. The final in Rev. 22:21

- On two occasions the Savior refers to Himself as Jesus:

A. To the apostle Paul

*"And he said, 'Who are You, Lord?' Then the Lord said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads'"* (Acts 9:5).

B. To the apostle John

*"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star"* (Rev. 22:16).

- Joseph is the only New Testament person referred to as the Son of David (Mt. 1:20).
- Also, the only city in the entire Bible (apart from Jerusalem) to be called the City of David was Bethlehem (Lk. 2:4).
- So then, like Nathanael, Jesus could describe Joseph as *"an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!"* (John 1:47)

## REFLECTIONS FROM HIS LIFE

It grieves me that in spite of our efforts they still look at Him with disdain. Admittedly, both His mother and I have struggled throughout the years to even partly understand that incredible

series of events. Who, indeed, could grasp the fact that my wife, while still a virgin, would give birth to the Messiah Himself? But that's exactly what happened. (Mt. 1:18-25; Jn. 7:3-5)

Jesus and Immanuel! Those were to be His names, as announced by an angel to both Mary and me; the names mean "Savior" and "God with us." But neither His half-brothers nor our hometown people will accept this! They simply shake their heads when we recount the story of the wondrous star and those visits by shepherds and astronomers. (Mt. 1:21-23; 2:1, 2; Mk. 6:3; Lk. 2:15; 4:29; Jn. 7:3-5)

He has left my carpenter shop to perform the Father's work, just as He predicted He would when He was a young boy. I am told John the Nazarite has recently baptized Him. What will happen next? Only He and His true Father can answer that question! (Mt. 3:13-15; Lk. 1:15, 2:41-50)