



# REFLECTIONS

December 30, 2018

**an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you,**

*Matthew 2:13*

## Long, Long Journey

More than 400 miles of rugged terrain lay between Bethlehem and Egypt. For Joseph and Mary that's a long, long journey especially with an infant child. Who knows what they would find when they arrived, or what hazards they might face during the 30 days or so required to get there? But the angel directed them to go; and true to their convictions, *[Joseph] got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt.* (Matt 2:14) They had a child to protect and nurture—a Holy Child.

*Upon the death of Herod they returned from Egypt, and so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."* (Matthew 2:15) Then under the tutelage of Joseph and Mary, Jesus prepared for the long, long journey ahead. *And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men* (Luke 2:52) until his time came.

Now isn't that a picture of the life we live? Two people joined as one for a long, long journey not knowing the hazards they will face or what they will find at journey's end. But they have a job to do—children to protect and nurture until *their* time has come.

Life can feel like a long, long journey, and I suppose it is until the end nears. *The length of our days is seventy years — / or eighty, if we have the strength; / yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, / for they quickly pass, and we fly away.* (Psalm 90:9-10)

Jesus faced a long, long journey, though his journey's length would be measured more by his suffering than by the duration of his time in the world. He had a job to do, a tortuous one. But it was a job that has reached far beyond his last breath in this life.

God has called each of us on a journey. On it we will face a lifetime of challenges and hardships. But God placed us here for a reason, one, like Jesus', that will reach beyond our last breath in this life. So, for us amid our journeys through this world with jobs still to complete, Robert Frost sums it well:

*The woods are lovely, dark and deep, / But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep, / And miles to go before I sleep.*

“Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening”

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard +*

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