

The Privilege (and Price) Of partnering with God.

Joseph Mt. 1

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Dec. 17th

REFLECTION: There are many characters needed to carry off any major production. Shakespeare was credited with observing that *“Life is but a stage, and we are all actors upon it.”* The incarnation was certainly the greatest “production” that our Great God ever produced. If God ever gave out “Oscars”, I believe Joseph would win one for “Best supporting actor.”

DIRECTION: The Bible doesn’t reveal much about Joseph, but what it does reveal is sufficient for us to gain a deeper appreciation for this marvelous man and the gracious God that chose him as the Human “step father” of Jesus. Matthew reveals that he was a direct descendent of King David and as such an “Heir” to his throne and a potential “Threat” to the power crazed Herod.

Notice the kind of man God chose to raise His son:

1. JOSEPH WAS JUST Mt 1:19 *“Joseph her husband, being a just man...”* *dik’aio:* equitable (in character or act)

A. Joseph Wanted To Do What Was Right. (Vs 19)

- 1) When he discovered that Mary was pregnant, society offered him only two options:
 - a) Public divorce resulting in humiliating Mary, *but exonerating himself.*
 - b) Private divorce, trying to basically “annul” the marriage.

Either choice would communicate his innocence, and Mary’s guilt!

- 2) He wanted to do what was right before God, *not just what was “right” for him.*

When we feel “wronged”, do we focus on what’s right before God, or just us?

Pr 21:2,3 *“Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.
To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.”*

2. JOSEPH WAS KIND. (Vs 19) *“Not willing to make her a public example”*

A. Despite his hurt, he wanted to protect Mary.

- 1) Since annulment wouldn’t require a public condemnation of Mary, it would leave him open to public “speculation” about his role in the pregnancy.

B. He was willing to sacrifice his reputation in order to be kind to her.

- 1) Gossip/speculation about him and Mary would affect his business.

1 Cor 13: 4-5 *“Charity suffereth long, and is kind; (Chrēsteu’omai: “usefully employed!”) charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil...”*

Are we prone to make sacrificial decisions based on our concern for the feelings of others, even when we feel we’ve been wronged?

3. JOSEPH WAS “CONSIDERATE”. (Vs 20) *“While he thought on these things.”*

A. He didn’t want To Be Hasty With Such Important Matters.

- 1) He realized his choices would affect others!
- 2) First impressions are often inaccurate. *“Haste makes waste” (John Ray's 1678 collection)*
 - a) Emotional decisions often lack:
 - (1) Clarity (To understand the truth/facts) Jn 7:24 *“Judge not according to the appearance...”*
 - (2) Understanding of Consequences. Pr 22:3 *“A prudent man foreseeth the evil...”*

B. He took the time to look (& listen) to God;

Instead of allowing his hurt/anger to cause him to react in angry judgment.

- 1) Because he was thoughtful he was receptive to the angel’s voice and learn/receive God’s:
 - a) Partnership/Peace: 1:20 *“Joseph...fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife..”*
 - b) Process: *“for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.”* (see Gen. 3:15)
 - c) Prophetic Promise: 21 *“she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”*

What might we be missing when we’re not “thoughtful”?

Ps. 46:10 *“be still and know that I am God.”*

4. JOSEPH WAS OBEDIENT. Vs 24; 2:13,14 THIS INVOLVED:

A. Doing what he was told, when it was told, and with a good attitude! Mt 1:24

“Then Joseph ...did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.”

B. Obedience involves a price/sacrifice! It cost Joseph:

- 1) His reputation and business (Why did they stay in Bethlehem for 2 years?)
- 2) His convenience. (Moved his family 4 times in 4 years)
- 3) His Safety (Bethlehem was 5 miles from King Herod)

Why do we think that our obedience will cost us nothing?

“Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease?

While others fought to win the prize and sailed through bloody seas.

No, I must fight, if I would win, protect my courage, Lord.

I’ll bear the cross, endure the toil, supported by Thy Word.”

Application:

- 1) What might God reveal to us if we purposed to be Just, Kind, and Considerate?

Jn 14:21 *“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”*

- 2) What might God accomplish through us if we purposed to be truly Obedient?

Gala 5:22-23 *“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”*

What price are you willing to pay for the privilege
of partnering with God?

The first part of Mt 1 reveals Jesus' human heritage as the son of David. (vv. 1-17).

The second part reveal his divine heritage as the son of God! (18-25)

“Genealogies were very important to the Jews, for without them they could not prove their tribal memberships or their rights to inheritances. Anyone claiming to be “the Son of David” had to be able to prove it. It is generally concluded that Matthew gave our Lord's family tree through His foster father, Joseph, while Luke gave Mary's lineage (Luke 3:23ff).

Many Bible readers skip over this list of ancient (and, in some cases, unpronounceable) names. But this “list of names” is a vital part of the Gospel record. It shows that Jesus Christ is a part of history; that all of Jewish history prepared the way for His birth. God in His providence ruled and overruled to accomplish His great purpose in bringing His Son into the world.

This genealogy also illustrates God's wonderful grace. It is most unusual to find the names of women in Jewish genealogies, since names and inheritances came through the fathers. But in this list we find references to four women from Old Testament history: Ta-mar (Matt. 1:3), Rahab and Ruth (Matt. 1:5), and Bathsheba “the wife of Uriah” (Matt. 1:6).

Matthew clearly omitted some names from this genealogy. Probably, he did this to give a systematic summary of three periods in Israel's history, each with fourteen generations. The numerical value of the Hebrew letters for “David” equals fourteen. Matthew probably used this approach as a memory aid to help his readers remember this difficult list.

But there were many Jewish men who could trace their family back to King David. It would take more than human pedigree to make Jesus Christ “the Son of David” and heir to David's throne. This is why the divine heredity was so important.”

Wiersbe Bible Exposition Commentary (BE Series) - New Testament - New Testament, Volume 1.

Although certainly not as reliable as the scriptures, there are some interesting genealogies relating to Joseph. Some Jewish sources trace Joseph as the son of Jacob, Patriarch of Jerusalem between 32 and 23 BC. <http://mauriceboddy.org.uk/JosephMary.htm>

The “Patriarch” or “Governor” of Jerusalem was the “Title” given to Zerubbabel by Cyrus.

History tells us Zerubbabel's descendants maintained that Title, at least among the Jews. This position was held between 41-32 BC by Herod's brother (Joseph IV) and his son (Joseph V)

The Patriarchate remained vacant for a few years due to the lack of Jewish descendants of Zerubbabel through his Jewish wife (Amytis.) **In 37 BC the Sanhedrin officially “recognized” Zerubbabel's descendents through his Persian wife.** This allowed Joseph's Jacob ben Mattat to become the Patriarch of Jerusalem through Zerubbabel's first (Babylonian) wife. **Herod appointed him and he served between 32-23 BC.** Herod actually sent him (with 3000 troops) to Egypt for service to Octavian in his war against Mark Antony and Queen Cleopatra VII in Egypt in the year of 31 BCE.

Jacob married Eucharis and had a daughter “Miriam.” He later married Cleopatra of Jerusalem (possibly the daughter of Cleopatra and Julius Caesar) **and Joseph was their firstborn son.**

Jacob's brothers Hizkiah and Judas became right wing “Zealots” and were executed in 23 BCE by the Roman and Herodian forces. Herod “trumped up charges” against Jacob and had him executed as well. “Coincidentally” Herod fell in Lust with Simon V Boethus beautiful daughter Mariamme II.

Since Simon was the High Priest's (Yehoshua III) uncle, Herod removed the High Priest and elevated Simon, giving him the “Famous” Cleopatra (Widow of the murdered Jacob) as his wife in exchange for the Mariamme II becoming Herod's 5th wife. **Herod later married Cleopatra himself.**

<http://www.biblesearchers.com/yahshua/davidian/dynasty3.shtml#SimonHighPriest>

If this account is true, then Joseph just “faded” into obscurity, probably in order to avoid the plotting of the corrupt King Herod.