

December 18 | Sunday

Joseph: The Journey to Bethlehem

Read [Luke 2:1-5](#)



19 | Mon – Two miracle moms meet | Read [Luke 1:39-45](#)

After the angel's visit, Mary went to see Elizabeth, another family member experiencing a miracle pregnancy, in her old age. As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, she was filled with the Holy Spirit and knew that God was at work in Mary's life too. It seems that Elizabeth was the first to call Jesus "Lord" before he was even born. What love and support Mary must have felt, knowing that someone else believed and rejoiced with her. When have you experienced or given that kind of support in a difficult time?

20 | Tue – Unexpected | Read [Psalm 121:1-8](#)

Imagine Joseph's concern for Mary, being forced to take this trip in her condition. We, too, may find ourselves in circumstances that we did not create and cannot change. Yet, we can be confident, as the psalm writer was, that God is with us. Is that why we are directed to look *up* for help? When we get our eyes away from the circumstances and focus on the source of our help, hope can be born anew.

21 | Wed – Hope in a dark place | Read [Psalm 130:1-8](#)

The writer of this psalm emphasizes the image of a watchman in a dark, dark night waiting and hoping for the morning light. A spiritually dark world was waiting for the arrival of a Redeemer. Jesus' birth made hope a reality. Is there a place in your life where there is 'darkness' and you are waiting for light? Don't give up. God is at work behind the scenes and the morning is coming!

22 | Thu – Antidote to fear | Read [Isaiah 7:10-14](#); [Matthew 1:20-23](#)

King Ahaz was facing invasion by neighboring kings. The prophet was sent with a message from the Lord that there was nothing to fear. Then Isaiah told Ahaz to ask for a sign. He refused. Read Isaiah's response in verse 14. Matthew quotes Isaiah, linking Jesus with the name "Immanuel" which means "God with us." What greater words can you hear and believe than these? We are not alone. Jesus reaffirms that promise in Matt 28:20. What a wonderful gift to receive at this time of the year. God is with you.. Always.

23 | Fri – No celebrities here | Read [Matthew 1:24-25](#)

Mary said "I am the Lord's servant." Joseph "did just as an angel from God commanded." Neither of them could have foreseen the millions, maybe even billions of people today who celebrate Jesus' birth because these two humble Hebrew peasants listened, believed, and obeyed. What is God calling you to hear, believe and then do? You have no idea what impact your actions could have on future generations..

24 | Sat – Not random chance | Read [Luke 2:1-5](#); [Romans 8:28](#)

This journey to Bethlehem was unexpected and unwanted. But it was also part of the Plan, God's master plan. Joseph and Mary did not know that there were bigger things afoot. You are also part of that Plan. When faced with life's detours which seem to take you the wrong direction, it is important to realize you probably don't have all the facts. But you can trust the One who does.