

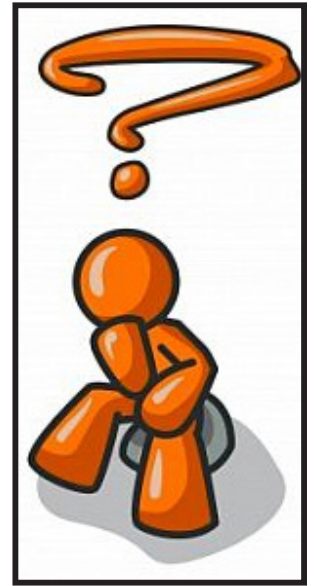
# What About...the Significance of Joseph?

By DR. DAVID A. DEWITT

Through Mary we have the miraculous conception of Jesus via the Holy Spirit. Then why was it crucial that she be married to Joseph? Because without Joseph:

- Jesus could not have fulfilled the Davidic Covenant, and reign as King over Israel
- Jesus would not have fulfilled the Micah 5:2 prophecy of Christ being from Bethlehem
- Jesus could not have fulfilled the angel Gabriel's promise to the virgin Mary

Let's start with the promise to Mary. The angel Gabriel was sent to Mary, who is described as *a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David* (Luke 1:27). So, even though Mary was a descendent of David through Bathsheba's son Nathan (Luke 3:31), Luke refers to Joseph, not Mary, as a descendant David. Then, after telling her she would conceive Jesus miraculously, Gabriel said, "...the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end" (Luke 1:32-33). Three times in the New Testament Jesus is called *Lord of lords and King of kings* (1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 17:14; 19:16). So, Jesus was not only to be a God-man through Mary, He was to be a *King of kings*, specifically, having *the throne of his father David*.



Now let's go back to the Davidic Covenant. God promised David,

*"I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever"* (2 Samuel 7:12-13).

The one who built that house, the temple David wanted to build, was his son Solomon. So, the throne of the kingdom that would be forever would come from the line of Solomon. And it was Joseph, not Mary, who was a descendent of David through Solomon (Matthew 1:6, 16). At the time of the birth of Jesus, Caesar Augustus ordered a census that required Joseph to go to *Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David*. That fulfilled Micah 5:2, which told us it was from Bethlehem *One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel...from the days of eternity*. This had nothing to do with Mary. It was Joseph's lineage to David that brought them to Bethlehem.

But there was a problem. Just as Mary could not have begotten the king of the Jews, neither could Joseph. In the line of descendants from David through Solomon to Joseph, we read about a king

named Coniah (or Jeconiah). He was so bad that, even though he had sons, God said,

*"Write this man down childless...for no man of his descendants will prosper sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah"* (Jeremiah 22:30).

This meant that if Joseph's seed conceived a child, that child would be one of the descendants of Coniah and eliminated from the possibility of being king. So, Joseph could not generate a king because of the curse of Coniah, and Mary could not generate a king because she was not of the line of Solomon. But with a marriage of Joseph to Mary, she not only became Joseph's legal wife, Jesus became Joseph's legal son. That's why when Joseph, though willing to dissolve his betrothal to Mary, *an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife"* (Matthew 1:20).

So, it was essential that Mary become Joseph's legal wife, because it was through Joseph that Jesus will have *the throne of His father David and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end* (Luke 1:32-33).