

December 22
Tuesday
Matthew 1.18-25

Joseph

Dear God, thank you for choosing people like Joseph, flawed and ordinary, but with potential for compassion, humility, obedience, and love through faith in you. Thank you for choosing this young couple of modest means and earnest hearts to be your earthly family. May we be as open and trusting and compassionate. Amen.

Joseph. "Being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame" is the spare description we have. I know you weren't perfect. You were flawed like all of us. But your two actions in this text speak volumes. First, you showed compassion toward Mary. It was likely an arranged betrothal. I wonder if you grew up knowing her. What a bitter disappointment it must have been to discover what seemed to be her unfaithfulness, yet you put those feelings aside and put Mary's welfare first. That was classy. Then crazy things happened. An angelic appearance in a dream. The child is special, a savior, perhaps...the Messiah.

Second, you obeyed God. In my commentary it says you obeyed like Old Testament heroes..."even when it went beyond all human common sense."* You believed the angel messenger was for real. You believed Mary was innocent of betrayal. You married her, then showed self restraint so she would remain a virgin until after the birth, just as the Torah prophesied. You believed you were asked to be a part of this amazing story of God stepping into history. And you humbly obeyed. You named him "Jesus," just as the angel asked. Jesus, Yeshua, "God is salvation." I smile to think that you must have remained this just, compassionate, obedient and faithful man as Jesus grew. He had a good father in heaven and on earth. Thank you for your example.

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*The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament