

Opening Prayer: Father in heaven, thank You for all the times I can lay down to sleep in a nice, warm bed. In times when I am in need or want, give me confidence You will provide whatever I need. Teach me thankfulness and contentment. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

- Describe a time you were not able to find lodging when you were away from home.
- Where is the worst place you have ever had to spend the night?

Watch the Video: Session 2



[Click here to learn more about Bethlehem, where Jesus was born.](#)

The Bible doesn't reveal what Joseph thought about the humble shelter he found for Mary and her son Jesus. But if many of us found ourselves in a similar situation, we would struggle with the fact that we couldn't provide better accommodations for our family.

- Describe a time you couldn't provide what you wanted for your family. What feelings did you experience?
- How would you help an unemployed or underemployed friend deal with feelings of failure or frustration, especially if his family was struggling financially?
- What valuable lessons does God teach us during difficult financial times?

Once when Jesus was traveling through Jerusalem He came across a man born blind. His followers thought the man's suffering was God's punishment for a sin either he or his parents had committed. Jesus taught them God sometimes leads us into difficult circumstances so He can reveal His love and glory to us—and through us—to others.

Read John 9:1-7, 13-17, 28-41.

- 1 As He (Jesus) passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.
- 2 And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"
- 3 Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.
- 4 We must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.
- 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."
- 6 Having said these things, He spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then He anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

- 13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.
- 14 Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.
- 15 So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."
- 16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for He does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" and there was a division among them.
- 17 So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about Him, since He has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

- 28 And they reviled him, saying, "You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.
- 29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He comes from."
- 30 The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where He comes from, and yet He opened my eyes.
- 31 "We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, God listens to him.
- 32 Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.
- 33 If this man were not from God, He could do nothing."
- 34 They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out.

- 35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him He said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”
- 36 He answered, “And who is He, Sir, that I may believe in Him?”
- 37 Jesus said to him, “You have seen Him, and it is He who is speaking to you.”
- 38 He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped Him.
- 39 Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.”
- 40 Some of the Pharisees near Him heard these things, and said to Him, “Are we also blind?”
- 41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.”

Jesus shows us why God permitted that man to be born blind. It was so that when he encountered Jesus his eyes could be healed and he could see the Savior of the world—God’s own Son, Jesus—with his own eyes. At the same time the evidence of his healing and his brave words would give a powerful testimony to the Jewish leaders that Jesus was indeed God’s omnipotent Son.

- When you go through tough times, what message do you think God is trying to give you?
- How have you seen God use a difficult circumstance in your life to your good and His glory?

Whatever Joseph might have felt about the poor surroundings he provided his family, the visit of the shepherds refocused his attention on that special Baby lying in the manger. Whether Joseph realized it or not, God’s Son had left behind the riches and glories of heaven to share His life with us in this poor, dark world. Jesus would go through far worse situations to save us from God’s wrath, even to death on the cross. But because Jesus humbled Himself, God the Father exalted Him by raising Him from the dead, and seating Him at His right hand in heaven.

- What does it show you about God our Father to realize He was not above letting His Son lie in a poor manger?

God chose to reveal the good news of His Son’s birth to shepherds, who were treated with contempt by most of their fellow Jews.

- What encouragement do you get from God choosing them, and then Jesus later identifying Himself as the Good Shepherd (John 10)?

Closing Prayer: Heavenly Father, this may not be the best time for my family, but remind us You are here to provide all our needs. Help us trust Your love for Jesus' sake so we can recognize Your deeds of kindness and spread the news of Your goodness everywhere we go. In Jesus' name. Amen.



Digging Deeper: Additional links and resources available at lhm.org/joseph.

[The Despised Shepherds](#)

[Angels](#)

[Dating the First Christmas](#)