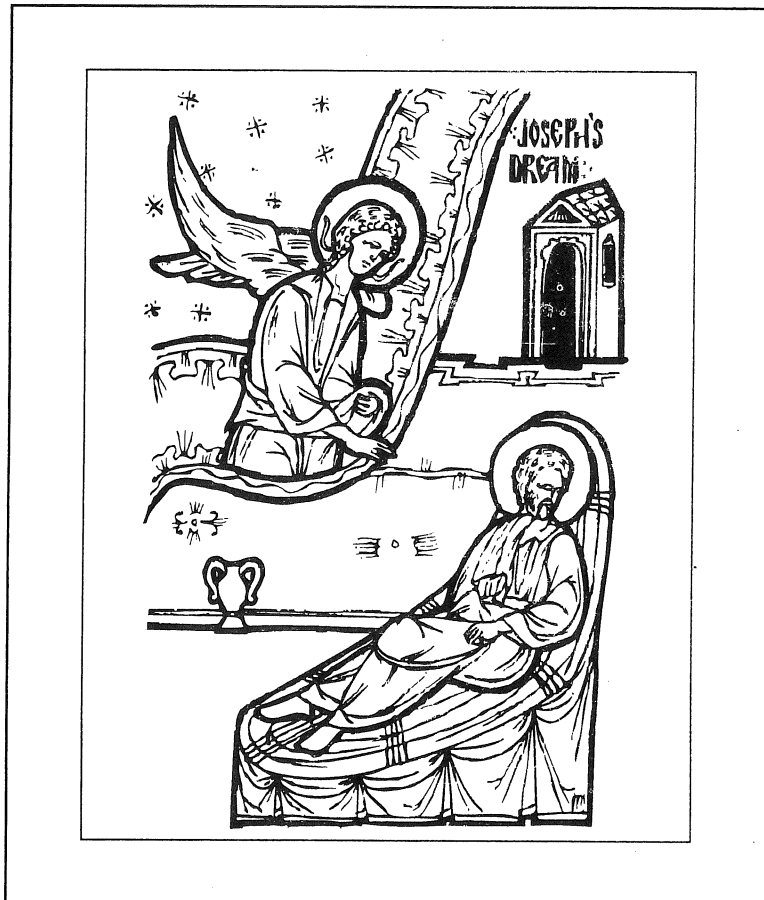


## LESSON 5

# JOSEPH MAKES A PROMISE

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*Read*  
*Matthew 1:18-23*

### JOSEPH'S DREAM

Joseph was an old carpenter of the House of David. When we say "House of David" we mean he was from a very large family all related to King David in the Old Testament. Joseph picked Mary to be his wife. They had a service before they were married called a **betrothal**. This was a pledge or promise that Joseph and Mary would soon live together as husband and wife. Joseph promised he would take care of Mary, protect her and provide for her.

Before they were to be married Joseph found out that Mary was going to have a baby. An angel appeared to him at that time in a dream. The angel told him Mary was filled with the Holy Spirit. She was going to have a son. Joseph was told to name the baby **Jesus**. The angel said Jesus was going to save His people from their sins!

Joseph listened to God's messenger, the angel. He also knew the words of the prophet, Isaiah, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His name shall be called Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14) (Immanuel means **God is with us.**)

Joseph accepted the angel's words, and prepared to welcome Mary into his family. Joseph promised to raise the baby Jesus as if He were his own son.

The word Immanuel is a special name given to Jesus meaning "God is with us." When you kiss the cross in the Church you might hear the priest say, "Christ is with us," or "Christ is among us." This means the same.

Do you know what the answer the Orthodox Christian gives?

H \_\_\_ is and a \_\_\_ w \_\_\_ ys shall be.

### The Census

Do you know what a census is? \_\_\_\_\_

Take a census of your own family. List everyone who lives with you in your home:

(name)	(relation)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The reason Joseph took Mary to Bethlehem was because the Roman Emperor ordered that everyone under Roman rule be counted. Today, we can mail in our census, or someone comes to our home and counts everyone in it. But during Joseph's time people had to travel to their ancestors' home to be counted. Joseph had to go to the home of his ancestor David which was in the town of Bethlehem.

Mary was due to have her child at any moment. The road from the city of Nazareth where she and Joseph lived was long and winding. They walked 90 miles to Bethlehem taking a donkey with them to carry their food and clothing.

Mary and Joseph walked during the day and slept in tents at night. The journey must have taken them almost a week. Joseph was anxious to find a place for Mary to rest as soon as they reached Bethlehem.

The census brought many other people to Bethlehem. The "House of David" family had grown and grown. Joseph walked through the square, hoping to find an inn where they could stay. But there wasn't any room left. Even the private homes were filled with relatives and guests. Finally a friendly man agreed to let Joseph use his cave, the place where animals were stabled for the night. In the cave Joseph found a trough hollowed out in the stone wall. It was called a manger. He filled it with straw so it would be ready if Mary delivered her son that night. During this time of year Bethlehem was quite cold, about 44 degrees at night. Joseph wanted to protect Mary as much as he could from the cold night air. The cave gave them the shelter they needed.

It was good that they were settled for the night, because it was time for Mary to have the baby, fulfilling the prophesy that the prophet Micah (Micah 5:2) foretold; **the Saviour was to be born in Bethlehem.**

## CHRISTMAS

Joseph had trouble finding a place to stay in Bethlehem. Will you have trouble finding these words about the Christmas story?

Find the following words:

Wisemen	Noel	Virgin Mary	Manger	Bethlehem	Judea
Shepherds	Donkey	Stable	Frankincense	Jesus	Holy Spirit
Herod	Gold	Myrrh	Angels	Israel	Nazareth
		December	Christmas		

T	S	E	S	J	O	U	H	Z	W	A	B	C
A	X	T	L	U	O	P	H	A	B	V	F	G
B	C	Z	D	D	S	E	D	C	E	I	H	C
I	Y	J	D	E	C	E	M	B	E	R	K	H
L	M	P	O	A	O	N	J	G	Q	G	R	R
S	T	J	N	U	V	H	W	O	X	I	Y	I
Z	A	B	K	C	R	D	E	L	B	N	F	S
G	H	I	E	R	J	K	L	D	E	M	M	T
H	O	L	Y	S	P	I	R	I	T	A	N	M
E	O	M	A	N	G	E	R	P	H	R	Q	A
R	R	S	N	T	U	W	V	W	L	Y	X	S
O	F	R	A	N	K	I	N	C	E	N	S	E
D	Y	Z	Z	A	B	S	C	O	H	D	T	A
E	F	G	A	N	G	E	L	S	E	H	A	O
I	J	J	R	K	L	M	M	N	M	L	B	T
O	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	S	P	L	O
Q	R	S	T	S	T	N	U	V	W	X	E	U
Y	Z	D	H	E	U	A	D	E	O	M	O	T
A	P	K	L	D	I	S	R	A	E	L	X	S

## The Family

Look at Matthew 1:1–17. This is the family tree of Jesus. It shows all the ancestors from **Abraham** to **David**, and from **David** to **Joseph**. Look at verse 17. Can you add together all the generations?

\_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

Have you every seen a picture or list of your family tree? Ask your parents to help you trace your ancestry. Sometimes we can find out about relatives by looking in our family Bible because many families record their names in it.

## The Troparion of Christmas

A **troparion** is a song about the feast day.

Do you know the troparion for Christmas? Perhaps you sing along with your parents in Church, and are learning it already. The troparion tells us about the Nativity and teaches us to adore Jesus and to know Him.

Find the words that are other names for Jesus in the hymns below. Circle them.  
Learn the troparion sung in your church.

Thy nativity, O Christ our God has shown to the world the light of wisdom for by it those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to adore thee, the sun of righteousness, and to know thee, the orient from on high; O Lord, Glory to Thee!

### Note to Parents:

Encourage your children to think of God's gift to us and what they can give others during the Christmas season. Participate in activities that collect gifts for needy children or other charitable works.