



NEW HEART BEAT DEVOTIONS

“This year, imagine the Christmas Story not as an observer but through the eyes of Mary and Joseph.”

Mary and Joseph

I often think about what it would be like to be the parents of Jesus. What and how did Mary and Joseph feel, understand, react, and say to others? From the announcement of conception, to the birth, through His life, death and resurrection, those most affected were His parents. Little is recorded about them so one can only imagine.

An angel appeared to Mary and said, “Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus... the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” Luke 1:31, 35 Understandingly, Mary was surprised, puzzled, and frightened, but excited and obedient. Then she must have thought and worried: “Who am I going to tell? Who is going to believe me? What are the words I am going to use to tell my parents, friends and Joseph?”

Being in the shoes of Joseph, our reaction would have also been shocked, upset, disbelieving and angry. He have must of thought: “The women I am to marry has cheated on me.” “Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream.” Matt 1:19. His human reaction then changed to believing but confused on the future, the wedding and what others would think.

“And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed... And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city... To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.” Luke 2:1, 3, 5. There had to been a lot of heated discussion between the two of them over this. It was a 90-mile trip over very rough and dangerous terrain. They had to take their own provisions and find their own shelter each night. Mary would have to ride on a donkey for more than a week while in her last days of pregnancy.

When they finally arrived in Bethlehem, Joseph tried to find a room for Mary. But all he could get was a dark, cold, dirty, smelly stable. Just imagine how Mary felt about this. Then her frustration turned to fear because the time of her delivery came. Joseph’s thoughts had to turn to panic maybe thinking: “I know nothing about delivering no baby. I know no one here. This is the worst place and time. Why now God?” As most women can relate, Mary by now is screaming in labor pain. It is not known if Joseph alone delivered the baby, but it had to be very stressful for both.

Like all parents, their frustrations turned to joy, with the baby’s first cry. People then started coming including shepherds who told about the angels they saw in the field. Luke 2:9-18 The Bible does not state when, but wise men from The East, came with gifts and worshiped the child. Matt 2:1-11 Mary pondered all these things in her heart. “This baby who I kiss, feed, change diapers, love and teach is the Creator, the Messiah, the Great I Am.”

There is little known about Jesus as a child. As parents, they must have wondered how to raise Him, knowing He was the Son of God. At age 12, He was not with his parents when they left Jerusalem. They searched for Him and found Him three days later in the temple. Like 2:42-52. They were worried and disturbed. “How do we disciple this perfect child?” Joseph, being the closest to Him for most of His life, then taught Him carpentry. One can only imagine those father and Son talks. Then imagine Mary’s emotions throughout her son Jesus’ life, ministry, crucifixion and resurrection.

God could have sent His Son to earth as a grown man to a palace with great riches and power. Then with an army of angels, He could have setup a kingdom and conquered evil. But God humbled His Son to become a child and experience life as a human so that He could feel, understand and best supply our needs. “And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Phil 2:8. But through His resurrection, Jesus conquered death so that we may have eternal life. John 3:16



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