



**BEDWELL GLOBAL MINISTRIES
EXPOSITORY SERMON**

E MAIL

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WEB PAGE – Bedwellglobalministries.com

*WE WANT TO WISH YOU A VERY BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND
A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR. MAY THE CHRIST
OF CHRISTMAS ALWAYS BE THE LORD OF YOUR LIFE*

“WHAT CHILD IS THIS?”

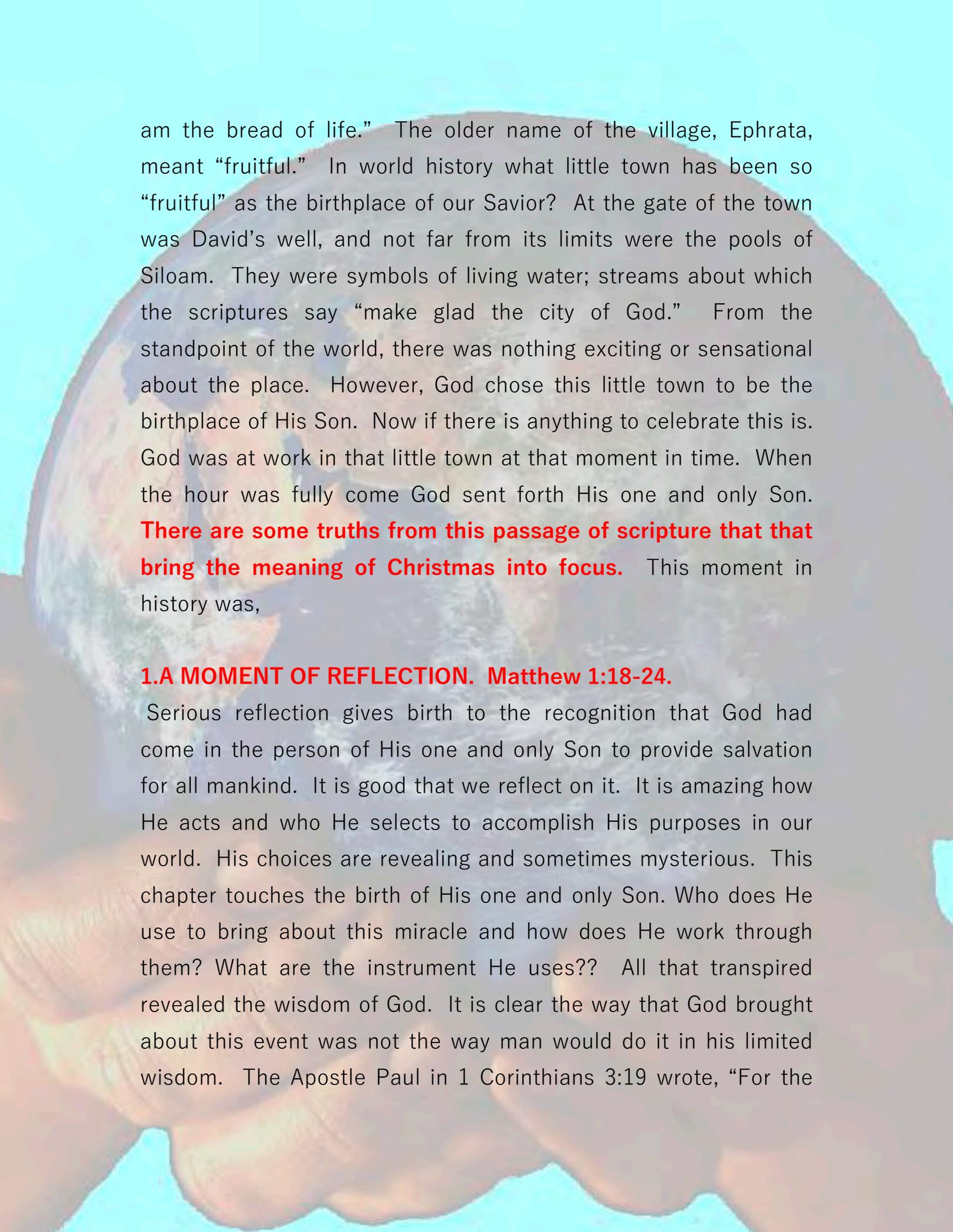
Scripture Reading – Matthew 1:18-25

Introduction

We are in the midst of the Advent season. The sights and sounds of our society in this season point to the joy of this time of the year. It is important that the Christian community with a deliberate and new fervor celebrate the coming of God in Christ as a little babe to our planet. Let us keep in mind that his is no ordinary birth. **This is God in Christ taking action and**

moving against the forces of darkness to bring salvation to all mankind. It is a clear sign to the hosts of hell that their destruction is inevitable. There needs to be an intentional focus on the essential meaning of His coming. Let us once again address the following questions “Who is this baby? Why did He come?” The title of the message asks the question “What Child is this?” It is taken from William C Dix’s carol with the same title and he answers the question “This, This is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing.” **This King was born in Bethlehem of Judea in a manger.**”

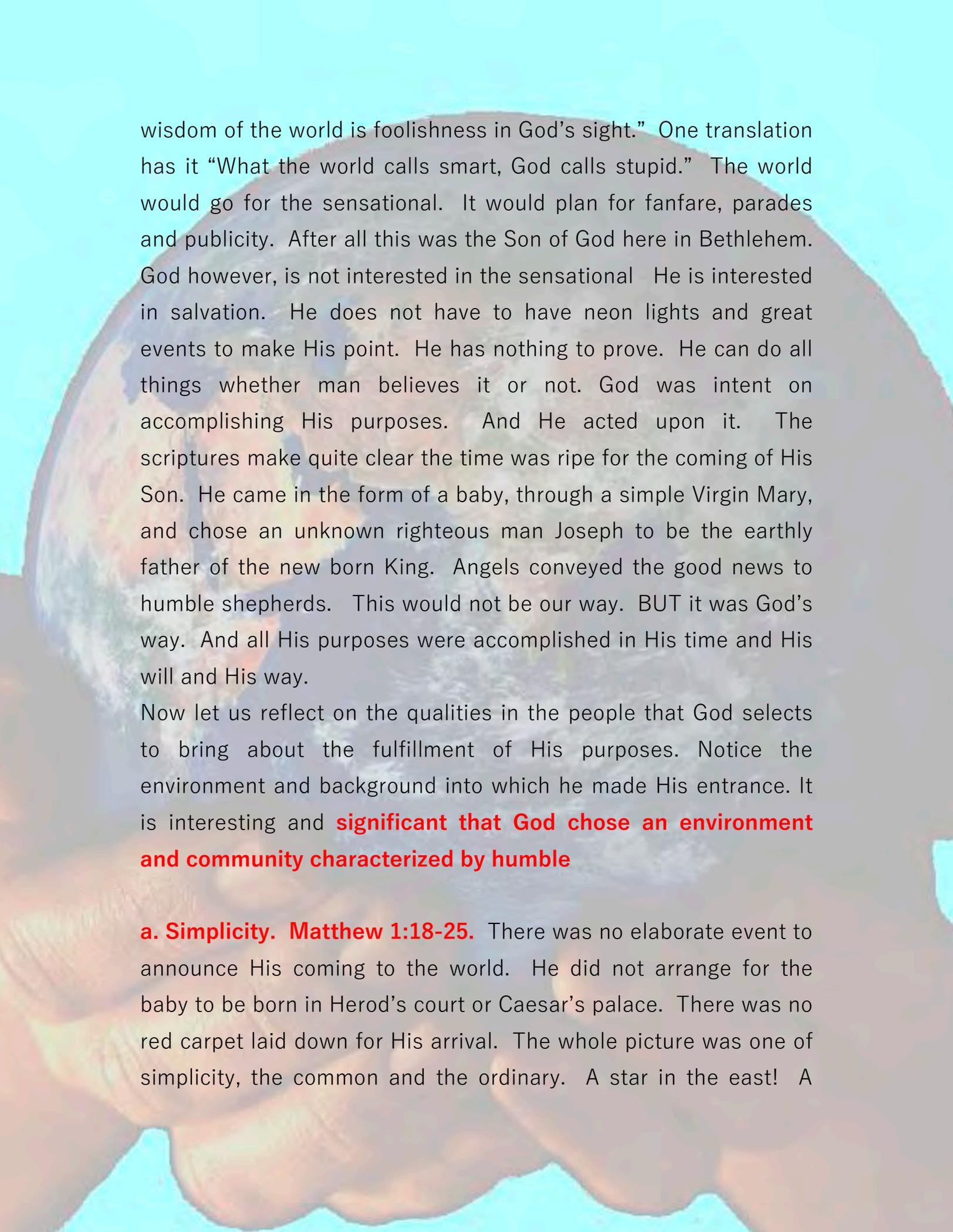
Bethlehem was a simple ordinary town. Nothing really exciting or significant took place at Bethlehem. But it had a place of significance in prophecy. The Prophet Micah (Micah 6:2) said that the Lord would be born in Bethlehem. Do you remember his words “But you Bethlehem Ephratha though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who would be ruler over Israel…” Note the words (Matthew 2:6) “...though you are small among the clans of Judah...” a ruler will emerge from you. In itself Bethlehem had nothing of earthly glory that is until God decided to make His entrance into that insignificant place. Through this event God gave the village not only significance but also its glory. It was changed from the ordinary to the extraordinary. World history gives little information about that tiny village. It had no castles and no princes, no temple and no priests. And yet there was in Bethlehem much that brought to mind the glory of God. The very name of Bethlehem meant “the house of bread.” Surely this reminds is of the Savior, who said of Himself, “I



am the bread of life.” The older name of the village, Ephrata, meant “fruitful.” In world history what little town has been so “fruitful” as the birthplace of our Savior? At the gate of the town was David’s well, and not far from its limits were the pools of Siloam. They were symbols of living water; streams about which the scriptures say “make glad the city of God.” From the standpoint of the world, there was nothing exciting or sensational about the place. However, God chose this little town to be the birthplace of His Son. Now if there is anything to celebrate this is. God was at work in that little town at that moment in time. When the hour was fully come God sent forth His one and only Son. **There are some truths from this passage of scripture that that bring the meaning of Christmas into focus.** This moment in history was,

1.A MOMENT OF REFLECTION. Matthew 1:18-24.

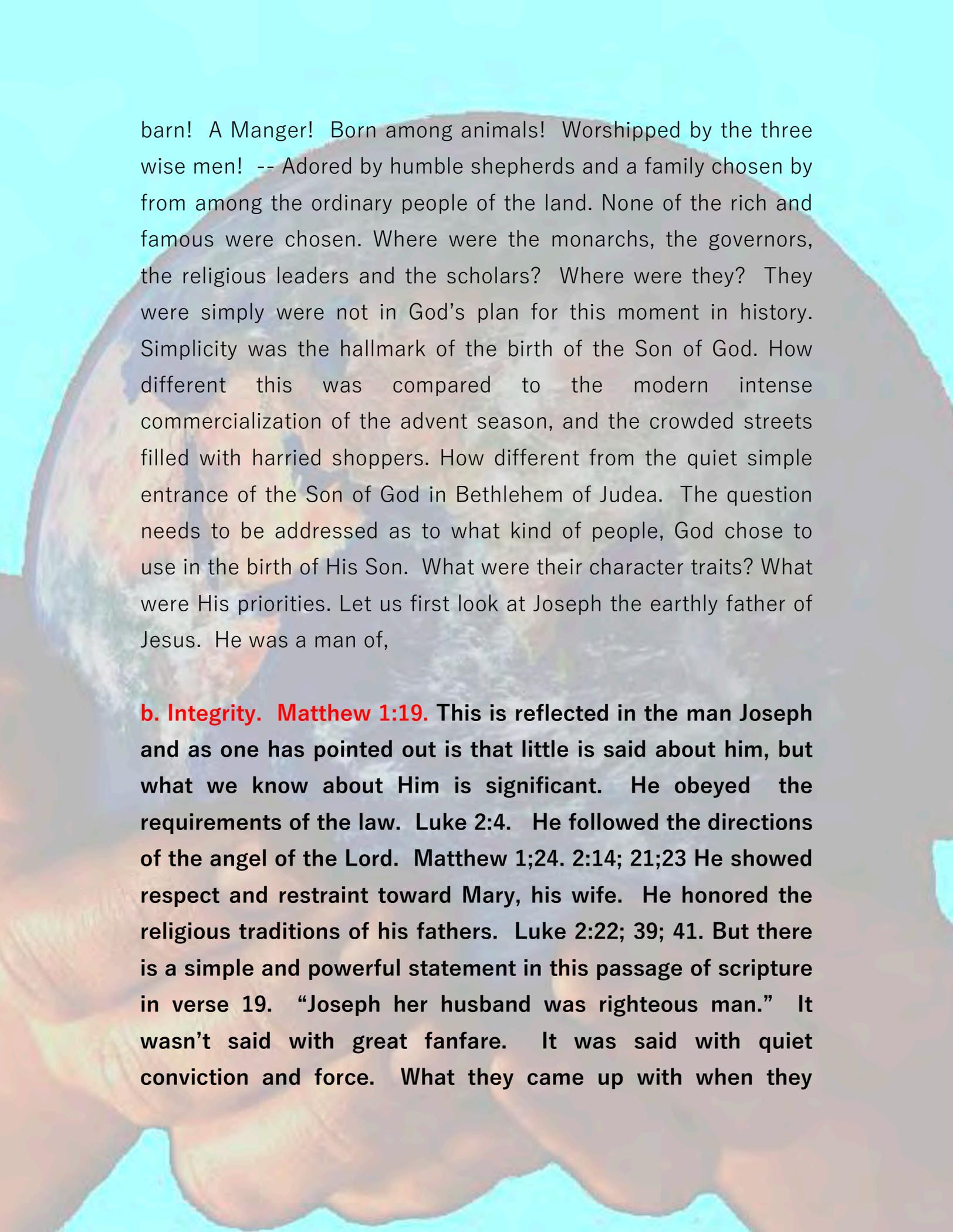
Serious reflection gives birth to the recognition that God had come in the person of His one and only Son to provide salvation for all mankind. It is good that we reflect on it. It is amazing how He acts and who He selects to accomplish His purposes in our world. His choices are revealing and sometimes mysterious. This chapter touches the birth of His one and only Son. Who does He use to bring about this miracle and how does He work through them? What are the instrument He uses?? All that transpired revealed the wisdom of God. It is clear the way that God brought about this event was not the way man would do it in his limited wisdom. The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 3:19 wrote, “For the



wisdom of the world is foolishness in God's sight." One translation has it "What the world calls smart, God calls stupid." The world would go for the sensational. It would plan for fanfare, parades and publicity. After all this was the Son of God here in Bethlehem. God however, is not interested in the sensational. He is interested in salvation. He does not have to have neon lights and great events to make His point. He has nothing to prove. He can do all things whether man believes it or not. God was intent on accomplishing His purposes. And He acted upon it. The scriptures make quite clear the time was ripe for the coming of His Son. He came in the form of a baby, through a simple Virgin Mary, and chose an unknown righteous man Joseph to be the earthly father of the new born King. Angels conveyed the good news to humble shepherds. This would not be our way. BUT it was God's way. And all His purposes were accomplished in His time and His will and His way.

Now let us reflect on the qualities in the people that God selects to bring about the fulfillment of His purposes. Notice the environment and background into which he made His entrance. It is interesting and **significant that God chose an environment and community characterized by humble**

a. Simplicity. Matthew 1:18-25. There was no elaborate event to announce His coming to the world. He did not arrange for the baby to be born in Herod's court or Caesar's palace. There was no red carpet laid down for His arrival. The whole picture was one of simplicity, the common and the ordinary. A star in the east! A

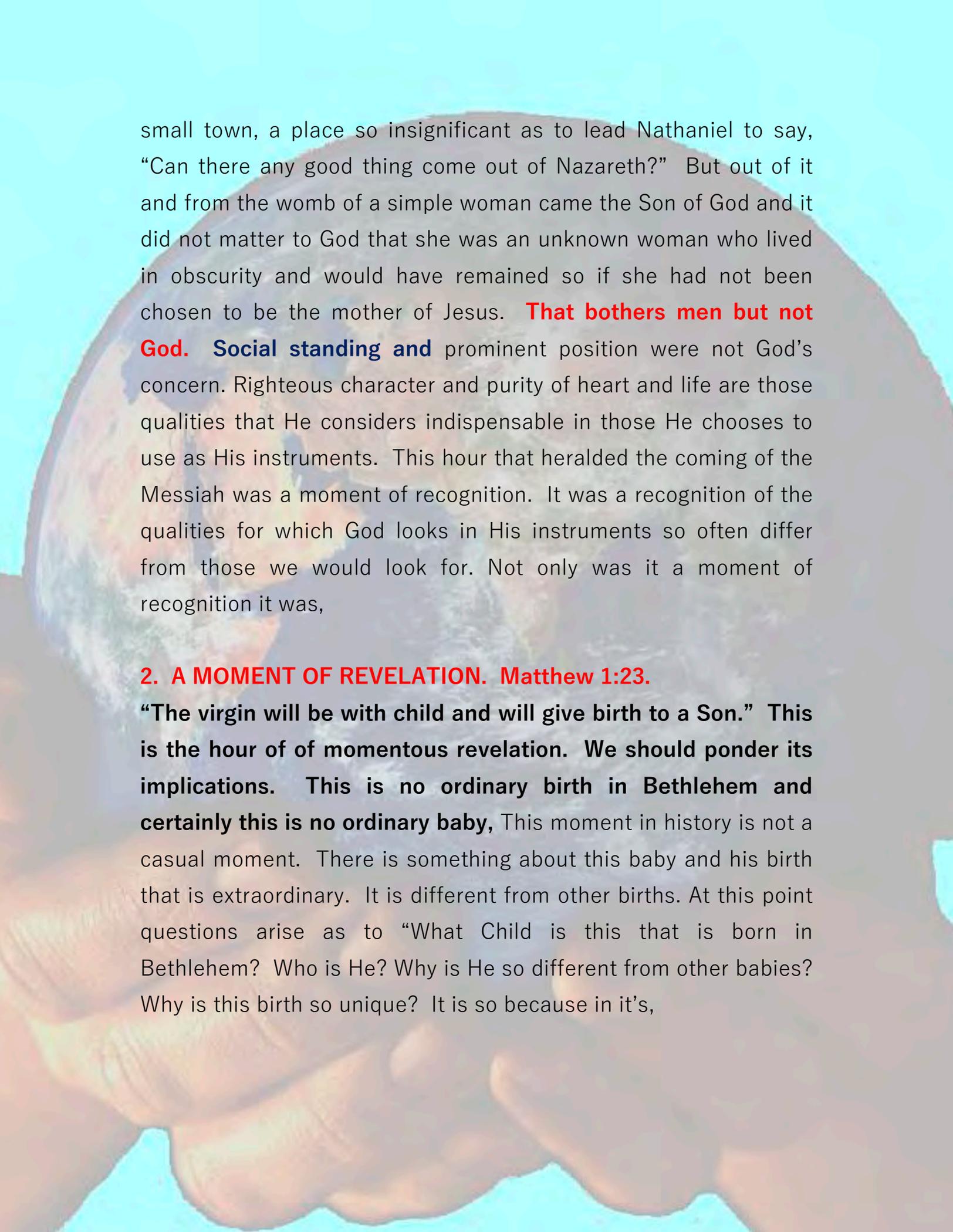


barn! A Manger! Born among animals! Worshipped by the three wise men! -- Adored by humble shepherds and a family chosen by from among the ordinary people of the land. None of the rich and famous were chosen. Where were the monarchs, the governors, the religious leaders and the scholars? Where were they? They were simply were not in God's plan for this moment in history. Simplicity was the hallmark of the birth of the Son of God. How different this was compared to the modern intense commercialization of the advent season, and the crowded streets filled with harried shoppers. How different from the quiet simple entrance of the Son of God in Bethlehem of Judea. The question needs to be addressed as to what kind of people, God chose to use in the birth of His Son. What were their character traits? What were His priorities. Let us first look at Joseph the earthly father of Jesus. He was a man of,

b. Integrity. Matthew 1:19. This is reflected in the man Joseph and as one has pointed out is that little is said about him, but what we know about Him is significant. He obeyed the requirements of the law. Luke 2:4. He followed the directions of the angel of the Lord. Matthew 1;24. 2:14; 21;23 He showed respect and restraint toward Mary, his wife. He honored the religious traditions of his fathers. Luke 2:22; 39; 41. But there is a simple and powerful statement in this passage of scripture in verse 19. "Joseph her husband was righteous man." It wasn't said with great fanfare. It was said with quiet conviction and force. What they came up with when they

observed Joseph was that he was a righteous man. This is what stood out - this was what was important to God. He was a righteous man. That says a whole lot about him. This is what God notices. Paul makes clear that if we are to be God's instruments we are to be righteous. In Romans 6:19. "Just as you offered the parts of your bodies to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, offer the parts of you bodies in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness." **The quality of righteousness is important to God. It gets the attention of God. The story does not mention that Joseph was a man of great talent or charismatic personality.** It did not say that he was a great organizer or an efficient administrator. You can possess all of these abilities and not be a righteous person. God is more concerned with what we are than the abilities we possess. God can only use a righteous man to accomplish His purposes and Joseph was a righteous man. He was man of integrity. As we move on let us on to note what was the chief quality God observed in Mary? It was a quality that was closely allied to what Joseph possessed. It was the quality of,

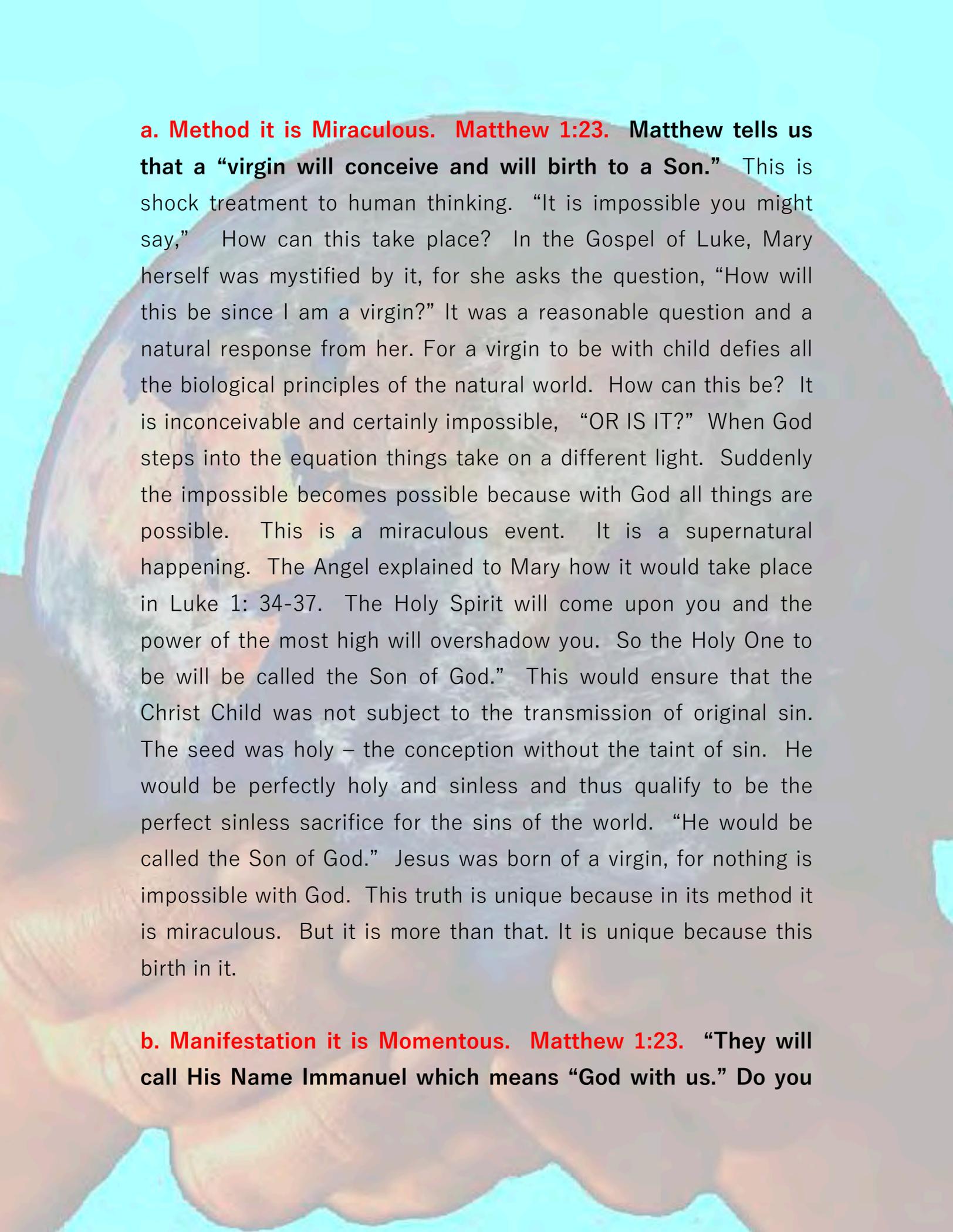
c. Purity. Mathew 1:20,23. She was a virgin and the Child that was conceived in her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Luke amplifies this truth in the first chapter of His gospel verses 26-28. Again what comes through is that God is concerned with purity of character. The angel said to her "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Luke1:28. She was to give birth to the Son of God. She was a humble village woman who lived in a



small town, a place so insignificant as to lead Nathaniel to say, “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” But out of it and from the womb of a simple woman came the Son of God and it did not matter to God that she was an unknown woman who lived in obscurity and would have remained so if she had not been chosen to be the mother of Jesus. **That bothers men but not God. Social standing and** prominent position were not God’s concern. Righteous character and purity of heart and life are those qualities that He considers indispensable in those He chooses to use as His instruments. This hour that heralded the coming of the Messiah was a moment of recognition. It was a recognition of the qualities for which God looks in His instruments so often differ from those we would look for. Not only was it a moment of recognition it was,

2. A MOMENT OF REVELATION. Matthew 1:23.

“The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a Son.” This is the hour of of momentous revelation. We should ponder its implications. This is no ordinary birth in Bethlehem and certainly this is no ordinary baby, This moment in history is not a casual moment. There is something about this baby and his birth that is extraordinary. It is different from other births. At this point questions arise as to “What Child is this that is born in Bethlehem? Who is He? Why is He so different from other babies? Why is this birth so unique? It is so because in it’s,



a. Method it is Miraculous. Matthew 1:23. Matthew tells us that a “virgin will conceive and will birth to a Son.” This is shock treatment to human thinking. “It is impossible you might say,” How can this take place? In the Gospel of Luke, Mary herself was mystified by it, for she asks the question, “How will this be since I am a virgin?” It was a reasonable question and a natural response from her. For a virgin to be with child defies all the biological principles of the natural world. How can this be? It is inconceivable and certainly impossible, “OR IS IT?” When God steps into the equation things take on a different light. Suddenly the impossible becomes possible because with God all things are possible. This is a miraculous event. It is a supernatural happening. The Angel explained to Mary how it would take place in Luke 1: 34-37. The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the most high will overshadow you. So the Holy One to be will be called the Son of God.” This would ensure that the Christ Child was not subject to the transmission of original sin. The seed was holy – the conception without the taint of sin. He would be perfectly holy and sinless and thus qualify to be the perfect sinless sacrifice for the sins of the world. “He would be called the Son of God.” Jesus was born of a virgin, for nothing is impossible with God. This truth is unique because in its method it is miraculous. But it is more than that. It is unique because this birth in it.

b. Manifestation it is Momentous. Matthew 1:23. “They will call His Name Immanuel which means “God with us.” Do you

mean to say God with us???? That weak vulnerable baby in a manger was God with us. What an incredible manifestation!

An Old pioneer traveled westward across the Great Plains until he came to an abrupt halt at the edge of the Grand Canyon. He gawked at the sight before him before him: a vast chasm one mile down, eighteen miles across, and more than a hundred miles long! He gasped and said “**something must have happened here.**” We still celebrate the birthday of Jesus over two thousand years after His birth. Have you often wondered why? I will tell you why - something extraordinary happened back there in a manger. . John said it well, “the Word who was with God and was God became flesh and lived among us.” (see John 1:1 and 14). Charles Wesley wrote, “He emptied Himself of all but love and bled for Adam’s helpless race.” Dr. Sidlow Baxter put it well “the great Architect of the Universe walks to me out of His infinity and invisibility in human form. He looked on me through human eyes: beckons to me with human hands: feels for me with human emotions. This baby is God with us.” This is the manifestation of God in the flesh. This is a momentous revelation.

But this is not all, this birth in its

c. Manner it is Modest. Matthew 1:23. He was born in manger of a humble virgin. Paul says “He was rich yet for our sakes He became poor. He by passed the palace of king Herod, ignored the courts of the nobles, and refused to seek the adulation of Caesar and the approval of the Roman senate. He was rich and for our sakes He became poor. At His birth there was no room for Him at

the inn. Luke 2:7. In life there was no home for him in which to live, or pillow on which to lay His head. Matthew 8:20. And in death there was no grave for Him to rest for His was a borrowed grave. Matthew 27:59-60. Paul wrote in the paraphrase of J. B. Phillips, **“For He who had always been God by nature, did not cling to His prerogative as God’s equal, but stripped Himself of all privilege** by consenting to be a slave by nature, and being born as a mortal man.” And having become a man, He humbled Himself by living a life of utter obedience, even to the extent of dying and the death He died was the death of a common criminal.” (see Philippians 2:6ff) “Christ always identified Himself with the least, the last and the lost.” His coming was modest in its manner and this event which took place in a manger 2000 years ago, calls for a moment of reflection. But this miraculous event is also,

3. A MOMENT OF REALIZATION. Matthew 1:21-23.

Mary will give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the Name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins…They will call Him Emmanuel which means God with us.” I want to emphasize two truths, which Matthew highlights about this event. They are fundamental to the Christmas message. They focus on the Christ child. The first is that this baby is

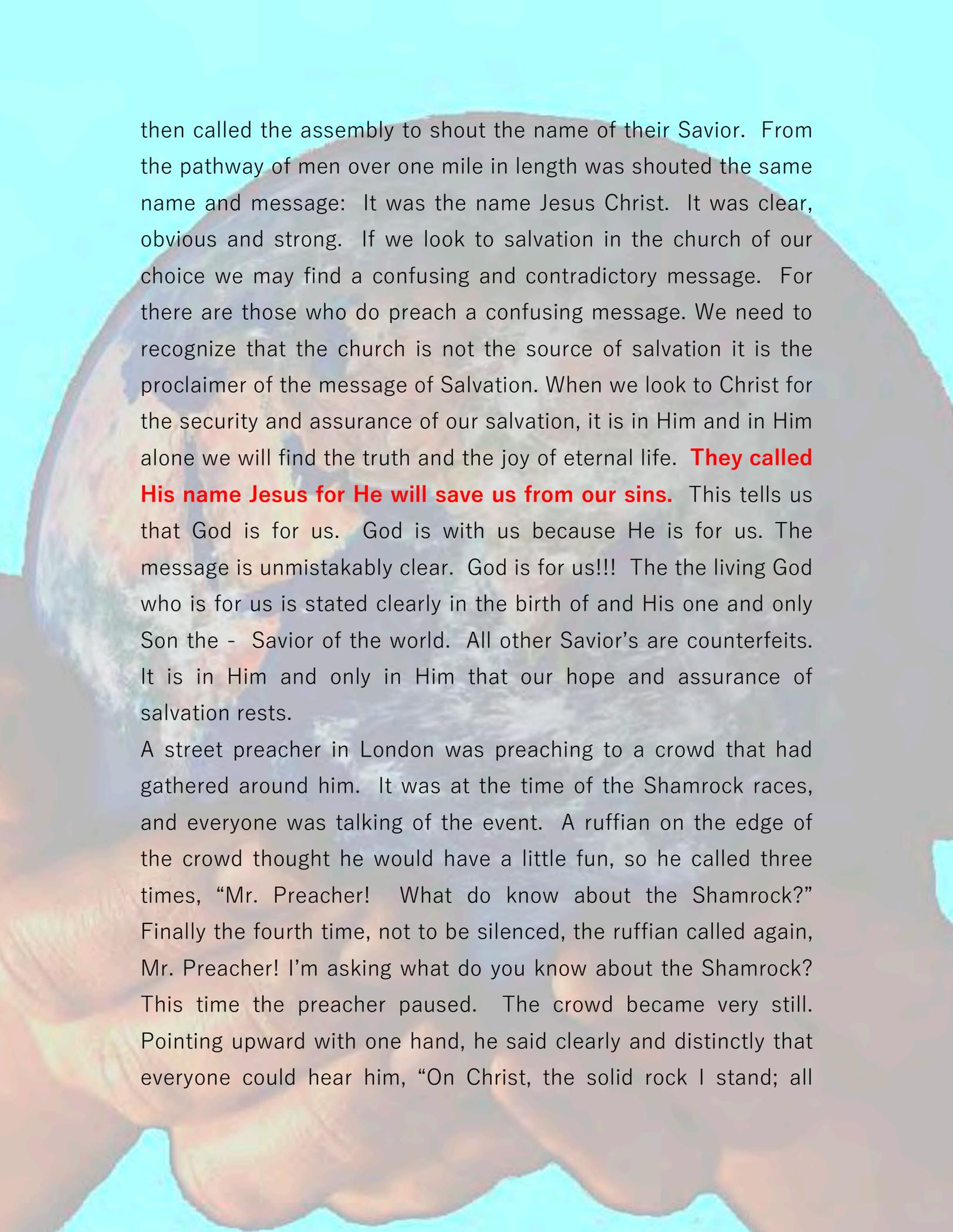
a. God with us. Matthew 1:23. They call Him Immanuel which means **God is with us.’ God Himself came to us.** Larry King created a lucrative career by simply asking questions. This celebrity has been interviewing people for over forty years with his



mastery of probing questions. The tables were turned when he was interviewed for the fortieth anniversary of his broadcasting debut. Bryant Gumbel had the honor of asking King some very interesting questions. Possibly the most interesting question came at the conclusion of the show when Gumbel asked King, "What question would you ask God if he were a guest on your show?" King ignited with a torrent of questions about God's level of participation in human's activity, but the first question out of his mouth was "Do you have a son?" Although King claims to be an agnostic, he understands the importance of asking this question first. Determining Jesus' relationship to God is indispensable for salvation, but we needn't wait for God's reply. He has already answered this at Christmas. God sent His Son born of a woman. He is the Son of God. The **message of Christ is that God is with us. But it is also that**

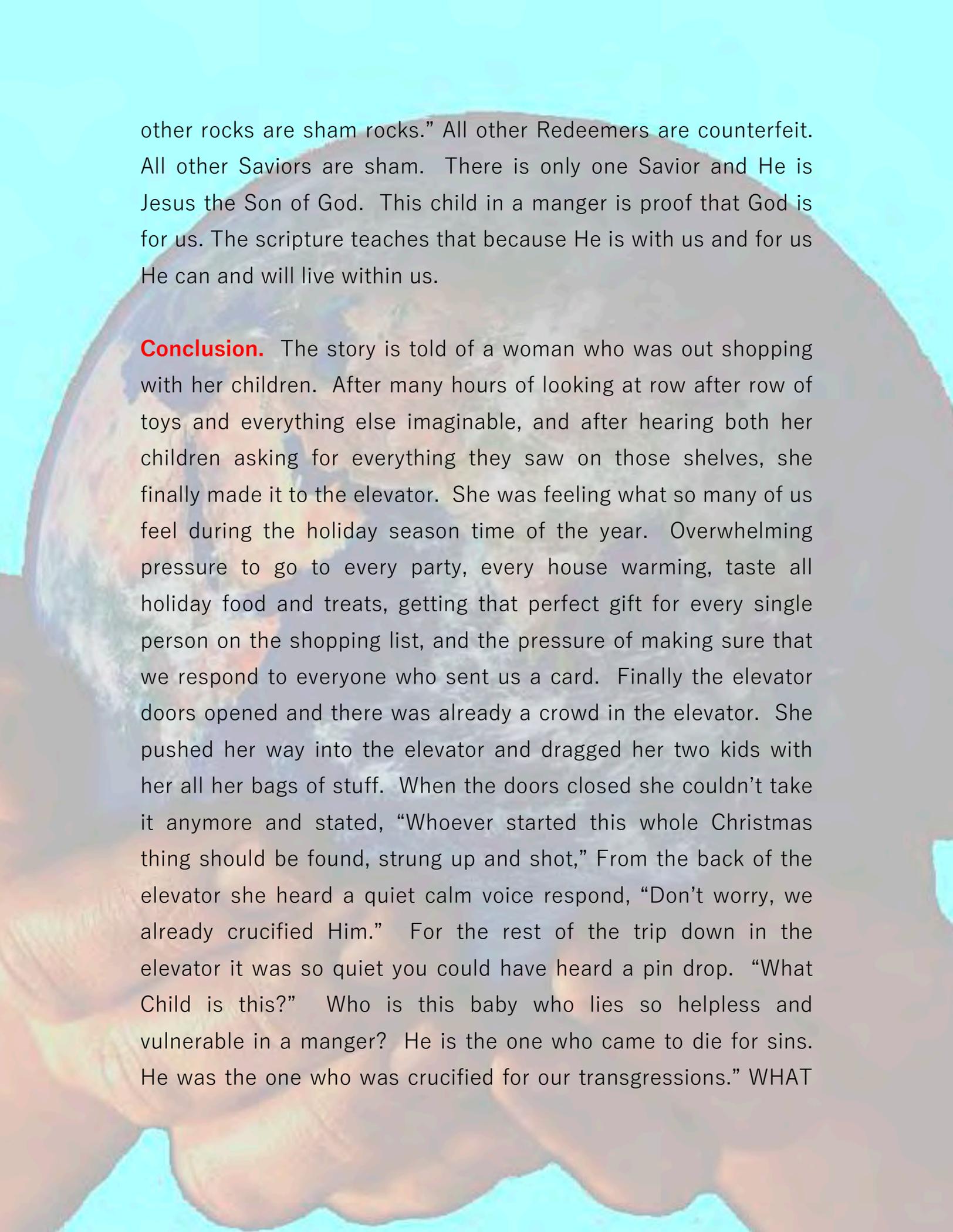
b. God is for us. Matthew 1:23. He was given the name Jesus because He would save His people from their sins." He is the only Savior from sin because He was crucified for our salvation He died for our salvation.

On October 4, 1997, over a million men gathered in Washington D.C., for Promise Keeper's Stand in the Gap. The day - long event featured many different speakers. One of those worship leaders was Max Lucado. In typical fashion, he urged crowd to shout the names of their individual denominations. Denominational Names were lost in the verbalization of church affiliations and created nothing more than confused noise. He



then called the assembly to shout the name of their Savior. From the pathway of men over one mile in length was shouted the same name and message: It was the name Jesus Christ. It was clear, obvious and strong. If we look to salvation in the church of our choice we may find a confusing and contradictory message. For there are those who do preach a confusing message. We need to recognize that the church is not the source of salvation it is the proclaimer of the message of Salvation. When we look to Christ for the security and assurance of our salvation, it is in Him and in Him alone we will find the truth and the joy of eternal life. **They called His name Jesus for He will save us from our sins.** This tells us that God is for us. God is with us because He is for us. The message is unmistakably clear. God is for us!!! The the living God who is for us is stated clearly in the birth of and His one and only Son the - Savior of the world. All other Savior's are counterfeits. It is in Him and only in Him that our hope and assurance of salvation rests.

A street preacher in London was preaching to a crowd that had gathered around him. It was at the time of the Shamrock races, and everyone was talking of the event. A ruffian on the edge of the crowd thought he would have a little fun, so he called three times, "Mr. Preacher! What do know about the Shamrock?" Finally the fourth time, not to be silenced, the ruffian called again, Mr. Preacher! I'm asking what do you know about the Shamrock? This time the preacher paused. The crowd became very still. Pointing upward with one hand, he said clearly and distinctly that everyone could hear him, "On Christ, the solid rock I stand; all



other rocks are sham rocks.” All other Redeemers are counterfeit. All other Saviors are sham. There is only one Savior and He is Jesus the Son of God. This child in a manger is proof that God is for us. The scripture teaches that because He is with us and for us He can and will live within us.

Conclusion. The story is told of a woman who was out shopping with her children. After many hours of looking at row after row of toys and everything else imaginable, and after hearing both her children asking for everything they saw on those shelves, she finally made it to the elevator. She was feeling what so many of us feel during the holiday season time of the year. Overwhelming pressure to go to every party, every house warming, taste all holiday food and treats, getting that perfect gift for every single person on the shopping list, and the pressure of making sure that we respond to everyone who sent us a card. Finally the elevator doors opened and there was already a crowd in the elevator. She pushed her way into the elevator and dragged her two kids with her all her bags of stuff. When the doors closed she couldn't take it anymore and stated, “Whoever started this whole Christmas thing should be found, strung up and shot,” From the back of the elevator she heard a quiet calm voice respond, “Don't worry, we already crucified Him.” For the rest of the trip down in the elevator it was so quiet you could have heard a pin drop. “What Child is this?” Who is this baby who lies so helpless and vulnerable in a manger? He is the one who came to die for sins. He was the one who was crucified for our transgressions.” WHAT

CHILD IS THIS?" His name is Jesus for he will save His people from their sins.(see Matthew 1:21)

