

JOSEPH, MARY'S BETROTHED

Message 2

Text: Matthew 1:18-19

Words: 6085

INTRO: Welcome to Christmas morning. Last Sunday I spoke to you on Matthew 1:1-17. We are looking at Joseph, Mary's betrothed. This is the genealogy of Jesus Christ. In these verses we have the descent of Joseph. He is a descendent of David and Abraham and all those in between. I pointed out from these verses that Jesus Christ is Messiah by covenant promise, He is Messiah by legal descent, and he is Messiah by timely birth.

When I originally spoke on this text, there was a group of ultra orthodox Jews, the Lubavitcher Hasidim who believed that Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson was the Messiah. In 1993 Schneerson suffered a severe stroke but still the Lubavitcher Hasidim were undaunted. In 1994 he died and many of his followers believed he would be resurrected. Schneerson was not Messiah by covenant promise nor by legal descent nor by timely birth; and he was not Messiah by resurrection. I can tell you on the basis of this genealogy that you and I serve the true Messiah. We do not wait for His first coming, He has already come!

This morning Matthew 1:18-25 was read for us. This is part of Matthew's account of the birth of Jesus Christ. The story of Christ (the Gospel) is the most astonishing story in all of history. From start to finish it is a story that has no equal in human history. It is a story of miracles from start to finish. The Gospel story has many aspects to it that have no parallel in the history of mankind. This is a story, which if told, has the power to change lives. It can make a giver out of a crook. It can make a life saver out of a killer. It can make an honest man out of a liar. It can make a fully sober man out of a drunkard. It can make a godly father out of an adulterer. This story can exalt the valleys and make the high places low. It can make straight that which is crooked. There is no other story that carries the punch and the power that the story of the life of Christ carries. Here is the story of all stories.

Now a story is an account of real or imaginary events. It may be told to entertain, or to give important and valuable

facts. This is a real story and it has the most important and valuable facts you will find in all of human history and it begins with a huge miracle. It is the miracle we commemorate this time of year.

It is interesting that when Matthew begins his story he begins with the genealogy of Jesus Christ, a genealogy he traces back to Abraham, not through Mary, but His step-father Joseph. When Luke writes his account of the Gospel story he traces Christ's genealogy back to Adam. When John writes the Gospel story he traces Christ's existence back to eternity past, before the creation of the world. As a Person, Christ has always existed. He existed as the second Person of the Triune God. That makes Him fully divine. As a man His genealogy begins with Adam and ends with Mary. That makes him fully human.

Having established that Joseph and Mary's Son qualifies to be the Messiah through the genealogy; Matthew, a Jew writing to Jews, begins this wonderful story like this, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was like this..." This raises a question: Why would he begin with the birth of Christ? When I read of Menachem Mendel Schneerson I do not read of his birth. I do not find a genealogy going back to Abraham or Adam. Why does Matthew begin with the birth of Christ? Because the birth of Christ is very, very significant. It is a birth such as has never occurred before and such as will never happen again. Without knowing how His birth took place we would not know if He is truly the Messiah.

Now, if He is to qualify as the Messiah, He must be born of the line of Judah. No one can sit on the throne of David who cannot trace his descent to David through the line of Judah. He must be born in Bethlehem for that is what the prophet Micah said. And then it is most important that He was born of a virgin for that is what the prophet Isaiah prophesied. There are many who proclaim to be Messiah in the world today who do not qualify by any such history. Only Jesus Christ qualifies to be the Messiah from before birth and onward. That is why the account of the birth of Christ is absolutely essential to the Gospel story.

Let me just add this note. Today there is an effort made to teach people that Jesus was a Palestinian. There is an

effort to bring Christianity and Islam together by using such words as Chrislam. That is an abomination. I just mention it for awareness. Matthew's genealogy alone refutes all such claims.

Now in Matthew 1:1-17 we have Joseph's **descent**. In 18-19 we have Joseph's **dilemma**. In 20-21 we have his **dream**; in 22-23 we have an important **doctrine** and in 24-25 we have Joseph's godly **decision**. We have looked at the descent and now want to consider Joseph's dilemma.

Let me read verse 18:

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

II. THE DILEMMA

A. The Timing of Mary's Conception

1. After Mary's betrothal to Joseph

Let us begin by considering for a moment the mother of Jesus. Verse 18 is an amazing verse in a number of respects. Listen to this prophecy made by Isaiah, the prophet 700 years earlier:

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.

Who would dare to prophecy such a thing? And if that had not happened, you could throw the Bible away. Who would dare make a prophecy so absurd? Well, God would! How so? He knows the future! God said that He Himself would give Israel a sign. What a sign is a virgin birth? If it happens it is an undeniable sign!

Now this sign was given at a very significant time in Israel's history. The sign God would give is, "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Immanuel means *God with us*. Now think of what

this is saying. A woman who is not married will have a Son. Not only is she a woman who is not married, she is a woman who was morally pure. She would be a virgin. If that prophecy is to come true, it will have to be a huge miracle! This defies all natural laws related to birth. It is an indisputable sign!

But if this prophecy is to come true, God would have to choose some woman to be the bearer of the Messiah. I expect that from the time of man's fall in Genesis 3 and from the time of God's promise of a Redeemer in Genesis 3 many a woman had dreamed of being the bearer of the Messiah! What a privileged woman that would be, so they must have thought. Who knows how many prayers ascended to heaven by women beseeching God for the privilege of bringing into the world the promised Redeemer.

Just before the birth of Christ There was a young Jewish girl, probably 13-15 years of age by the name of Mary. In the Greek it is literally Maryam, or Miriam. She was a godly young woman. Though of poor parentage, from what she has said, she must have been well trained in Jewish teaching by her parents. Like many other Jewish girls, there is evidence that she had dreams of bringing into the world the promised Redeemer.

Now I believe there is evidence that she had asked God for the privilege of bearing the Messiah. Turn to Luke 1. Think of that, a young lady with such a request when for 400 years God had been silent and many had probably lost hope. Let me show you where I find this evidence. Go to verse 26 of Luke, chapter 1. Luke's Gospel begins with the account of the conception of John the Baptist and then it gives the account of the conception of Jesus Christ. We'll begin in verse 26:

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,

27 *to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.*

If you check out the name translated Mary here it is Miriam. Note that it is the angel Gabriel who is sent. And most amazingly, he is not sent to Jerusalem. He is sent to Galilee, Galilee of the Gentiles. Why is the angel sent here? From my studies I have concluded that the godliest people were not in Jerusalem. That is where they should have been, but the spiritual leaders had become almost totally corrupted spiritually.

And now, in one of the last places you would expect the angel to be sent to, to bring a message to the woman who would bear the Messiah is Galilee. And not only that, it is Nazareth of Galilee. Do you remember what Nathanael said to Jesus? "Can any good thing come from Nazareth?"

But in Nazareth there is a young lady who is betrothed, or engaged to a man named Joseph. He is of the house of David; that is king David. And this young lady is a virgin who is betrothed to be married. Verse 28:

28 *And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"*

29 *But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.*

Note what the angel says, "Rejoice, highly favored one!" Does anyone remember what the word 'favor' is related to from recent message? It is related to the word *grace*. Mary was literally a highly *graced* woman. What does that mean? That means she had pleased God in some way and He had been pleased to grant her the very highest blessing any woman could ever have! Then the angel said, "The Lord is with you!" And then

the angel said, "Mary, you are blessed among women!"

I have mentioned at other times the two Hebrew words for blessed. The one means, as I understand it, to be envied. That is, one is in an enviable situation, a situation others would wish to be in. The other is to be well spoken of. I had originally taken this to have the first meaning but it is the second. Here the idea is that Mary would be well spoken of among women.

Now look at verse 30:

30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."

Well, for a young woman, to suddenly find herself in the presence of an angel with this kind of news could be frightening. But the angel says, "Do not be afraid." Then he gives the reason why this is not frightening. He says, "For you have found favor with God. God is pleased with you, Mary." Now the word translated 'favor' is *charis*, grace. It is what we call *unmerited favor*. But it is not favor without reason. I want you to notice something very important. It says, "...you have found favor with God."

Do you remember recently when we studied the word grace? Do you remember Queen Esther coming before the king unbidden and she found favor with the king? She was also seeking a favor. Do you remember that she found favor because the king was pleased with her? Here is Mary, and this young lady had pleased God in heaven. And God stretched out the golden scepter, so to speak, to this young lady in Nazareth of Galilee, and said, "You will bear My Son."

Now one might ask, "How did God choose her over all other women?" Well we might say she was of the right age at the right time and God just chose her. She was God's elect simply by God's choice. It had nothing to do with her. But that is not

how God chooses. What was not God's basis for choosing her? I want you to notice verse 30, "Do not be afraid Mary, you have found favor with God."

Here is a very simple lesson in grammar. Verbs tell us several very important things. One of those capabilities of verb to reveal some very important truths is the voice of the verb. Now in English we have only two verb voices, active and passive. When the verb is passive an action is performed on the subject of the verb. When a verb is active the subject does the action. Now I want you to consider the verb *found*. Mary had found favor with God. Mary had found grace to bring the Messiah into the world, but how was she chosen for this? The verb found is in the active voice which tells us that she actively pursued this favor with God. She pursued this favor and found it. God chose her for this favor because she actively pursued this favor.

Let me tell you something about the doctrine of election. God does not indiscriminately choose some to salvation and reprobate the rest to condemnation. There is a very specific kind of person God chooses. It is one that chooses Him out of all the other myriads of religions and gods man has. God elects such as elect Him by repenting of their sins and walking by faith.

Well, Mary is betrothed to Joseph. Betrothal in Jewish culture was somewhat like engagement in our culture. Like engagement, it tells others that this person is spoken for. He or she is no longer available to anyone else for marriage. However, betrothal, in Bible times, was so binding in the Jewish culture that only a divorce could break the betrothal. The commitment was just as strong as marriage only the marriage, because of necessary preparations, was not yet consummated. It was after Mary was betrothed that Mary has her

encounter with the angel who informs her that she will be the bearer of the Messiah.

Well, the timing of Mary's conception is important. It is first, "after she was betrothed to Joseph." We will consider now second that it was before her marriage to Joseph.

2. Before Mary's marriage to Joseph

Let me read verse 18 once more:

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew has now told us that Mary's conception took place after her betrothal to Joseph, but that it was before her marriage to Joseph for he says it was before they came together. Mary did not seem to understand that the Messiah must be born of a virgin. The Jews did not understand it either. In Luke 2 when the angel informs her of her privilege to bear the Messiah she said, "How can this be since I do not know a man?" She was betrothed but not married.

I want you to notice several things here. When God sought the right family to put His only begotten Son into He did not choose a rich family or one of high position. He sought, above all else for a godly family. When one studies in Luke what Mary said to Elizabeth when she went to see her, one finds that she is a godly woman. Now I want you to notice in verse 19 that Joseph was also a just man. Take careful note that God did not want a single parent home for His Son. He could have done that. And again, the Lord did not look for rich parents; He looked for righteous parents. He needed a godly, righteous young woman who was not married because she must be a virgin. Then He needed a righteous young woman who was betrothed to a godly man so His Son would have godly

training. Spiritual training in Scripture belongs to the man. He needed a godly young woman who was betrothed to a man who would not divorce his wife though she was found to be with child before marriage. God found such a man in Joseph. I have taught some lessons that I called Mighty Lessons from Little Men. Joseph is one of these little recognized men from whom we can learn mighty lessons.

When the time was right and God found the right woman and the right man then He took the necessary steps to bring forth His Son, the Messiah. Now notice how carefully Matthew words this first sentence in the Story of stories, "After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together..."

Well, all that is with regard to the timing of Mary's conception which leads us now to the discovery of her conception.

B. The Discovery of Mary's Conception

In another house in Israel there was a godly man. We do not know how old he was. But he will have been a happy man. Soon he would be married! Do you know what it is like to be engaged? Do you remember how you looked forward to being married? No doubt the days went by fast as he busily prepared a home for his bride. He likely did not get to see his bride. It may be he would not see her until the day he went to take her as his wife. But soon he would be married. Then one day some of the most devastating news an engaged or betrothed man can receive came to him. How it came to Joseph we do not know. Perhaps the friend of the bridegroom who carried messages from one to the other came and said, "Joseph, brace yourself. I have bad news for you. Joseph, my friend, my brother, I don't know how to break this to you. Mary is expecting a child."

Put yourself in Joseph's shoes for a moment. I do not know for how long they have been betrothed, but

without doubt Joseph and his dad have been busy building onto Joseph's father's house. They are preparing a place for Joseph and Mary to live after they are married. Maybe the place is half done, and maybe it is almost done, and now this news. How devastating that must have been! No doubt his world seemed to crumble before him. Mary has been found with child. Joseph must have said, "Oh my God what shall I do?"

I want you to look at these words now, "...she was found to be with child..." We want to consider first the verb *found*, which we looked at earlier in a better light. Here we have the same word. Again I want to point out to you the voice of the verb. This time it is not active it is passive. This time the action happens to her. She has been discovered! Mary silently carried the Messiah and then she was found out!

I have wondered how Mary's parents learned about this. I have wondered how Mary explained this to them. But it seems that they accepted her story. But the story is not over. Our first sentence of this story in Matthew is as yet incomplete. Let me now read this clause once more, "...she was found with child of the Holy Spirit." Well, Joseph does not yet know this but notice again how carefully Matthew sets forth the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, "...she was found with child of the Holy Spirit." Yes, she was found with child but she had not been unfaithful. The child she was carrying was the Christ, the Messiah.

Before we move to the next point let me just note here that there are four major doctrines in this verse. The first is the virgin birth. Mary was found with child before she was married. Then, because Mary was a human being, we have the humanity of Christ. That is a major doctrine. The third major doctrine taught is the deity of Christ. Mary was with child by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is divine and that makes Jesus divine. How it works with Jesus being both human and divine was a doctrine that went through a lot of argument and

study in the early Church. The fourth major doctrine is that of the deity of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ was fathered by the Holy Spirit, and Christ is called the Son of God.

III. DECISION (19)

A. The Reasons for Joseph's Decision

1. Joseph was a just man

We come then to verse 19. It says:

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.

We begin with the statement made that Joseph was a just man. It is very significant that Matthew would note that here. Joseph has just had almost the worst news any young man can be given. It does not mean as much in a promiscuous society like ours as it would have to Joseph, though it is bad enough even now. And Joseph had a major decision to make: What will he do with Mary?

I wonder this morning if it could be said of me or you this morning: He is a just man? Are you a just man? Are you a just woman? Well, let's look at what it means to be a just man or a just woman. The original word means upright, righteous or virtuous. Joseph walked uprightly before God and man.

Joseph was the kind of man you could buy a used car from. You could buy a house from him. If Joseph had come to your shop and charged things you could have done so without fear that he might not pay when the due date came. He was the kind of guy, that if you worked with him he would do his share. Joseph was a just man. Joseph was a good man.

I wonder if you know what it is like to sell things and not get paid? I wonder if you know what it is like

to buy something and find out you got a lemon. I wonder if you know what it is like to work with someone and you end up doing most of the work or the dirty work? I wonder if you know what it is like to trust someone as a friend and then find they sold you out for something?

Here is a mighty lesson from a little man. Be just. Joseph knew what it was to be poor. But he knew what it was to walk upright before man and God. You cannot be classed a just man in Scripture and live unrighteously before man or God.

Joseph was a just man. I find five people in the Bible who are called just men; Noah, John the Baptist, Cornelius the Gentile, Joseph and Jesus. The first reason for the decision Joseph is going to make is that he is a just man.

2. Joseph was a considerate man

The second reason for the decision he will make is that he was a considerate man. Well, how do I know that? Look at what our verse says. He has just learned that his betrothed had been unfaithful, but he was not willing to make her a public example.

Joseph, fully expecting that his espoused wife had been unfaithful. That is the only conclusion he could come to. He now had the right to bring her before the leaders and request to have her stoned to death. She would have died the death of an un-mourned harlot. She deserved it, as far as Joseph knew. Any girl who lives unfaithful in that day knew that could happen. It was not only legal to stone a person like that, it was required. Any man who treated a girl like that during OT times, if he was discovered, was to be stoned just as well. He did not deserve to live. Are you listening young men and women? The God, who set those laws, is a just God.

Now there is something that follows naturally in men who are just. They are considerate. Joseph had his rights but he was considerate. Notice our text, "Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example..." Ah there is in just men an aspect we all appreciate of someone else. He was not willing to make her a public example. He is considerate.

I suppose you know what it is like to be with someone who is inconsiderate. Ladies, maybe you know what it is like when you have washed the floors and somebody walks across them with muddy boots. Do you know what it is like to live with inconsiderate people? Joseph probably learned as a child to be just. And he was considerate because he had learned to be just.

Inconsiderate people do not take others into consideration. They are the important people. They are selfish. I can tell you from our text this morning that if Joseph had come to your house you would have met a gracious man. You would have been able to tell him to help himself at your house and you would know that he would not have abused your generosity. I can tell you from this text that if he had spilled something on your floor he would have cleaned it up. You know that because the text teaches us he was considerate when it says, "he was not willing to make her a public example."

Two mighty lessons we might learn from Joseph this morning.
To walk uprightly before man and God and to be considerate of others.

B. The Content of Joseph's Decision

We come now to the content of Joseph's decision. Joseph had several options before him. We'll read verse 19 once more:

19 *Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.*

This verse tells us he was 'minded' to put her away secretly. The word translated 'minded' is *bouloumai*. It has been translated to: will 15 times, would 11 times, be minded 2 times, intend 2 times and a few other miscellaneous ways. So it occurs 34 times. In this case Joseph had a decision to make. He made his decision, and now he needed to carry through with his plans. Verse 20 tells us that he thought about these things. He did not act then think. He thought then wanted to act. You see, he was thinking over things that caused him great pain. And yet, in his pain he was considerate of Mary. No wonder God chose this man to be the guardian of His Son.

So what options did Joseph have? Turn to Deuteronomy 22. As I see it, he had two options. He had the option of bringing her to the elders and to have her stoned to death. Verse 20 speaks of an unfaithful young woman. It says:

20 *"But if the thing is true, and evidences of virginity are not found for the young woman,*

21 *"then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father's house. So you shall put away the evil from among you.*

If Joseph had chosen this route, she would have been accused and judged. And then they would have taken stones and stoned her to death or they would have taken her out of the city and up to some high spot and there they would have pushed her over. If she was alive yet when she hit the bottom they would have stoned her to death there.

When our text says Joseph was not willing to make her a public example, this is what he was not willing to do. His other option was divorcing her. It is here that it

becomes very important that it says Joseph was a just man. If the Lord had not allowed the option of divorce in such cases, he would not have been a just man by making the decision he made. If he had done something not permissible by the law, he could no longer have been considered a just man.

So we ask, just where does the OT law allow divorce in a case like this? Turn to Deuteronomy 24. I believe this is one of the most misunderstood passage over which so much debate occurs. It says this:

- 1 *"When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house,*
- 2 *"when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's wife,*
- 3 *"if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife,*
- 4 *"then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.*

Now here is the great debate, what does verse 1 mean when it says, "...she finds no favor in his eyes..." and "...he has found some uncleanness in her..."? It is my view that this describes precisely the case Joseph was in. It seems that God's people sometimes did not carry through with the requirement to stone a young woman in such a case. And in this passage, though God does not recommend it, He allows divorce instead of stoning. Jesus said in Matthew 19 that Moses gave this allowance because of the hardness of their hearts.

Is there support for that view? We go back to Deuteronomy 22. Look now at verses 13-14. Here a young man

detested his new wife because he discovered she was not a virgin. It says:

- 13 *"If any man takes a wife, and goes in to her, and detests her,*
- 14 *"and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, 'I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she was not a virgin,'*

Now note in verse 13, this young man detests her because he discovered she was not a virgin. The passage then goes on to give instruction as to how to determine if what he said is true and if it is not true, he has to remain married and may never divorce. Why? Because his claim was proven false and after marriage no divorce was ever allowed by God anywhere in the Bible at all.

But if it was true, she was to be stoned. Let me quote here from the notes I wrote to the Catechism on this question. I wrote:

"For years, it seemed to me that this 'some uncleanness' of Deuteronomy 24 must refer to Deuteronomy 22:13-21. This speaks of a young lady who had been betrothed but did not tell her husband before marriage that she had been unfaithful to him during betrothal. But after marriage he discovered that she had been unfaithful during their betrothal. In 22:14, it says he brings occasions of speech against her or charges her with shameful conduct. The words 'speech against her' KJV, or 'charges her' NKJV is the word 'dabar'. This is the same word as used in 24:1 'some' (dabar) uncleanness. I propose that the words, 'he has found some uncleanness in her' in 24:1 mean the same as the charges of unfaithfulness in 22:14. That would mean she had been unfaithful during the time of betrothal. In 24:3 this woman had been divorced and then married another, and the second husband made the same discovery as the first husband. Deuteronomy 24:3 says he *hates* her or *detests* her. In 22:13, the *detesting* of the wife by the husband was because the husband claimed he had found her not to be a virgin. The word to 'hate' or 'detest' in 22:13 and 24:3 are the same word. So I believe that this

gives some ground to see that these two passages speak of the same sin. So the 'some uncleanness' is the same as the unfaithfulness of 22:20-21 and the 'hating' or 'detesting' her are for the same cause, her unfaithfulness during betrothal."

The conclusion to that is this: If unfaithfulness occurred by a young lady during betrothal she should be stoned, but God did allow divorce if the man so chose. Once the marriage had taken place and this claim was not made, I find no allowance for divorce at all in the OT or the new. Anyone wishing greater detail on this could get our messages on this from sermonaudio/mecl.

So Joseph had before him two legal options: Have Mary stoned to death, or divorce her privately. And so, not willing to make her a public example, and being a just man, he determined to divorce her privately.

Now before I conclude let me ask you a question: Why did God not inform Joseph sooner about the fact that Mary would bear the Messiah? He could have. After Joseph has come to his decision, the Lord then lets him know what the case is. Second question: Why did God not wait longer to let Joseph know what the case is with Mary? And here is the answer: we do not know.

And why did I ask those questions? We might ask the same question of many things in our lives. Why did I not see that car? Why did we not notice something was not right? Why did this happen to me? Why did I wait so long? Here is what I propose: Always live right to the very best of your ability and then simply trust God for all those things you do not know. Simply trust that God knows what is best.

CONCLUSION: So, let me conclude by reading our verses once more:

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

19 *Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.*

It is amazing to learn whom God chose to be the mother of the Messiah. It was a young virgin in a despised town, in an undesirable region, Galilee of the Gentiles. It was to a young lady in a poor home, but beyond all question, a godly home. Then, the Lord chose a time after she was betrothed and before she was married. And she conceived by the Holy Spirit. She was a virgin and that is what the prophet Isaiah had prophesied 700 years earlier.

One cannot help but wonder how everything was explained to all those closely involved, but in Mary's family and in Joseph's family.

What kind of person are you? Are you just and considerate like Joseph? Do you think of others rather than yourself? How about taking Mary and Joseph as an example for your own life. Why not seek to live a life before God as they did?

Also, if you are taking responsibility for things you did not know soon enough; things that you might do different if only you had known certain things sooner, why not unload today. Simply say, Lord You know best. I trust You.