

SIX SCENES FROM THE TRUE CHRISTMAS:
Scene #2: God Secures an Earthly Father for Jesus (Matthew 1:18-25)

Initial Observations:

1. God made sure Jesus had an earthly father to provide for him, to protect him, and to train him,
2. God made sure Mary kept the husband that she had been promised to (affirming Biblical marriage as the God-intended foundation for children). God does not guarantee that He will fulfill our plans, but He certainly can fulfill His own plans!

Key Word	Passage	Summary Phrase	Explanation
1. Progression	¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>After</u> His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, • <u>before</u> they came together, • she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. 	Joseph Finds Out	<p><i>This verse gives a brief order of events:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mary was promised to Joseph 2. Mary was with child of the Holy Spirit 3. Eventually everyone found out. <p><i>There is no evidence that Mary told Joseph anything. (Who would or could believe her?) Joseph in some way found out about Mary's pregnancy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was she discovered because "showing" at this time? – Mary had spent 3 months with Elisabeth before this. • Did Joseph find out by gossip? • Did Mary's parents have to break the news to him?
2. Purity & Privacy	¹⁹ Then Joseph her husband, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being a just [man], and • not wanting to make her a public example, • was minded to put her away secretly. 	Joseph Desires Purity Joseph Displays Compassion	<p><i>Joseph wanted to obey God, and yet be kind to Mary. Because Joseph thought the only possible explanation for Mary's pregnancy had to be immorality (sin), he had to separate from her to honor God. Instead of putting her through public legal separation, he still desired to show kindness to her by privately cancelling the legally binding betrothal (divorce).</i></p>
3. Pondering	²⁰ But <u>while</u> he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife,	Joseph Fears Choices Angel Directs Joseph	<p><i>It might be that Joseph was afraid about what would happen to Mary when he separated from her. It would place even greater trouble upon her, bringing her pregnancy (and supposed sin) to permanent exposure and greater scorn. Joseph might even have considered marrying her for her own sake. The angel tells him not to be afraid to do so. Somehow the angel communicated to him through a dream, rather than making a physical appearance as an angel did with Mary. Regardless, Joseph had no doubt or question of its validity (see v. 24 comments).</i></p>
4. Pregnancy	for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ²¹ And she <u>will</u> bring forth a Son, and • you <u>shall</u> call His name Jesus, for He <u>will</u> save His people from their sins." 	Angel Explains Baby	<p><i>Only God providing a supernatural messenger would allow Joseph to believe that Mary had not sinned. God sent this angel to clearly explain that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary's pregnancy was of the Holy Spirit • Mary had not sinned (Mary was still a virgin), and that • the Baby Boy (to be named Jesus) she was carrying would be the Savior.

5. Prophecy	<p>²² So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ²³ "Behold,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the virgin shall be with child, and • bear a Son, and • they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." 	Bible Told Before	<p><i>This is apparently Matthew's explanation (not the angel's) where he ties in what happened regarding Jesus' birth to Old Testament prophecy (the purpose of the Book of Matthew). Matthew quotes from Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Isaiah's prophecy was given around 700 years before Jesus' birth, and clearly indicates that God would come to earth as a male child, and that He would be born to a virgin. What had been foretold had now come to pass!</i></p>
6. Promptness	<p>²⁴ Then Joseph,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being aroused from sleep, • did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and • took to him his wife, ²⁵ and • did not know her <u>till</u> she had brought forth her firstborn Son. • And he called His name Jesus. 	Joseph Obeys God Joseph Marries Mary	<p><i>Joseph immediately obeyed God when he woke from sleep. Though the passage does give a precise command from the angel, Joseph understood it as a command and acted promptly. Joseph immediately "married" Mary, which:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would have helped provide for her, • would possibly alleviate <u>some</u> of the scorn felt by her family, and • would certainly reduce to some degree the social rejection she was experiencing, and would yet experience. <p><i>Joseph, though married to Mary, was not intimate with Mary until after Jesus was born. Joseph seemingly grasped the holiness and greatness of the Child that was growing within her.</i></p> <p><i>Joseph obediently named the baby Jesus. (The usual practice was to name a child after his father.)</i></p> <p><i>According to Luke 1, Mary was told different details about the identity of Jesus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both Mary and Joseph were told what name was to be given to the Baby. • Both Mary and Joseph were given clear and ample information to leave no doubt that this was the Messiah, the Promised One from the Old Testament, God in the flesh. • Joseph was not given specific details of Jesus' assumption of David's throne, but Joseph would have easily made the connection from Old Testament teachings and his knowledge of his lineage and that of Mary.