

“Home For Christmas: Advent Series”

Part 2

“A Home to Grow: Nazareth”

“So the family went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what the prophets had said: ‘He will be called a Nazarene.’” Matthew 2:23

A. Nazareth as a home for Jesus...

“‘Nazareth!’ exclaimed Nathanael. ‘Can anything good come from Nazareth?’ ‘Come and see for yourself,’ Philip replied.” John 1:46

1. Nazareth was a small village on a hill of about 400.
2. Nazareth was looked down on by those from the people of Judea. People of Nazareth were considered less cultivated, with a ruder dialect, and influenced by the Gentiles with less moral or religious character.
3. Nazareth was about 70 miles from Bethlehem.
4. The trip from Egypt would have been somewhere between 100-200 miles depending on the area where Joseph and Mary settled for refuge.

“After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. ‘Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother,’ the angel said. ‘Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.’ That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, and they stayed there until Herod’s death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: ‘I called my Son out of Egypt.’” Matthew 2:13-15

B. Joseph and Mary return to Nazareth...

“When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. ‘Get up!’ the angel said. ‘Take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel, because those who were trying to kill the child are dead.’ So Joseph got up and returned to the land of Israel with Jesus and his mother. But when he learned that the new ruler of Judea was Herod’s son Archelaus, he was afraid to go there. Then, after being warned in a dream, he left for the region of Galilee. So the family went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what the prophets had said: ‘He will be called a Nazarene.’” Matthew 2:19-23

1. Jesus grew up in a village with brothers and sisters. **“Then they scoffed, ‘He’s just a carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon. And his sisters live right here among us.’ They were deeply offended and refused to believe in him.” Mark 6:3**

2. Jesus learned His “father’s” trade as a carpenter. **“He’s just a carpenter, the son of Mary...”**

3. Jesus grew in wisdom, size, and favor. **“Then he returned to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. And his mother stored all these things in her heart. Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people.” Luke 2:51-52**

4. Jesus’ wisdom exceeded His age! **“After the celebration was over, they started home to Nazareth, but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn’t miss him at first, because they assumed he was among the other travelers. But when he didn’t show up that evening, they started looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they couldn’t find him, they went back to Jerusalem to search for him there. Three days later they finally discovered him in the Temple, sitting among the religious teachers, listening to them and asking questions. All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.” Luke 2:42-47**

C. Life was hard for Jesus in Nazareth...

1. He was rejected by His own. **“A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his own family.” Matthew 13:57**

2. His life was threatened. **“When they heard this, the people in the synagogue were furious. Jumping up, they mobbed him and forced him to the edge of the hill on which the town was built. They intended to push him over the cliff, but he passed right through the crowd and went on his way.” Luke 4:28-30**

3. He was limited in miracles. **“Then Jesus told them, ‘A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his own family.’ And so he did only a few miracles there because of their unbelief.” Matthew 13:57b-58**

4. Still, He would always carry the label of being a Nazarene. **“We have found the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth.” John 1:45 NLT**

D. What are your expectations as a follower of Christ?

1. Mary and Joseph had to leave all that was familiar to find safety.

What is God asking you to leave behind to follow His voice?

2. Mary and Joseph had to trust the voice of God to guide them.

Where is God leading you in your personal walk? What is He prompting you to do...or not do?

3. The promise of the angel, “Do not be afraid” did not guarantee that Mary and Joseph would not face danger, criticism, hard times, poverty, or any other threatening circumstance.

What promises do you need to hold onto as you walk through challenging times?

4. Jesus had no guarantee of acceptance by those in His own home area, as well as limitations due to the faith of others.

What is God calling you to do by faith? Is there rejection in your life that you need to surrender? God has peace for all who will follow!

**“I am leaving you with a gift—
peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give
is a gift the world cannot give.
So don’t be troubled or afraid.” John 14:27**

Coming soon:

You can pick up the DVD in the foyer today!

December 11: **“A Supportive Home: Jerusalem”**

December 18: **“The Predicted and Celebrated Home: Bethlehem”**

December 25: **“I’ll Be Home For Christmas”**

“Children in Jesus' day played games similar to hopscotch and jacks. Whistles, rattles, toy animals on wheels, hoops, and spinning tops have been found by archaeologists. Older children and adults found time to play, too, mainly with board games. A form of checkers was popular then.

Tradesmen would be instantly recognizable by the symbols they wore. Carpenters stuck wood chips behind their ears, tailors stuck needles in their tunics, and dyers wore colored rags. On the Sabbath, these symbols were left at home.

The second commandment forbade "graven images," so there are few Jewish portraits showing dress at the time. Also because of this prohibition, the Jews produced little in the way of painting, sculpture, or carvings. The masonry and carpentry of the day appear utilitarian. One notable exception to the commandment seems to be the tolerance of dolls for children.

At the two meals each day, bread was the main food. The light breakfasts—often flat bread, olives, and cheese (from goats or sheep)—were carried to work and eaten at mid-morning. Dinners were more substantial, consisting of vegetable (lentil) stew, bread (barley for the poor, wheat for the rich), fruit, eggs, and/or cheese. Fish was a common staple, but red meat was reserved for special occasions. Locusts were a delicacy and reportedly taste like shrimp. (Jews wouldn't have known that, however, since shrimp and all other crustaceans were "unclean.")

As carpenters, Joseph and Jesus would have created mainly farm tools (carts, plows, winnowing forks, and yokes), house parts (doors, frames, posts, and beams), furniture, and kitchen utensils.”

