

Sunday, 02 December 2007

Matthew 1:18-25

Mat 1:18-25 This was how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they were married, she found out that she was going to have a baby by the Holy Spirit. Joseph was a man who always did what was right, but he did not want to disgrace Mary publicly; so he made plans to break the engagement privately. While he was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to be your wife. For it is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived. She will have a son, and you will name him Jesus---because he will save his people from their sins." Now all this happened in order to make come true what the Lord had said through the prophet, "A virgin will become pregnant and have a son, and he will be called Immanuel" (which means, "God is with us"). So when Joseph woke up, he married Mary, as the angel of the Lord had told him to. But he had no sexual relations with her before she gave birth to her son. And Joseph named him Jesus.

To be like Joseph.

Can you imagine the shock of Joseph, having to find out that his wife to be is pregnant, but knowing that the child is not yours. Even in today's modern world, with very few people with good values and morals, this would be a difficult situation to handle. In the days of Joseph, an engagement was as legal as marriage itself, and if he wanted to end the engagement, he would have to "divorce" Mary. We read in this scripture that Joseph was a man that always did what was right, and by law, he should have had Mary stoned for being unfaithful to him, but he decided rather to quietly end the engagement, not to disgrace Mary in public. He saw no other option for himself.

I guess Mary had told him about the angel, and the fact that she got pregnant in that way, but "WOW" what a story to believe? Then God intervened. God send His angel to Joseph, to go and talk to Joseph about Mary. The greeting of the angel was; "Joseph, descendant of David." reminding Joseph about the fact that the promise was given so many years ago that the Saviour would come from David's descendants. Again the message was clear, not to be afraid. Not only of the angel, but for what the message was, and for what the implications of this message would be. Be not afraid, for God is in control over all of this. The angel continues to assure Joseph that the message is true, and is actually the message prophesied so many years ago. He tell Joseph that the son to be born of Mary, will be the one to save all people from sin, he reminded him of the prophecy of a virgin birth, and that this Son will be Immanuel, "God is with us". Joseph must have known these scriptures, and he understood what the angel referred to, for he hesitated no more. He got up, and married Mary. He respected the Holiness of the mother and child, and had no sexual relations with her, until the child was born. He was obedient also in naming the child Jesus, as he was instructed by the angel.

Are we like Joseph? He knew that people would talk, and talk behind his back. He knew people would think that he was the one that made Mary pregnant, and that people would gossip. He had a way out of the relationship, but he chose rather to obey God, than seek the acceptance of man. Joseph is teaching us that if we should ask God for His guidance and answers to difficult situation, that we will get an answer to our question, and we should trust God's answer to be right. If we obey His guidance, then we can walk in peace and with the assurance that all will be just fine.

* Should you wish to write me, and are in need of someone who would listen and pray with you... Please do. david@davidniebuhr.com

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