

Readings for the week of Dec. 21/25:

Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-25

Sometimes it amazes me that God knows exactly what we need, and when we need it. His faithfulness to us never ceases.

Mary and Joseph were engaged, but had not had intimate relations. When she became pregnant, Matthew 1:19 tells us *"Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly."*

Then, verses 20 & 21 of that passage tells us *"But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.'"*

God, the Father, had chosen Mary and Joseph to be the human parents of His Son, Jesus. When their circumstances got complicated, God intervened and gave Joseph what he needed. According to our human understanding, it appeared as though Mary had cheated on Joseph and had become pregnant.

All of this was part of God's plan for the Salvation of His people, through His Son, Jesus. When Joseph received that message through an angel of the Lord, that Mary was pregnant from the Holy Spirit, his concerns were taken away and he married Mary as planned.

The birth of Jesus is the reason we can have hope for our Salvation, and our eternal life.

Oftentimes when God has a plan for us, we are not able to see it fully as we are going through it. God is the only One who knows the whole plan from beginning to end. But, in Matthew 1:24 we are told that Jesus is Emmanuel, which means "God is with us". The Holy Spirit of God is always present with us, if we give Him the opportunity. All we have to do is invite Him into our lives and He will come and stay with us forever.

Psalm 37:4-5, says, *“Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act.”*

Proverbs 3:5-6, says, *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”*