

ADVENT: WEEK TWO

day 14

Unmet Expectations

Isaiah 53



- Joseph had grown up hearing the prophecies of the coming Messiah. He was familiar with Isaiah 53 and its description of someone easy to overlook. Even so, no one in Joseph's time expected the Messiah to actually look like this. No one expected a baby born to humble parents in Bethlehem. Joseph is immediately asked to respond to the realization that God was moving in an unexpected way to restore mankind to Himself. He had to overcome not only his personal expectations but also the ones that had been handed down to him for generations. GOD WAS NOT SENDING HIS SON ONLY FOR THE WELL-RESPECTED, THE RELIGIOUS, OR THE RICH. HE WAS SENDING HIS SON FOR EVERYONE. It shouldn't have been so surprising because the Old Testament was filled with accounts of humble people being used to do incredible things. And now, a humble couple had been chosen to be the earthly parents of the Messiah. Joseph was one of the first to realize that God can and will use anyone who says YES to Him. He realized that God plans to do so much more for His people than they had been taught to hope for. Like Joseph, we very easily carry around unmet expectations for our lives. On this discipleship journey, we will have many opportunities to choose to allow God to redefine our expectations in ways that may at first seem undesirable. Joseph's longing for the Messiah to come in as a warrior king probably seemed impossible when he realized the child would come into his family; he was a nobody and understood this child would be living in obscurity under his roof. But as he witnessed miracle after miracle, he surely began to understand that God's plan would be beyond his comprehension but filled with a transformation of an entirely different kind. In the remaining Advent season, *ask Holy Spirit* to highlight the miracles in your own story that have been unexpected, along with asking Him to open your eyes to the ways God is longing to exceed your expectations. For, as Paul reminds us in *Ephesians 3:20*, we serve the One who "is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly more than all that we dare ask or think [infinitely beyond our greatest prayers, hopes, or dreams], according to His power that is at work within us..."

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