



Week 3: Joseph

Introduction

Have you ever had a special dream, a dream you remembered when you woke up, a dream that made you feel happy and warm inside? The Bible tells us about a very special dream that God gave to Joseph. Listen, and I'll tell you all about this special dream.

Getting to the Heart

(Read Matthew 1:20–21 from your Bible.)

Joseph was engaged to Mary. They were planning to become husband and wife. One night, while Joseph slept, an angel came to Joseph in a dream. The angel had some surprising news for Joseph, news of a miracle. The angel said, "Joseph, Mary is pregnant. She is going to have a baby. You are not the baby's father. Mary's baby is God's own Son, so don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife. Mary's baby will be the Savior everyone has waited for. When the baby is born, name him Jesus."

God wanted to make sure that Joseph knew how special Mary's baby would be. The angel told him, "He shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Baby Jesus would be our Savior! God also wanted Joseph to know that everything would work out okay. "Don't be afraid," the angel said to Joseph.

I wonder if Joseph remembered the angel's words as the little family traveled the long road to Bethlehem. How do you think Joseph felt when he was told, "We have no room for you! The king ordered everyone to return to his hometown to be counted. Bethlehem is filled with people! No room! Go away!"

What must Joseph have thought when the only shelter he and Mary could find was a little stable? Was Joseph worried? Did he remember the angel's words, "Don't be afraid"?

God knew that his Son, Jesus, would be born in the stable. He knew Jesus' first cradle would be an animal's feed box—a manger. God knew the baby Savior's first visitors would be shepherds from the nearby fields. It was all part of God's plan—his Christmas miracle.

Let's repeat the poem we learned last week:

Little baby Jesus sleeping in the hay, *(Tilt your head to "sleep" on your hands.)*

You're God's special Miracle, born on Christmas Day. *(Rock the "baby" in folded arms.)*

Continued

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Taking It Home

Let's thank our heavenly Father for sending Jesus, the Miracle in the manger, to save us. I will say the prayer and you repeat the words after me:

**Dear heavenly Father,
we praise and thank you
for sending Jesus.
Help us to share
the good news of salvation
with everyone we meet.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.**

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