

"LIFE THROUGH THE LENS"



IS CHRISTMAS ONLY? – PT.2 THE ROAD TRIP

Meanwhile, Joseph heard about Mary being pregnant. He thought, "Uh Oh! Mary hasn't slept with me. Maybe she's got a new bloke. I still love her and don't want to embarrass her. I'll quietly break off the engagement." But again, God steps in. He sends an angel to mess with Joseph's dreams with a message that Mary's pregnancy is part of His plans and not break off the engagement. The next morning a bleary-eyed Joseph said to himself (and to God), "OK! If that is what God wants, I'll marry Mary and look after the little bloke like he was my own."



Now we go on a road trip of about 111 Km with Joseph, a pregnant Mary and a non-pregnant donkey. To understand this, we need to back up a bit. About six hundred years before, God let it be known that this specially planned birth would happen in Bethlehem. But! How to get Joseph and a pregnant Mary to go to Bethlehem?

Governments may not know it or believe it, but God can use them too to make his plans happen. Well, the government decided (actually put the idea in their mind) that everyone in the country had to be counted and make it easier for the "Counters"; everyone had to go to the town from which their great grandfathers, grandfathers, etc. came. Guess where Joseph's relations had lived? Right! Bethlehem!



So, end of the road trip. Worn out, cold (not hot and dusty -remember this was wintertime in their country) footsore, tired; Joseph, pregnant Mary and a non-pregnant donkey arrived in Bethlehem, along with a mob of other travellers all coming to be counted.

Imagine an exhausted Joseph and clod and pregnant Mary knocking on Inn doors (inns are like old-time motels) and the Inn-keepers all saying, "Bad luck mate! No rooms left". But! Again God swings his plan into action. Finally, after saying, "Sorry mate. Full up", one bloke takes a closer look and sees the tired and pregnant Mary, sighs and says, "Well mate, I guess you and the missus could stay in the stable out the back." And so that is where this special baby, the Son of God was born. His mother wrapped him in some cloths and gently laid him on some straw in a feeding manger. People think stables are smelly, dirty and cold places. Believe me! That is not true. I grew up on a farm with a stable where my dad kept his horses for pulling ploughs. On cold, windy nights, it was so warm from those big animals and cuddly in the straw; quiet and peaceful. It would have been the best place ever to be born. Especially when you know it is God's ideal!



God bless, Kevin. See Pt. 3 next week.