The background features intricate, light-colored line art of various motifs, including roses, thorny branches, and holly leaves, scattered across the page. The text is centered in a classic, elegant font.

JESUS'

GOSPEL STORY

O R N A M E N T S

.....

*Twelve stories explain
His foretelling in Isaiah,
His birth in Luke and Matthew
and His salvation work on the cross;
all through the power
of His Names*

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NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES



IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED AND HE NAMED. HE CALLED THE DARKNESS *NIGHT* AND THE LIGHT *DAY*. HE CALLED THE DRY LAND *EARTH* AND THE SKY ABOVE *HEAVEN*. HE CREATED THE SUN, THE MOON, AND THE STARS, GIVING EACH ONE ITS NAME.

CHILDREN LEARN AT A VERY YOUNG AGE THAT THE WARM YELLOW BALL IN THE SKY IS CALLED THE SUN. THAT IS ITS NAME. AS THEY GROW OLDER, THEY LEARN MORE ABOUT ITS PROPERTIES, ITS SIZE, AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE EARTH, THE OCEANS, AND EVEN THEIR OWN BODIES. THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUN DEVELOPS AND EXPANDS.

LIKE THE SUN, EACH OF US IS
KNOWN BY OUR NAME. MEANING IS
INHERENT IN A NAME, GIVING IDENTITY TO
AN OBJECT OR A PERSON.

JESUS IS A MAN OF MANY NAMES—SOME SCHOLARS SAY AS MANY AS THREE HUNDRED—WHICH TELLS US RIGHT AWAY THAT HE IS NOT LIKE US. GETTING TO KNOW THE NAMES OF JESUS INTRODUCES US TO WHO HE IS. IT'S THE STARTING PLACE FOR DISCOVERING THE GREATEST TREASURE, A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ETERNAL GOD. IN LEARNING THE NAMES OF CHRIST, OUR UNDERSTANDING OF HIM GROWS. WE BEGIN TO KNOW HIM AS HE IS.

THE CELEBRATION OF CHRIST'S BIRTH HAS GOTTEN LOST IN A SWIRL OF FAIRY TALES AND MERCHANDISING. THINK ABOUT IT, THE STUNNING MIRACLE OF GOD BECOMING HUMAN HAS BECOME TRIVIALIZED WITH TOYS, TINSEL, AND TRIPS TO THE MALL.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION? THE BIBLE TELLS US: "FIXING OUR EYES ON JESUS" (HEBREWS 12:2, NIV). LEARN HIS NAMES, AND IN DOING SO YOU WILL KNOW MORE OF HIM. SEEING JESUS STIRS A RESPONSE OF ADORATION AND WORSHIP. THE THINGS OF EARTH BECOME LESS IMPORTANT. OUR MISPLACED AFFECTIONS ARE RIGHTED.

MAY HIS NAMES ADORN YOUR HOME AT CHRISTMAS—AND BEYOND—AS YOU GIVE PROMINENCE TO THE ONE WHOSE BIRTH WE CELEBRATE ON DECEMBER 25, THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD, JESUS CHRIST. AS YOU LEARN ABOUT OUR MATCHLESS SAVIOR, MAY YOUR HEART BE LED TO SING:



*Joy to the world!
The Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and heaven and nature sing.¹*



HIS
PROMISED
NAMES



HE SHALL BE CALLED



HE SHALL BE CALLED



Wonderful Counselor



FOR TO US A CHILD IS BORN, TO US A SON
IS GIVEN; AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL
BE UPON HIS SHOULDER, AND HIS NAME
SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE.

—ISAIAH 9:6

Wonderful MEANS "TO BE FULL OF WONDER,"
THE NATURAL RESPONSE TO SOMETHING *truly*
WONDERFUL IS TO BE SPEECHLESS AND BARELY ABLE TO MOVE.



WHEN OUR CHILDREN WERE YOUNG WE TOOK
THEM TO THE GRAND CANYON. WE BLINDFOLDED
THEM AND THEN CAREFULLY LED THEM TO THE RIM.
WHEN THEY TOOK OFF THEIR BLINDFOLDS ALL THEY
COULD SAY WAS, "WOW!" BEYOND THAT THEY WERE
WITHOUT WORDS, ROOTED TO THE GROUND, EYES
WIDE WITH WONDER AT THE SIGHT
OF SOMETHING SO MAJESTIC.



— HIS PROMISED NAMES —

Jesus IS FULL OF WONDER, AND HE IS OUR COUNSELOR. HE IS ABLE TO MAKE WISE PLANS, TO GIVE *unequaled* ADVICE, AND TO LEAD US IN PERFECT SAFETY ALONG THE OFTEN-ROCKY PATH OF LIFE. THIS CHILD *who* WAS GIVEN IS OUR WONDERFUL COUNSELOR.

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN PERPLEXED? UNSURE OF WHICH ALTERNATIVE IS BEST WHEN MAKING A DECISION? HAVE YOU BEEN DISCOURAGED OVER A RELATIONSHIP WITH A FRIEND OR A SIBLING? JESUS IS OUR WONDERFUL COUNSELOR AND HIS ADVICE CAN ALWAYS BE TRUSTED. HIS GUIDANCE IS UNPARALLELED.

“YOUR FATHER KNOWS WHAT YOU NEED BEFORE YOU ASK HIM. PRAY THEN,” JESUS SAID (MATTHEW 6:8-9).

THIS IS ANOTHER WONDER: HE KNOWS WHAT WE NEED BEFORE WE ASK! AND BECAUSE HE IS GOD, HE KNOWS BEFORE WE ARE EVEN AWARE OF OUR NEEDS. “AND MY GOD WILL SUPPLY EVERY NEED OF YOURS ACCORDING TO HIS RICHES IN GLORY IN CHRIST JESUS” (PHILIPPIANS 4:19).

Is Jesus WONDERFUL TO YOU, THE MAJESTIC ONE WHO IS YOUR COUNSELOR? THE ONE WHOSE *grandeur* MAKES THE GRAND CANYON LOOK LIKE LITTLE MORE THAN A HOLE IN THE GROUND?

TRUE GOD OF TRUE GOD, LIGHT FROM LIGHT ETERNAL,
LO, HE SHUNS NOT THE VIRGIN'S WOMB;
SON OF THE FATHER, BEGOTTEN, NOT CREATED;

O COME, LET US ADORE HIM,
O COME, LET US ADORE HIM,
O COME, LET US ADORE HIM,
CHRIST THE LORD.²



HE SHALL BE CALLED



Mighty God



AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED
WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD,
EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE.

—ISAIAH 9:6

MIGHTY GOD . . . AMONG *the hundreds* OF NAMES FOR JESUS, THIS IS ONE OF ONLY FOUR SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET ISAIAH WHEN HE MADE THE GRAND ANNOUNCEMENT OF *His birth*. THE ISRAELITES UNDERSTOOD *MIGHTY* FOR THEY HAD EXPERIENCED THE GREAT POWER OF THE LORD WHEN HE PARTED THE RED SEA WITH JUST THE *breath* OF HIS NOSTRILS (SEE EXODUS 15:8).



WITHOUT THE MODIFIER *MIGHTY*, SOME MIGHT THINK THAT *Jesus* WAS LESS THAN GOD. HOWEVER, WORDS ARE VERY IMPORTANT; "EVERY WORD OF GOD PROVES TRUE" (PROVERBS 30:5). *MIGHTY GOD* IS A SIGNIFICANT NAME GIVEN TO THIS INFANT LYING ON A BED OF HAY. HUMAN EYES SAW JUST A BABY, BUT GOD LEFT NO DOUBT AS TO HIS TRUE NATURE.



Did you know THAT NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD (LUKE 1:37)? THE ANGEL GABRIEL SPOKE THESE VERY WORDS TO MARY TO REASSURE HER WHEN HE *appeared* TO HER WITH THE NEWS OF HER PREGNANCY. MORE POWERFUL THAN HIS *creation*, MIGHTY GOD IS NOT BOUND BY THE *forces* OF NATURE. HE CAN PART THE RED SEA OR CONCEIVE, WITH ONE INVISIBLE CELL, AN INFANT WHO WOULD BE JESUS. AND HE WANTS YOU TO KNOW HIS POWER, TOO. **NOTHING IS TOO HARD FOR GOD (JEREMIAH 32:17).**

BUT WE DON'T ALWAYS FEEL THAT WAY, DO WE? WE CRY INWARDLY SAYING, "I CAN'T DO THIS" OR "THERE IS NO WAY OUT," JUST LIKE THE ISRAELITES DID WHEN STARING AT A VAST BODY OF WATER THAT BLOCKED THEIR ESCAPE. CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS YOUR MIGHTY GOD? THAT HE CAN PROVIDE A WAY OF ESCAPE FOR YOU, TOO, WHEN YOU NEED IT? THAT HE CAN HELP YOU THROUGH A CRISIS?

CHRISTMAS IS PORTRAYED AS A TIME OF JOY, BUT IT ISN'T ALWAYS SO. HARD TIMES HAPPEN EVEN AT CHRISTMAS, AND WE SOMETIMES FEEL THEM MORE DEEPLY ON HOLIDAYS. DO YOU KNOW THE SONG, "A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD"? IT ISN'T A CHRISTMAS SONG, BUT SINGING IT COULD REMIND YOU WHAT IS TRUE ABOUT JESUS, OUR

Mighty God

A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD,
A BULWARK NEVER FAILING;
OUR HELPER HE AMID THE FLOOD
OF MORTAL ILLS PREVAILING.
FOR STILL OUR ANCIENT FOE
DOETH SEEK TO WORK US WOE;
HIS CRAFT AND POWER ARE GREAT,
AND ARMED WITH CRUEL HATE,
ON EARTH IS NOT HIS EQUAL.³



HE SHALL BE CALLED



Eternal Father



“... AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED
... EVERLASTING FATHER ...”

—ISAIAH 9:6

A WELL-KNOWN CHRISTMAS CAROL TELLS THE STORY OF A KIND, BENEVOLENT RULER WHO LIVED IN THE EARLY 900S. RAISED BY HIS GRANDMOTHER WHO HAD A STRONG FAITH IN CHRIST, YOUNG WENCESLAUS LEARNED TO LOVE GOD AND TO LIVE GUIDED BY **FAITH, HOPE AND CARE FOR OTHERS**.

AT THE AGE OF 13, HIS FATHER WAS KILLED IN BATTLE AND THE YOUNG DUKE BECAME THE RULER OF HIS COUNTRY, BOHEMIA, NOW KNOWN AS CZECHOSLOVAKIA. WHAT MAKES THIS YOUNG RULER DIFFERENT FROM SO MANY WHOSE NAMES WE KNOW WELL IS HIS KIND LEADERSHIP THAT SOUGHT TO SERVE HIS PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE POOR, AND HIS HEART TO PLEASE GOD. HE BECAME THE TYPE OF RULER JESUS MODELED BY EXAMPLE.

NINE HUNDRED YEARS LATER, A PRIEST IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND WROTE THE STORY OF THE BENEVOLENT DUKE INTO A SONG, CHANGING HIS TITLE TO KING, AND TAUGHT IT TO CHILDREN IN HOPES OF PROVIDING THEM AN HONORABLE ROLE MODEL FOR THEIR FAITH.

THIS STORY *illustrates* WHAT BIBLE SCHOLARS BELIEVE IS THE MEANING BEHIND THIS NAME OF JESUS, ETERNAL FATHER. THOUGH IT SEEMS CONFUSING AT FIRST GLANCE, THIS PROPHETIC PROCLAMATION TELLS US HOW JESUS WOULD RELATE TO HIS PEOPLE WHEN HE CAME.

JESUS CAME TO EARTH TO SHOW US HIS FATHER. HIS LIFE WAS

HIS PROMISED NAMES

CHARACTERIZED BY A FATHERLY CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH GREAT NEEDS. WE SEE HIM UNAFRAID OF THE LEPERS AND ENTERING INTO CONVERSATIONS WITH TAX COLLECTORS WHO WERE OFTEN HATED AND SHUNNED SOCIALLY. **HE HEALED COUNTLESS NUMBERS OF PEOPLE WHO WERE SICK AND DYING.**

Demonstrating care FOR OTHERS EVERY DAY OF HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY IS AN UNDISPUTED FACT.

ATTACHED TO THIS NAME OF JESUS IS A MODIFIER, THE WORD ETERNAL OR EVERLASTING. A FATHER WHO IS EVERLASTING OBVIOUSLY CAN'T REFER TO A MERE MORTAL, BUT ONLY TO ONE WHO IS FOREVER ALIVE.

DAVID, WHEN HE ASKED TO MEET GOLIATH, FAMOUSLY SAID TO SAUL, "HE HAS DEFIED THE ARMIES OF THE LIVING GOD." DAVID RECOGNIZED GOD AS THE LIVING GOD. GOD LATER PROMISED DAVID THAT HIS KINGDOM WOULD CONTINUE THROUGH HIS SONS FOREVER. JESUS WAS BORN IN THE LINE OF DAVID, THE FULFILLMENT OF THIS PROMISED FOREVER REIGN.

SO WE SEE IN JESUS A PICTURE OF GOD AS OUR EVERLASTING, **ETERNAL FATHER.**

JESUS IS NOT GOD THE FATHER, BUT IN HIS WORK ON EARTH, HE SHEPHERDED HIS FOLLOWERS WITH THE LOVE AND PROTECTIVE CARE OF A FATHER.

IN THIS NAME, WE LEARN JESUS IS *forever*, ONE WITH THE FATHER, ALWAYS LISTENING TO HEAR OUR PRAYERS.

WHETHER YOU ARE ALONE TODAY OR WITH YOUR FAMILY, TAKE A MINUTE AND THANK JESUS FOR SHOWING US THE LOVE OF THE FATHER.

MAY YOU CHOOSE THIS CHRISTMAS TO BE MORE LIKE JESUS.

GOOGLE THE SONG, "GOOD KING WENCESLAUS," AND READ THE LYRICS AS A FAMILY. MAY YOU BE INSPIRED BY THE EXAMPLE OF THIS YOUNG RULER WHO DESIRED TO PLEASE HIS FATHER IN HEAVEN.

— — — — —
"THEREFORE CHRISTIAN MEN, BE SURE,
WEALTH OR RANK, POSSESSING,
YE WHO NOW WILL BLESS THE POOR,
SHALL YOURSELVES FIND BLESSING."⁴



HE SHALL BE CALLED



PRINCE OF PEACE



AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER,
PRINCE OF PEACE. OF THE INCREASE OF HIS
GOVERNMENT AND OF PEACE THERE WILL BE NO END.

—ISAIAH 9:6-7

Every human heart LONGS FOR PEACE WITHOUT END,
BUT IT CANNOT BE FOUND ON EARTH. NO KING HAS EVER LIVED,
EVEN THE MOST BENEVOLENT, WHO HAS RULED WITH *perfect* PEACE.
ALL KINGS ARE HUMAN, FLAWED, AND PRONE TO ERROR, BUT JESUS IS
NAMED *PRINCE OF PEACE*. THIS NAME BRINGS THE GREAT PROMISE OF
A LIFE WITHOUT CONFLICT. *Only One* WHO IS DIVINE, WHO IS
SINLESS, CAN RULE WITH PERFECTION. HIS NAME IS JESUS.



WHILE WE WAIT FOR HIS GOVERNMENT ON EARTH, WE CAN STILL
EXPERIENCE THE PEACE JESUS OFFERS: "PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU; MY
PEACE I GIVE TO YOU. NOT AS THE WORLD GIVES DO I GIVE TO YOU. LET
NOT YOUR HEARTS BE TROUBLED, NEITHER LET THEM BE AFRAID" (JOHN
14:27). LATER HE ADDED, "IN ME YOU MAY HAVE PEACE" (JOHN 16:33). JESUS
KNEW HE WAS LEAVING AND HIS FOLLOWERS WOULD FEEL
ABANDONED AND AFRAID, SO HE PROMISED THEM THE
ASSURANCE OF MUCH NEEDED PEACE.

— HIS PROMISED NAMES —

IT IS BOTH *remarkable* AND COMFORTING THAT JESUS CAN DWELL WITHIN OUR FRAIL HUMANITY BY HIS SPIRIT. EVEN IN OUR FAULTS AND FAILURES HE CAN PRODUCE *miraculous* PEACE. DOES HE LIVE WITHIN YOUR HEART? IF HE DOES, THEN NO MATTER HOW DIFFICULT YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES, HE CAN AND WILL *give peace* THAT PASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING IF YOU WILL ASK.

ONE OF THE MOST LOVED *hymns* OF THE CHURCH, "IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL," WAS WRITTEN BY HORATIO SPAFFORD JUST MONTHS AFTER ALL FOUR OF HIS DAUGHTERS DROWNED WHEN THEIR SHIP SANK IN THE ATLANTIC OCEAN. HIS WIFE WAS SAVED WHEN A PLANK OF WOOD FLOATED BENEATH HER UNCONSCIOUS BODY, KEEPING HER FROM DROWNING. UNIMAGINABLE GRIEF MUST HAVE OVERWHELMED MR. SPAFFORD.

ON THE JOURNEY TO MEET HIS WIFE, HE WROTE THESE WORDS NEAR THE PLACE WHERE THE SHIP SANK: "WHEN *peace* LIKE A RIVER ATTENDETH MY WAY, WHEN SORROWS LIKE SEA BILLOWS ROLL . . . THOU HAS TAUGHT ME TO SAY, IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL." HOW WAS THAT POSSIBLE? WITHOUT THE PRINCE OF PEACE IT IS NOT. ONLY IN JESUS CAN WE SAY, "IT IS WELL WITH MY *soul*."

MAY YOU KNOW HIS PEACE THIS CHRISTMAS AND FOREVER.



HAIL THE HEAV'NLY BORN PRINCE OF PEACE!
HAIL THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS!
LIGHT AND LIFE TO ALL HE BRINGS,
RIS'N WITH HEALING IN HIS WINGS.
MILD HE LAYS HIS GLORY BY,
BORN THAT MAN NO MORE MAY DIE,
BORN TO RAISE THE SONS OF EARTH,
BORN TO GIVE THEM SECOND BIRTH.
HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING,
"GLORY TO THE NEW BORN KING!"⁵
AMEN.





HIS CHRISTMAS NAMES



UNTO US A
SON IS BORN





HE SHALL BE CALLED



Jesus

JOSEPH, SON OF DAVID, DO NOT FEAR TO TAKE
MARY AS YOUR WIFE, FOR THAT WHICH IS
CONCEIVED IN HER IS FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT.
SHE WILL BEAR A SON, AND YOU SHALL
CALL HIS NAME, JESUS.

—MATTHEW 1:20–21

JESUS IS THE FIRST BIBLICAL NAME MOST *children learn*.

IT'S SHORT, EASY TO PRONOUNCE, AND EASY TO REMEMBER.
We sing, "JESUS LOVES ME, THIS I KNOW, FOR THE BIBLE
TELLS ME SO." SIMPLE, YET FULL OF PROFOUND TRUTH.
WHY WAS THIS *baby* GIVEN THE NAME *JESUS*?

WHEN JOSEPH LEARNED THAT HIS FIANCÉE, MARY,
WAS PREGNANT, HE WAS SHOCKED. IN THEIR CULTURE
AN ENGAGEMENT WAS CONSIDERED AS BINDING AS A
MARRIAGE. AS HIS ANXIOUS MIND TRIED TO MAKE SENSE
OF WHAT SEEMED LIKE TERRIBLE NEWS, JOSEPH DECIDED
TO DO THE MOST HONORABLE THING BY QUIETLY
DIVORCING HER. THE BIBLE TELLS US JOSEPH WAS A JUST
MAN, A MAN WHO COULD HAVE HAD MARY PUT TO
DEATH FOR BECOMING PREGNANT BEFORE MARRIAGE,
BUT INSTEAD HE DECIDED TO SHOW COMPASSION.



HIS CHRISTMAS NAMES

But before Joseph COULD ACT ON HIS THINKING, AN ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED TO HIM *in a dream*.

THE ANGEL TOLD JOSEPH THAT THE BABY IN MARY'S WOMB WAS NOT FROM ANOTHER MAN, BUT WAS CONCEIVED BY THE *Holy Spirit*.

THEN THE ANGEL SAID, "YOU SHALL CALL HIS NAME JESUS, FOR HE WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS" (MATTHEW 1:21).

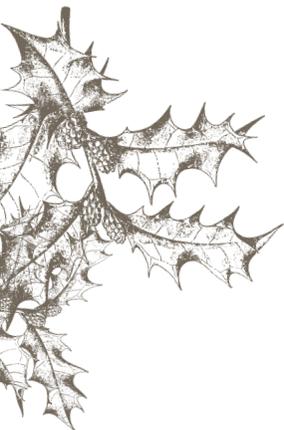
**GOD HIMSELF NAMED THIS BABY IN BETHLEHEM,
AND HE SENT THE NAME BY SPECIAL
DELIVERY THROUGH AN ANGEL.**

Jesus IS A FORM OF THE NAME *JOSHUA*. DO YOU KNOW ANOTHER JOSHUA IN THE BIBLE? JOSHUA LED THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL; HE LED THEM IN BATTLE AND INSPIRED THEM TO KEEP BELIEVING THAT GOD WOULD DELIVER THEM. IN WHAT WAYS WAS JESUS LIKE JOSHUA? OR, HOW WAS JOSHUA LIKE JESUS?

THE NAME *JESUS* MEANS "*God saves.*" HE IS OUR PROTECTOR, OUR LEADER, AND OUR SAVIOR. HIS IS THE NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES, AND ONE DAY, WHEN THE NAME JESUS IS SPOKEN, "EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, . . . AND EVERY TONGUE WILL CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER" (PHILIPPIANS 2:10-11, NASB).



JESUS, NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES
BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR, GLORIOUS LORD.
EMMANUEL, GOD IS WITH US.
BLESSED REDEEMER, LIVING WORD⁶





HE SHALL BE CALLED



Savior

FOR UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY IN THE
CITY OF DAVID A SAVIOR, WHO IS CHRIST THE LORD.

—LUKE 2:11

SPOKEN TO *stunned shepherds* IN THE DARK OF NIGHT, THIS NAME SPEAKS TO THE TASK PREPARED FOR JESUS: HE WOULD BE THE LONG-AWAITED SAVIOR. THESE MEN AND BOYS—WHOSE LIVES WERE ROUGH, DIRTY, AND LONELY — KNEW NOTHING OF THE ANGEL WHO HAD VISITED JOSEPH OR THE ONE WHO HAD VISITED MARY. BUT *suddenly* THEY, TOO, EXPERIENCED THE REALITY OF ANOTHER REALM, FOR “AN *angel* OF THE LORD APPEARED TO THEM, AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD SHONE AROUND THEM” (LUKE 2:9). SHINING AS BRIGHT AS THE SUN AND SURROUNDING GOD’S PRESENCE, THE *glory* OF THE LORD IS A *brilliant* LIGHT, AND THAT LIGHT CAME WITH THIS ANGEL. ANGELS ARE SUPERNATURAL BEINGS WHO SERVE AT GOD’S COMMAND. AND THIS ONE WAS SENT TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE *Savior* HAD COME.



HIS CHRISTMAS NAMES

A *savior* IS SOMEONE WHO RESCUES ANOTHER PERSON WHO IS IN TROUBLE. IMAGINE SOMEONE BEGINNING TO DROWN IN A LAKE, AND THEN A BRAVE SOUL JUMPS IN, SWIMS TO HIS AID, AND SAVES HIS LIFE. THE *rescuer* IS CALLED A SAVIOR.

WHAT KIND OF SAVIOR DID THE SHEPHERDS NEED?
WHAT KIND OF SAVIOR DO YOU NEED?

THE VERY *FIRST* PEOPLE WHO LIVED ON EARTH WERE ALSO THE FIRST ONES *to need* A SAVIOR. ADAM AND EVE CHOSE THEIR OWN WAY OVER GOD'S WAY AND BECAME FOREVER TRAPPED IN BONDAGE TO A BODY THAT WOULD DIE INSTEAD OF LIVING FOREVER. YOU AND I ARE THEIR CHILDREN, ALIVE IN BODIES THAT ARE BROKEN BY SIN AND UTTERLY UNABLE TO REACH GOD'S STANDARD OF *holiness*.

BUT BECAUSE GOD LOVES US *He sent Jesus*
TO BE OUR SAVIOR, TO RESCUE US FROM DROWNING IN A LAKE OF SIN. AS YOU HANG THE NAME SAVIOR ON YOUR TREE—THINK OF THE SYMBOLISM IN THIS SIMPLE ACTION—GIVE THANKS THAT HE CAME TO SAVE YOU AND ME AND ANYONE WHO BELIEVES ON HIS NAME.

HALLELUJAH, WHAT A SAVIOR!



"FEAR NOT," THEN SAID THE ANGEL,
"LET NOTHING YOU AFFRIGHT,
THIS DAY IS BORN A SAVIOR,
OF VIRTUE, POWER AND MIGHT;
SO FREQUENTLY TO VANQUISH ALL
THE FRIENDS OF SATAN QUITE;"
O TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY
COMFORT AND JOY
O TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY?





HE SHALL BE CALLED



Christ the Lord



FOR UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY IN THE CITY OF
DAVID A SAVIOR, WHO IS CHRIST THE LORD.

—LUKE 2:11

THE *grand announcement* DELIVERED BY
THE ANGEL IDENTIFIED THIS BABY NOT ONLY AS OUR
SAVIOR BUT ALSO AS CHRIST THE LORD. JUST AS WE
give names TO CHILDREN THAT CONNECT THEM
TO THEIR PARENTS,

Jesus' NAME *CHRIST THE LORD* DECLARES THAT HE
IS FROM GOD AND THAT HE BELONGS TO GOD. *CHRIST
THE LORD* IS ALSO A TITLE AND IS SIMILAR TO HOW
WE ADDRESS EARTHLY KINGS (HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS)
OR LEADERS OF NATIONS (PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
STATES). *This name* DECLARED THAT JESUS
WAS NOT ONLY *FROM* GOD, BUT THAT HE *IS* GOD. THE
PROMISED ONE FOR WHOM THE JEWISH PEOPLE HAD
BEEN WAITING FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS WAS *born
with a royal title:* CHRIST THE LORD.

HIS CHRISTMAS NAMES

THIS *Declaration* WAS MADE TO SIMPLE SHEPHERDS WHO WERE PASTURING FLOCKS OF SHEEP DESTINED TO BECOME SACRIFICIAL LAMBS DURING PASSOVER. THIS WAS AN INTENTIONALLY SYMBOLIC LOCATION THAT WE OFTEN OVERLOOK IN THE CHRISTMAS STORY. THE LAMBS' SHED BLOOD WAS MEANT TO ATONE FOR THE PEOPLE'S SIN ONCE A YEAR, BUT JESUS' BLOOD WOULD BE SHED ONCE FOR ALL. BECAUSE HIS SACRIFICE WAS PERFECT AND *forever*, PLANNED BEFORE TIME BEGAN, HIS TITLE *CHRIST THE LORD* WOULD BE FIRMLY AUTHENTICATED.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR JESUS TO BE LORD? A LORD IS SOMEONE WHO HAS GREAT AUTHORITY OVER OTHERS. FOR JESUS TO BE YOUR LORD MEANS HE IS YOUR RULER.

PERHAPS YOU'VE *heard* IT SAID THAT IF YOUR CAR DOESN'T WORK, YOU TAKE IT TO A MECHANIC. IF YOUR WATCH IS BROKEN, YOU TAKE IT TO A JEWELER. BUT YOU DON'T TAKE YOUR CAR TO THE JEWELER OR YOUR WATCH TO THE MECHANIC. THE ONE WHO MADE IT IS THE ONE WHO CAN FIX IT AND MAKE IT WORK CORRECTLY. THEREFORE IF JESUS IS LORD, IT MEANS HE IS GOD. AS GOD, HE *knows* BEST HOW YOUR LIFE SHOULD WORK.

Jesus IS CHRIST THE LORD. WILL YOU LET HIM RULE YOUR LIFE? WILL YOU GIVE JESUS *a gift* THIS YEAR FOR CHRISTMAS? WILL YOU GIVE HIM AUTHORITY OVER ALL OF YOU?

COME TO BETHLEHEM AND SEE
HIM WHOSE BIRTH THE ANGELS SING;
COME ADORE ON BENDED KNEE
CHRIST THE LORD, THE NEWBORN KING.⁸



HE SHALL BE CALLED



Emmanuel



BEHOLD, A VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD,
AND SHALL BRING FORTH A SON,
AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME EMMANUEL.

—MATTHEW 1:23 (KJV)

The beginning moments OF A BABY'S LIFE ARE A MYSTERY IN MANY WAYS. AT FIRST, NEW LIFE HAPPENS SECRETLY, SILENTLY, IN THE DARKNESS OF A *mother's* WOMB. THEN WEEKS LATER THE DISCOVERY IS MADE, THE TRUTH OF A NEW LIFE ALREADY *existing* BECOMES KNOWN, OFTEN ACCOMPANIED BY GREAT JOY.

ONLY ONCE WAS THIS NORMAL HUMAN PROCESS CHANGED. AND BECAUSE THIS CONCEPTION DEFIED THE LAWS OF NATURE, WE CALL IT A MIRACLE. INCOMPREHENSIBLY, THE BABY WAS NOT CONCEIVED BETWEEN A MAN AND A WOMAN, BUT IN A WOMAN ALONE. AND NOT IN A MARRIED WOMAN, BUT A MAIDEN, A GIRL PERHAPS AS YOUNG AS THIRTEEN OR FOURTEEN.



Many OF US KNOW THE STORY, BUT PAUSE FOR A MOMENT AND SHAKE OFF THE FAMILIARITY. LET YOURSELF BE AWED BY THE MULTITUDE OF *wonders* THAT SURROUND THIS EXCEPTIONAL BIRTH. IT WAS SEVEN HUNDRED YEARS PLUS A FEW WHEN ISAIAH FIRST SPOKE OF THE LORD WHO *was to come*. WE SEND OUT BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS, AFTER THE ARRIVAL, BUT GOD DECLARED THIS BIRTH CENTURIES AHEAD OF TIME. AND HIS *announcement*, LIKE OURS, INCLUDED THE NAME . . . EMMANUEL.

"GOD WITH US" IS THE MEANING OF *EMMANUEL*. WITH YOU. WITH ME. NOT A GOD WHO IS WANDERING THE GALAXIES SOMEWHERE, BUT HERE, PRESENT, LIVING, *WITH US*. THIS WAS A STUNNING ANNOUNCEMENT. IT STILL IS. FOR ANYONE WHO HEARS THE STORY AND BELIEVES, LIFE IS ALTERED. NO ONE ELSE HAS EVER BEEN BORN LIKE THIS.

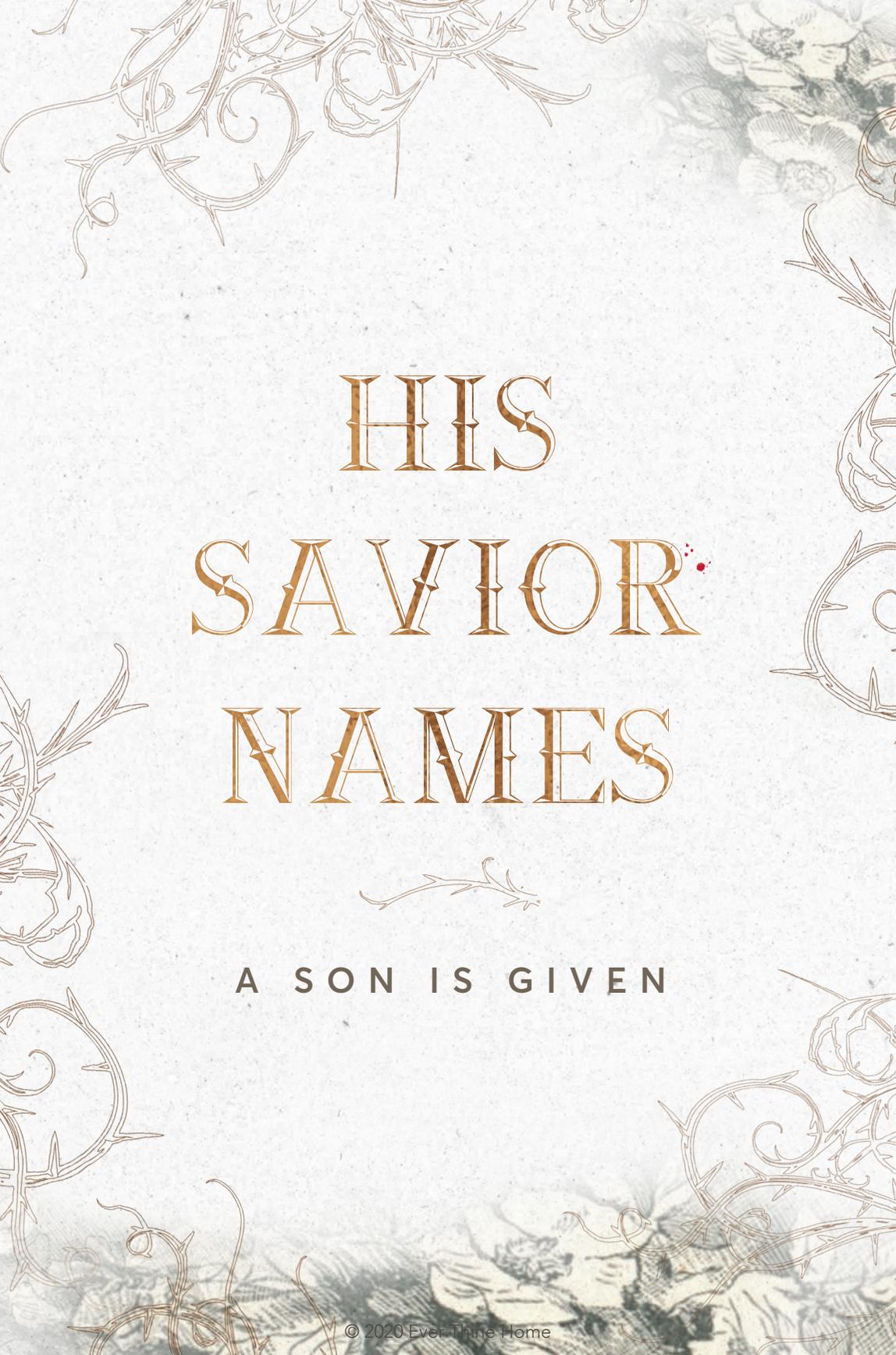
DO YOU KNOW HIM? WILL YOU WELCOME HIM, EMMANUEL, THE MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS? WILL YOU SING, "O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL" AS A PRAYER FROM YOUR HEART?

WHAT A MYSTERY! *God* IS WITH US!

O COME, THOU DAY-SPRING, COME AND CHEER
OUR SPIRITS BY THINE ADVENT HERE;
DISPERSE THE GLOOMY CLOUDS OF NIGHT
AND DEATH'S DARK SHADOWS PUT TO FLIGHT.

REJOICE! REJOICE! EMMANUEL
SHALL COME TO THEE, O ISRAEL!





HIS
SAVIOR
NAMES



A SON IS GIVEN



GREAT HIGH PRIEST

SINCE THEN WE HAVE A GREAT HIGH PRIEST
WHO HAS PASSED THROUGH THE HEAVENS,
JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, . . . ”

—HEBREWS 4:14

A PRIEST IS SOMEONE WHO HAS CHOSEN TO
WORK FOR GOD, OFTEN IN A CHURCH, TO HELP PEOPLE
CONNECT WITH GOD. SOMETIMES A PRIEST IS KNOWN BY A
DIFFERENT TITLE, SUCH AS PASTOR, RECTOR, MINISTER,
OR MISSIONARY.

IN BIBLICAL TIMES THERE WERE MANY MEN
WHO SERVED AS PRIESTS, BUT ONE WAS CHOSEN BY
GOD AS THE HIGH PRIEST, THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB IN
THE TEMPLE: “FOR EVERY HIGH PRIEST . . . IS APPOINTED
ON BEHALF OF MEN IN THINGS PERTAINING TO GOD.”¹⁰

ONCE EACH YEAR, ON THE DAY OF
ATONEMENT, THE HIGH PRIEST GOT EXTRA
CLEAN AND PUT ON CLOTHES MADE OF PURE LINEN,
REPRESENTING HIS HUMILITY BEFORE GOD. HE THEN
WENT INTO THE HOLY PLACE IN THE TEMPLE TO MAKE
OFFERINGS FOR HIMSELF AND ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE
NATION. AFTER OFFERING THE SACRIFICES, HE WENT INTO
ANOTHER ROOM CALLED THE HOLY OF HOLIES. THE WALLS
WERE COVERED IN GOLD, AND BEHIND A THICK, HEAVY
CURTAIN WAS A GOLDEN ALTAR WITH CHERUBIM (ANGELS)
ON TOP. THE HIGH PRIEST WAS THE ONLY PERSON EVER
ALLOWED INTO THIS ROOM. CARRYING A PAN OF COALS
AND INCENSE AND THE BLOOD OF A BULL, THE HIGH
PRIEST FEARFULLY AND REVERENTLY MADE OFFERINGS
TO GOD, WHOSE PRESENCE DWELT THERE.

TODAY THIS SEEMS AN EXCESSIVE RITUAL, BUT WE HAVE
LITTLE APPRECIATION FOR THE FEARSOME HOLINESS OF
GOD AND THE SERIOUSNESS OF OUR SIN. IMAGINE GOING

HIS SAVIOR NAMES

ALONE BEFORE GOD ALMIGHTY. WOULD YOU FEEL ANXIOUS, NERVOUS, OR EVEN AFRAID? IN THE ENTIRE BIBLE NEVER DID AN ANGEL APPEAR TO A PERSON WITHOUT EVOKING GREAT FEAR AND AWE. IF PEOPLE REACTED LIKE THIS TO THE PRESENCE OF AN ANGEL, IMAGINE WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO SEE GOD HIMSELF.

THEN CAME JESUS. CHOSEN TO BE OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST AND TO BE OUR SACRIFICE, JESUS FREELY GAVE HIS OWN LIFE. BECAUSE OF THE CROSS, RITUALS ARE NO LONGER NEEDED BECAUSE "HE, HAVING OFFERED ONE SACRIFICE FOR SINS FOR ALL TIME, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD."¹¹ HIS WORK IS COMPLETE. WE DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID. AT ANY TIME WE CAN "DRAW NEAR WITH CONFIDENCE TO THE THRONE OF GRACE, SO THAT WE MAY RECEIVE MERCY AND FIND GRACE TO HELP IN TIME OF NEED."¹²



YET YOU LEFT THE GAZE OF ANGELS,
CAME TO SEEK AND SAVE THE LOST,
AND EXCHANGED THE JOY OF HEAVEN
FOR THE ANGUISH OF A CROSS.¹³

FROM "ACROSS THE LANDS"



ETHIOPIAN CROSS

ETHIOPIA, FIRST MENTIONED IN GENESIS, LIES SOUTH OF EGYPT AND HAS HAD A STRONG CHRISTIAN PRESENCE SINCE PHILLIP, THE DISCIPLE, EXPLAINED THE WORDS OF ISAIAH TO THE ETHIOPIAN SERVANT OF CANDACE, QUEEN OF ETHIOPIA IN ACTS 8. THIS ETHIOPIAN MAN RETURNED TO HIS COUNTRY REJOICING IN THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS AND UNDOUBTEDLY WAS USED BY GOD TO LEAD MANY IN HIS COUNTRY TO FAITH IN CHRIST. THE ETHIOPIAN CROSS IS ONE OF ETHIOPIA'S MOST PRECIOUS RELIGIOUS AND HISTORICAL HEIRLOOMS, SIGNIFYING THEIR LONG HISTORY AS A CHRISTIAN NATION.



GOD AND SAVIOR

FOR I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD,
THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, YOUR SAVIOR.

—ISAIAH 43:3

MARY, A YOUNG TEEN, WAS ASTONISHED TO SEE AN ANGEL APPEAR BEFORE HER. STILL A CHILD IN MANY WAYS, MARY PROBABLY SAT ON HER BED HUGGING HER KNEES, EYES WIDE AS SAUCERS, STARING AT THIS DAZZLING WARRIOR BEING. SHE WAS GREATLY TROUBLED TO HEAR: "GREETINGS, O FAVORED ONE, THE LORD IS WITH YOU!" (LUKE 1:28-29) BUT SHE WAS NOT SO AWED THAT SHE COULDN'T SPEAK. RESPECTFULLY SHE QUESTIONED GOD'S ANGELIC MESSENGER, "HOW WILL THIS BE, SINCE I AM A VIRGIN?" (LUKE 1:34) GABRIEL ANSWERED, THEN DECLARED, "FOR NOTHING WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD."¹⁴ HE DEPARTED AS MYSTERIOUSLY AS HE HAD APPEARED.

SOON AFTER, MARY TRAVELED TO VISIT HER AUNT ELIZABETH, WHO WAS PREGNANT WITH A BABY ALSO ANNOUNCED BY AN ANGEL. AT THEIR HAPPY REUNION MARY DECLARED HER PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING TO GOD WITH THESE WORDS, " MY SOUL MAGNIFIES THE LORD, AND MY SPIRIT REJOICES IN GOD MY SAVIOR."¹⁵

MARY'S WORDS REFLECT THE GOOD NEWS THAT FROM THE FIRST MOMENT AFTER ADAM AND EVE SINNED, GOD BEGAN COMMUNICATING HIS INTENTIONS TO SAVE HIS PEOPLE. THEN, MARCHING ACROSS THE PAGES OF THE BIBLE GOD CONTINUED TO INCREASINGLY REVEAL THIS PREDETERMINED PLAN OF SALVATION THROUGH JESUS WHO WOULD BE GOD AND SAVIOR. GOD HAS ALWAYS BEEN HUMANITY'S ONLY HOPE FOR RECOVERING ALL THAT WAS LOST IN EDEN.



HIS SAVIOR NAMES

WHAT WAS NEVER CLEAR TO MOSES, DAVID, ISAIAH, AND ALL THE PROPHETS WHO SPOKE GOD'S WORDS AND WROTE HOLY SPIRIT-INSPIRED MESSAGES, WAS THAT THE WAY OF SALVATION WAS THROUGH THE DEATH OF A SAVIOR. JEWISH SCHOLARS AND JESUS'S DISCIPLES ALL BELIEVED THE SAVIOR WOULD BE A KING WHO WOULD RULE ON EARTH. THEY WERE BEWILDERED BY HIS HUMILITY AND HIS UNWILLINGNESS TO SUBDUED THE ROMANS. IN FACT, JESUS' UTTER SUBMISSION TO THE ROMAN SOLDIERS—WHO BEAT AND SCOURGED HIM BEFORE DRIVING HIM TO DEATH ON A CROSS—WAS A SHOCKING REALITY THEY NEVER IMAGINED.

AFTER THE RESURRECTION HIS DISCIPLES AND FOLLOWERS SAW THE TRUTH WITH THEIR EYES: "TOUCH ME AND SEE," JESUS SAID, "FOR A SPIRIT DOES NOT HAVE FLESH AND BONES AS YOU SEE THAT I HAVE."¹⁶ AND THEY BELIEVED JESUS WAS INDEED GOD AND SAVIOR!

THIS CHRISTMAS MAY YOU WELCOME JESUS WHO IS GOD AND SAVIOR INTO YOUR HEART AND FAMILY, AND MAY YOU "PROCLAIM HIS NAME TO ALL NATIONS . . ."¹⁷

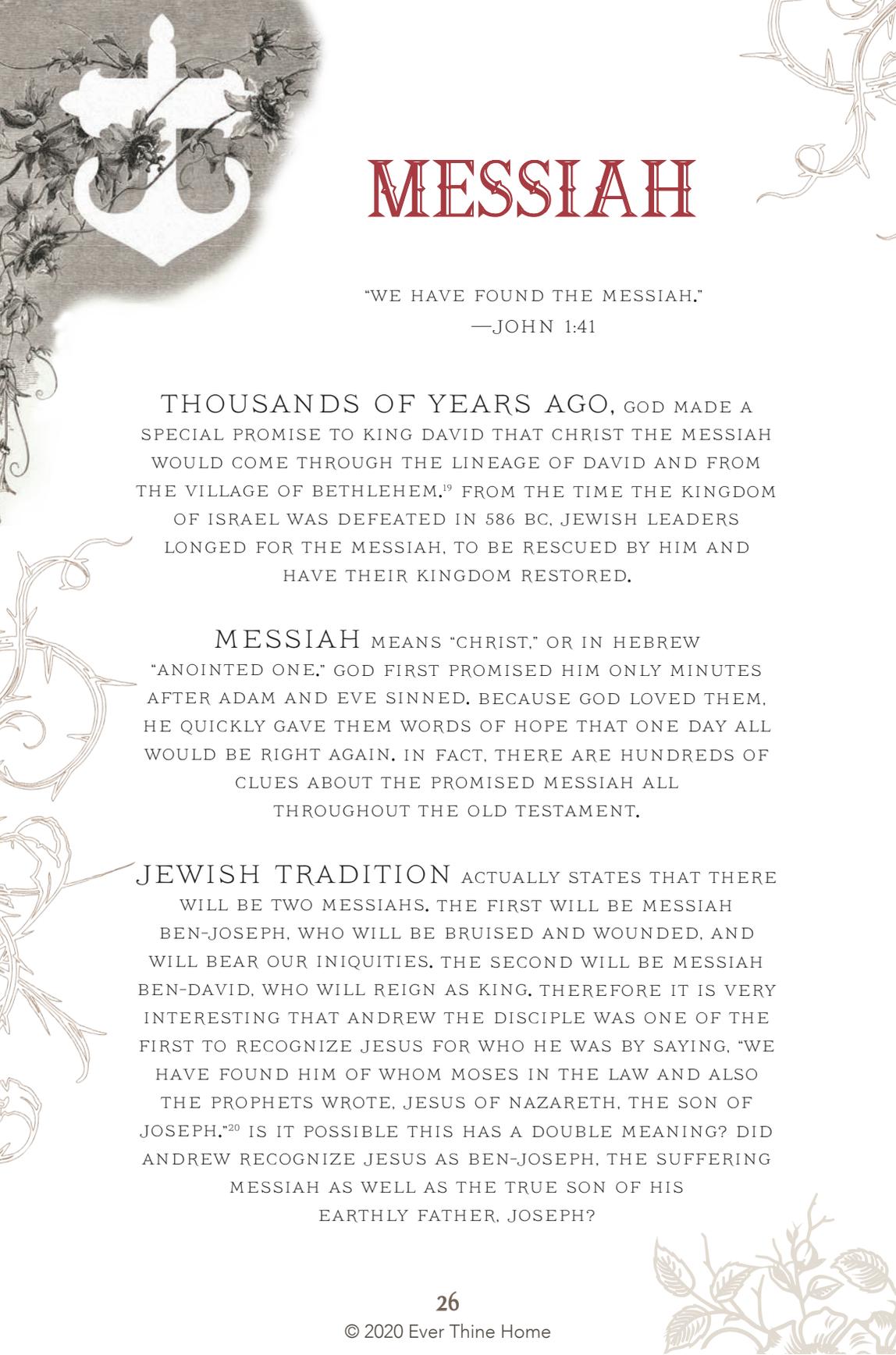


ONE WITH HIMSELF I CANNOT DIE
MY SOUL IS PURCHASED BY HIS BLOOD
MY LIFE IS HID WITH CHRIST ON HIGH
WITH CHRIST MY SAVIOR AND MY GOD
WITH CHRIST MY SAVIOR AND MY GOD.¹⁸



JERUSALEM CROSS

THE JERUSALEM CROSS IS THOUGHT TO HAVE ORIGINATED WITH THE EARLY CHURCH DURING THE ROMAN EMPIRE. ITS DESIGN OF FIVE CROSSES REPRESENTS THE WOUNDS OF THE LAMB: SMALL CROSSES FOR THE NAILS DRIVEN INTO HIS HANDS AND FEET AND THE LARGE CENTER CROSS FOR THE SPEAR WOUND IN HIS SIDE. OTHERS BELIEVE THE LARGE CROSS SHOWS THE CENTRALITY OF CHRISTIANITY WITH THE SMALLER CROSSES REMINDING US OF CHRIST'S COMMAND TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL TO THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH.



MESSIAH

“WE HAVE FOUND THE MESSIAH.”

—JOHN 1:41

THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, GOD MADE A SPECIAL PROMISE TO KING DAVID THAT CHRIST THE MESSIAH WOULD COME THROUGH THE LINEAGE OF DAVID AND FROM THE VILLAGE OF BETHLEHEM.¹⁹ FROM THE TIME THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL WAS DEFEATED IN 586 BC, JEWISH LEADERS LONGED FOR THE MESSIAH, TO BE RESCUED BY HIM AND HAVE THEIR KINGDOM RESTORED.

MESSIAH MEANS “CHRIST,” OR IN HEBREW “ANointed ONE.” GOD FIRST PROMISED HIM ONLY MINUTES AFTER ADAM AND EVE SINNED. BECAUSE GOD LOVED THEM, HE QUICKLY GAVE THEM WORDS OF HOPE THAT ONE DAY ALL WOULD BE RIGHT AGAIN. IN FACT, THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF CLUES ABOUT THE PROMISED MESSIAH ALL THROUGHOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT.

JEWISH TRADITION ACTUALLY STATES THAT THERE WILL BE TWO MESSIAHS. THE FIRST WILL BE MESSIAH BEN-JOSEPH, WHO WILL BE BRUISED AND WOUNDED, AND WILL BEAR OUR INIQUITIES. THE SECOND WILL BE MESSIAH BEN-DAVID, WHO WILL REIGN AS KING. THEREFORE IT IS VERY INTERESTING THAT ANDREW THE DISCIPLE WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO RECOGNIZE JESUS FOR WHO HE WAS BY SAYING, “WE HAVE FOUND HIM OF WHOM MOSES IN THE LAW AND ALSO THE PROPHETS WROTE, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE SON OF JOSEPH.”²⁰ IS IT POSSIBLE THIS HAS A DOUBLE MEANING? DID ANDREW RECOGNIZE JESUS AS BEN-JOSEPH, THE SUFFERING MESSIAH AS WELL AS THE TRUE SON OF HIS EARTHLY FATHER, JOSEPH?

HIS SAVIOR NAMES

CHRISTIANS BELIEVE JESUS IS BOTH A SUFFERING AND REIGNING MESSIAH, WHO CAME FIRST TO REDEEM US FROM SIN AND WHO WILL COME AGAIN TO RULE AND REIGN ON EARTH. JESUS THE MESSIAH CAME AS THE LAMB OF GOD AND HE WILL ONE DAY RETURN ON "A WHITE HORSE" AS THE CONQUERING "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."²¹

THE PROMISE OF MESSIAH IS A MESSAGE OF HOPE. IT IS ALSO A MESSAGE OF LOVE. "FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON."²² RECOGNIZING MESSIAH IS A GIFT OF GOD, FOR IT IS HE WHO CALLS OUR NAME, WHO GIVES US EYES TO SEE AND EARS TO HEAR. "TODAY, IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS."²³ SAYS THE HOLY SPIRIT. TODAY IS THE BEST DAY TO WELCOME JESUS INTO YOUR LIFE, AND IF YOU DO, IT WILL BE A DAY YOU WILL NEVER FORGET!



DEATH IS DEAD, LOVE HAS WON, CHRIST HAS CONQUERED,
AND WE SHALL REIGN WITH HIM,
FOR HE LIVES: CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD!²⁴

FROM "SEE, WHAT A MORNING"



ANCHOR CROSS

THE ANCHOR CROSS HAS SYMBOLIZED HOPE SINCE THE EARLY DAYS OF THE CHURCH. HEBREWS 6:19-20 TELLS US, "WE HAVE THIS AS A SURE AND STEADFAST ANCHOR OF THE SOUL, A HOPE THAT ENTERS INTO THE INNER PLACE . . . WHERE JESUS HAS GONE . . . ON OUR BEHALF," AS AN ANCHOR HOLDS A SHIP IN PLACE, SO THE ANCHOR OF CHRIST'S WORK AS MESSIAH HOLDS US STEADY IN THE WINDS OF LIFE. THIS HOPE "DOES NOT DISAPPOINT."²⁵



CHIEF CORNERSTONE

THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED
HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNER STONE.

—PSALM 118:22 (NASB)

YOU MIGHT REMEMBER SINGING, “THE WISE MAN BUILT HIS HOUSE UPON THE ROCK . . . THE FOOLISH MAN BUILT HIS HOUSE UPON THE SAND.”²⁶ A FOUNDATION, THE PART OF A BUILDING THAT IS BELOW THE GROUND, OFFERS THE MOST STABILITY IF IT IS SET UPON ROCK, WHICH DOESN'T SHIFT LIKE SAND.

IF YOU WERE TO VISIT THE REMAINS OF THE ANCIENT JEWISH TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM, YOU WOULD SEE THE HUGE RECTANGULAR FOUNDATION STONES, INCLUDING A CORNERSTONE THAT IS FORTY FEET LONG, EIGHT FEET WIDE, AND THREE AND A HALF FEET TALL; THAT'S ALMOST AS BIG AS A BOXCAR ON A TRAIN! IT IS HARD TO FATHOM HOW STONES OF THIS SIZE COULD HAVE BEEN MOVED INTO PLACE. WHEN JESUS SAVES US, HE IS OUR FIRM FOUNDATION FOREVER, HE IS THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE, “IN THE SIGHT OF GOD CHOSEN AND PRECIOUS.”²⁷



THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE, PERFECTLY AND PRECISELY PLACED, IS THE POINT FROM WHICH AN ENTIRE BUILDING IS JOINED AND ALIGNED. OUR CHIEF CORNERSTONE IS FAULTLESS, IMMOVEABLE, AND HE IS A *LIVING* STONE. KING DAVID CALLED GOD HIS ROCK, AND PETER, WHO SAW THE RISEN CHRIST, KNOWS OUR CORNERSTONE IS ALIVE FOREVERMORE. PETER TELLS US WE, TOO, ARE LIVING STONES! EACH PERSON WHO BELIEVES IN JESUS FOR SALVATION IS AN IMPORTANT STONE IN THE BUILDING OF HIS CHURCH. WE ARE A “CHOSEN RACE, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION,”²⁸ “BEING BUILT UP AS A SPIRITUAL HOUSE.”²⁹





HIS SAVIOR NAMES



THE WORLD MAY BE CHANGING AROUND US, BUT THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE WILL NOT BE MOVED. "JESUS CHRIST IS THE SAME YESTERDAY AND TODAY AND FOREVER."³⁰ THOUGH HARD TIMES WILL MAKE YOU FEEL UNSTEADY, "HE WILL BE THE STABILITY OF YOUR TIMES."³¹

HAVE YOU BELIEVED IN JESUS?

WILL YOU BUILD YOUR LIFE ON THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE? HE WILL GIVE YOU STRENGTH, COURAGE, AND "THE PEACE OF GOD, WHICH SURPASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING"³² WHEN THE STORMS AND FLOODS OF LIFE MAKE YOU FEEL UNSURE.



HE IS MY LIGHT, MY STRENGTH, MY SONG;
THIS CORNERSTONE,
THIS SOLID GROUND,
FIRM THROUGH THE FIERCEST DROUGHT AND STORM.³³

FROM "IN CHRIST ALONE"



COPTIC CROSS

THE COPTIC CROSS IS CONSIDERED A SIGN OF FAITH AND PRIDE TO THE CHRISTIANS OF EGYPT. AS A PEOPLE, THEY HAVE A LONG HISTORY WITH THE STORIES OF THE BIBLE. FROM JOSEPH AND MOSES, WHO LIVED WITH PHARAOHS; TO MARY, JOSEPH, AND BABY JESUS' ESCAPE FROM HEROD INTO EGYPT; TO EARLY CHURCH FATHERS SUCH AS AUGUSTINE, CHRISTIANITY FOUND FERTILE GROUND IN EGYPT. BUT THE COPTIC STORY IS NOT JUST ANCIENT HISTORY. GOD SAYS ONE DAY, "THE EGYPTIANS WILL KNOW THE LORD IN THAT DAY . . . BLESSED BE EGYPT MY PEOPLE."³⁴



GOD'S AMAZING LOVE



Christmas IS THE STORY OF GOD'S LOVE. THE PERFECT ONE CAME TO US EVEN THOUGH OUR SIN SEPARATES US FROM HIM. HE WENT TO *great lengths* TO LIVE A FLAWLESS LIFE AND THEN TO OFFER THAT LIFE AS A *sacrifice* FOR OUR SIN. BECAUSE OF THAT GIFT YOU CAN BE FORGIVEN AND WELCOMED INTO HIS FAMILY FOREVER. WILL YOU ACCEPT HIS OFFER OF *salvation by asking* HIM TO FORGIVE YOUR SINS AND TRUSTING HIM BY FAITH TO BE YOUR SAVIOR? IF SO, HERE IS A SUGGESTED PRAYER.



LORD JESUS, I NEED YOU. THANK YOU FOR DYING ON THE CROSS FOR MY SINS. I RECEIVE YOU AS MY SAVIOR AND LORD. THANK YOU FOR FORGIVING MY SINS AND GIVING ME ETERNAL LIFE. MAKE ME THE KIND OF PERSON YOU WANT ME TO BE.

Amen.



NOTES

1. "Joy to the World," Isaac Watts, 1719.
2. "O Come, All Ye Faithful," John Francis Wade, translated to English Frederick Oakly, 1841.
3. "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," Martin Luther, 1529.
4. "Good King Wenceslaus," John Mason Neale
5. "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," Charles Wesley, 1739.
6. "Jesus, Name Above All Names," Nadia Hearn, Copyright © 1974, 1978 Scripture in Song (a division of Integrity Music).
7. "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen," W.B. Sandys, 1833.
8. "Angels We Have Heard on High," James Chadwick, translated in 1862.
9. "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," John Mason Neale, altered by compilers, 1867.
10. Hebrews 5:1-2 NASB
11. Hebrews 10:12 NASB
12. Hebrews 4:16 NASB
13. Keith Getty and Stuart Townend, "Across the Lands" © 2002 Thankyou Music (PRS) (adm. worldwide at Capitol-CMGPublishing.com excluding Europe which is adm. by Integritymusic.com) All rights reserved. Used by permission.
14. (Luke 1:37)
15. (Luke 1:44-47)

16. (Luke 24:39 NASV)
17. (Luke 24:47)
18. From the hymn "Before the Throne of God Above"
19. See John 7:42.
20. John 1:45
21. See Revelation 19:11, 16
22. John 3:16
23. Hebrews 3:7
24. Keith Getty and Stuart Townend, "Resurrection Hymn" (See, What a Morning) © 2003 Thankyou Music (PRS) (adm. worldwide at CapitolCMGPublishing.com excluding Europe which is adm. by Integritymusic.com) All rights reserved. Used by permission.
25. Romans 5:5 NASB
26. Child Bible Songs, accessed April 23, 2014, <http://childbiblesongs.com/song-21-wise-man-built-his-house.html>
27. 1 Peter 2:4
28. 1 Peter 2:9
29. 1 Peter 2:4–5
30. Hebrews 13:8
31. Isaiah 33:6
32. Philippians 4:7
33. Keith Getty and Stuart Townend, "In Christ Alone" © 2002 Thankyou Music (PRS) (adm. worldwide at CapitolCMGPublishing.com excluding Europe which is adm. by Integritymusic.com) All rights reserved. Used by permission.
34. Isaiah 19:21, 25



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