

Drive Thru Christmas Character Script

CHARACTER: Joseph

***Narrator:** Hi! Welcome to Drive Thru Christmas! We are so excited that you have chosen to come on this journey with us. My friend has so much to show and tell you! They will be here in just a second...but before I introduce you to them, here are a few quick things to know about your trip!*

- 1) Drive slowly around the parking lot area, listening to the audio and viewing the scenes as you go.*
- 2) Each banner has a hidden star...see if you can find them all.*
- 3) I hear your tour guide coming...enjoy the journey!*

Introduction

Welcome! My name is Joseph and I get to take you back in time and tell you how the Christmas story unfolded!

First a little about myself...

I am a quiet and simple Jewish man. I was from Bethlehem but now live in Nazareth where I work with my hands, building tables and benches and frames for looms. My small shop is filled with the smell of olive wood and pine shavings as I use the tools my father passed down to me to shape the wood into something useful. Useful...and beautiful. I could never have dreamed that God would use me, a simple carpenter, in his amazing plan. Yet that's just what He did. Let me tell you what happened...

Scene 1: Creation

Let me start from the beginning.... From the time I was very small, I learned that before the world was created, God was there. He made the earth and everything in it just by speaking the word. He looked at everything He had made, and said that it was perfect. I was taught the two people God had created, Adam and Eve, were made in His image. I wondered what that meant. Some of the rabbi's taught me that when people were made in the image of God, it means that they were *like* God—they were perfect, entirely good, just like God is good.

Unfortunately, things didn't stay that way for long. Adam and Eve disobeyed God. The serpent, who we know was Satan, came and tempted them to do the one thing God had told them not to do—eat the fruit from the one tree in the garden God had told them not to. The serpent said that if they did this, they would be as wise as God. They were proud. They decided to listen to the serpent, and disobey God.

Because they sinned, everything changed. Now Adam and Eve weren't perfect and good. Before, they used to walk through the garden with God. Now they hid from him. They were ashamed. Worst of all, because they had disobeyed, they would die – a natural consequence of sin.

God still loved them though and promised a way for forgiveness and new life. He wanted his people to live. He wanted His people to be perfect again, in His image. He wanted them to be with Him again and never be ashamed. God made a promise. God said that one day, the woman would give birth to Someone who would overcome Satan and live perfectly as a substitute for sinners. This One would save us from the death that came because of Adam and Eve's disobedience. This One, who we call the Messiah, would give us new life. And since that first promise, everyone had been waiting for Him to come.

Scene 2: Angel to Mary

About 4000 years passed since the Garden of Eden. People waited for the Savior to come.... I waited too. Little did I know the waiting was almost over. God had set his plan in motion. I didn't know it yet, though. I had a lot on my mind, and a plan of my own.

You see, there was a girl in Nazareth named Mary. She was young and beautiful. We were engaged to be married. My parents definitely approved of a marriage with this girl. She was from a good, God fearing family who were descendants of King David, just as I am.

My father made a call on the girl's parents. Soon after, both her parents and mine brought us together. They blessed us, and we each drank a little from the engagement cup of wine. I started getting everything ready. There was a home to build, and all the household things that a wife needs. And later, God willing, there would be children.

Then, before the wedding ceremony, I discovered that my sweet, quiet fiancée was pregnant! She tried to tell me an angel of God came to her while she was at home... I could not listen. I felt as though I'd been hit in the stomach. "Why, God?" I asked. "Why did you ruin my plans for the future?" For awhile I just felt angry at her betrayal and sorry for myself. Then I started to think about her family, and the shame they all must be feeling. I decided that there was no need for me to make things worse by ending our engagement publicly. According to the law, she could even have been stoned for adultery, though that punishment is rarely given these days. I decided to end things privately—and soon!

But before I could, the Lord came to me in a dream—to me, a simple carpenter! He said, "Joseph, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." I had woken up, awestruck by what God had just told me. I began to understand that my plans for the future are really God's plans, and He is the one in control. I did as the Lord told me and took Mary as my wife.

Scene 3: Caesar

Mary and I heard the news about 8 months later. Caesar, the King over the whole Roman Empire, ordered that a census be taken of all the people he rules. In order to register and be taxed, everyone had to return to their hometowns. This was a major decree – it went out to the whole Roman territory - which included Israel, Egypt, parts of Northern Africa, Greece, Asia Minor and Italy. Since Mary and I were Jews, descendents of David, living in Nazareth, we needed to return to Bethlehem, a week’s journey from Nazareth. Mary and I discussed whether or not we should make the trip. She was going to have the baby soon. I didn’t know if it was safe for her to travel. Her family even cautioned against it. But in the end, we decided together that we needed to obey the government and make the trip.

Even though I have nothing good to say about the Romans, especially about their king, they are still the authority that God has put over us. Besides, at least in Bethlehem we would be free for a little while from the gossip and pointed looks. Things hadn’t been easy for either of us. I tried to keep in mind the amazing message the Lord gave me in the dream...that the child inside Mary was the Savior that God had promised to send! But sometimes the details and worries of everyday life crowded out the joy and excitement I felt after the dream.

It was during our slow journey south to Bethlehem, that Mary suddenly says to me, excited, her eyes shining, “Joseph, do you remember the words of the prophets?”

“Sure I do,” I said to her, grinning a little even though we are both weary. “Every single letter of the scriptures, by heart.”

“Joseph! Don’t make fun. There is a prophecy that says, ‘But you, Bethlehem, Ephratha, out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.’ Don’t you see? It’s about the Promised One. He is to be born in Bethlehem. Everything is just as God had planned it to be, long ago.”

Scene 4: Shepherds

While we were in Bethlehem, the time came. That night I had all the anxieties and concerns of a husband with a wife in labor for the first time. At that moment, I had no idea of the incredible way that God was letting the world know that the Promised One had finally come.

Mary and I were just thankful for a safe trip and shelter... the town was filled with people looking for a place. As evening came it was quiet and I was thankful to rest for a minute. Then I looked out the door and noticed a bright light out in the fields of Judea. “What could that be?” I wondered. I did not realize until later that God had sent millions of messengers that filled the night sky over the hills above Bethlehem. The light was a sky full of angels who shone white with God’s glory. They had come to tell shepherds the news of Jesus’ birth. The shepherds said they were so terrified they were shaking but the angel told them not to be afraid, that he had come with good news for all people. They repeated the angel’s words, “Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born; he was the Messiah,

the Lord. And this is how you will know what I say is true, you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” They were so excited at the news, they left their sheep and ran to town.

Scene 5: Nativity

God is amazing and keeps his promises. He kept us safe during our travels and provided a shelter for us. It was not the ideal shelter I had in mind but the guest rooms were all full. Finally some one offered us the use of his stable. “Mary, I am so sorry,” I told her a dozen times since she first started feeling labor pains and I realized we were completely unprepared. “God will protect us,” she answered each time. And He did—He brought Mary and the baby safely through labor. And He kept me from going crazy with worry. I kept thinking how I knew nothing of all this. I wished for a moment that I was back in my shop in Nazareth. As I looked at the tiny baby asleep in the feeding trough, I didn’t know how it was that he would save us from death and give us life. But I trust that he will do it. He is the Promised One, the Messiah.

The last thing that Mary and I expected were visitors! Yet they came, men and boys in rough, dirt stained tunics, breathing hard, sweat pouring down their faces. They crowded into the room, all talking at the same time. Their story came out in a jumble, ‘taking care of the sheep’ ‘singing!’ ‘bright white light’ ‘baby in a manger!’ We understood that they had come to see the child. They drew close to the feeding trough, with gasps of amazement. Some knelt, and I could see tears running down their cheeks. “It is the Christ!” I heard some say. Mary and I looked at each other. I brushed the wet hair away from her forehead. God was taking care of us. And he will take care of our biggest need through this tiny child, forgiveness of sins.

Scene 6: Wise men

For a short time, Mary, the child Jesus, and I made our home in Bethlehem. I set up a small shop and God gave me good business. Jesus was growing fast, crawling around our small home and curious about everything. Then one day we had some strange visitors. I saw through the doorway of our home a group of men, each leading a camel, as they approached our little house. Mary and I looked at each other in amazement because we knew from their rich, ornamented robes that they were wealthy, important men. I went outside to greet them. They asked in Aramaic with heavy eastern accents if they may come in. I felt a little hesitant, but I told them that they may. As soon as they entered, they saw Jesus, rushed to him, and bowed down! Then they stood, and I saw joy in their faces. They explained that they were ambassadors from beyond the great river, the Euphrates. Over a year ago, they saw a new star rise in the sky. They knew from their studies of our Scriptures that the star meant that the Christ had come. They started on a journey to come and worship him. They had been traveling for months, across the great river, through

the desert, and finally to Bethlehem. The star kept guiding them, and stopped directly over our house.

Then these men took gifts from their bags, and laid them before Jesus. They brought gold and expensive spices—gifts fit for a king. The heavy smells of rare spices filled our little home. As they bowed before Jesus again, Mary and I marveled at what a wonderful God we have. Even people from other lands come to bow down before the Promised One he has sent us.

That is the story, isn't it amazing?!? It was quite a learning experience for me to raise this Son of God. As he grew he was always about His Heavenly Father's work. I did not quite understand what was all involved in the plan back then. I just knew God had a plan and my job was to trust and obey. I was thankful that our Savior was here, someone to live perfectly for us so that we could be in heaven with God some day, where we will never have suffering, sorrow or sin again. It would be PERFECT, just like in the beginning. We have the best gift, the beautiful gift of God's only son! I am humbled when I think of the way God has used me in his plan to bring the Savior to all people. May the birth of our Son, God's Son give you joy and excitement in your heart as you celebrate this Christmas. Jesus was born for you!!

Narrator:

Congratulations, you have now completed your Drive Thru Christmas Experience! Thank you for going on this journey with us! We pray that you have been blessed by your time here. You are welcome to come back and go through as another character anytime you want!

One more special note I don't want to forget! You are invited to join us for our other Christmas Celebration on Christmas Eve

God bless your Christmas celebration with joy and peace as we praise God for the greatest gift of all – His Son Jesus Christ! Thank you for visiting the Christmas Drive Thru and Merry Christmas!