

A religious scene depicting two figures in a desert landscape. The figure on the left is a woman wearing a white headscarf and a bright orange robe. The figure on the right is a man with a beard, wearing a white headscarf and a brown robe with a colorful striped shawl. They are standing in front of a large, arched opening in a wall, looking at each other. The background shows a rugged, rocky desert landscape under a warm, golden light. The entire scene is framed by a dark, textured border.

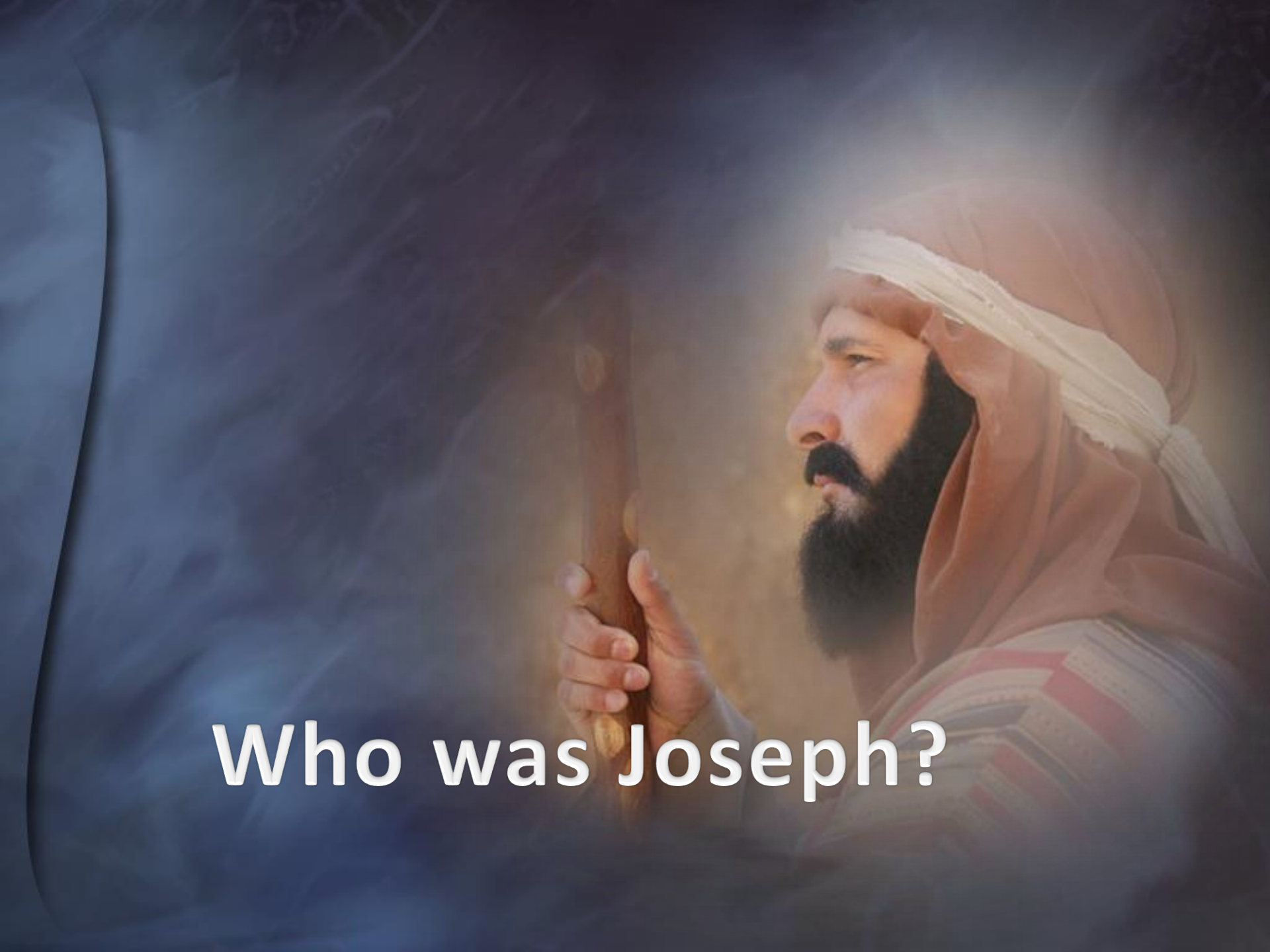
The Christmas Scandal & The Number Forty Two

Matthew 1:18,19



18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.*

A man with a dark beard and a head covering, possibly a turban or shawl, is shown in profile, looking to the left. He is holding a wooden staff or rod. The background is a soft, hazy blue and white, suggesting an outdoor setting. The overall tone is contemplative and historical.

Who was Joseph?

- ✧ Joseph by trade was a carpenter.
- ✧ That placed him near the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder of his day.
- ✧ A carpenter from a long line of kings.



Who was Joseph?

In the genealogy provided by Matthew Joseph was a carpenter with a rich heritage.



Who was Joseph?

Joseph was a descendent of Abraham which made him a member of the chosen race.



Who was Joseph?

He was also a descendant of Israel which made him a member of the chosen nation.



Who was Joseph?

He was directly descendent
from Judah which placed him
solidly in the tribe of the kings.



Who was Joseph?

And he was also a direct
descendent of king David.



Who was Joseph?

If fate had played his hand differently, he could have been king.



Who was Joseph?

But the long line of failures in his holy line left him a carpenter in Caesar's kingdom.



Who was Joseph?

To make matters worse,
Joseph was named after
Joseph.



Who was Joseph?

*Who was the other
Joseph?*



Joseph

Joseph was the son of Jacob who was taken into captivity and he lived all his life under the rule of another kingdom.



Who was Joseph?

Joseph's name is appropriate here.



Who was Joseph?

He had lived all his life in
captivity under Roman rule.



Who was Joseph?

In the Gospel of Matthew Joseph is in a long list of names in a genealogy that looks like its going nowhere.



Who was Joseph?

Joseph's claim to fame is the
Son of God – not his name.



Who was Joseph?

The introduction of Jesus into the genealogy makes all the difference in the world for Joseph.



Who was Joseph?

**The genealogy of
Matthew starts like this
in Matthew 1:1:**



Who was Joseph?

The book of the genealogy of
Jesus Christ, the Son of
David, the Son of Abraham:



Matthew 1:1

Which is literally translated:

**“The Book of the Genesis of
Jesus Christ – son of David – son
of Abraham.”**



Matthew 1:1

Matthew declares that Jesus is the new Adam - the beginning of a new creation...the Genesis of Jesus!



The New Adam

In the Next 15 verses of Matthew we find a fascinating genealogy that starts with Abraham and it ends with Jesus.



The New Adam

Looking at the genealogy, Jesus had every reason to fail as far as his family system was concerned.



The New Adam

- Abraham was a polygamist.
- Isaac lied to save his life.
- Jacob tried to steal his brother's birthright.



The New Adam

- Judah sold his brother into slavery and committed adultery.
- Tamar performed the work of a prostitute to gain children by Judah.
- Rahab was a prostitute too.



The New Adam

- Ruth was a Moabites. She tried to entice an intoxicated Boaz on the threshing floor to gain his favor.
- David murdered a man to steal his wife.



The New Adam

- Solomon led God's people into Idolatry.
- Rehoboam oppressed his people and destroyed the unity of the empire.
- Uzziah committed blasphemy and profaned the temple.



The New Adam

By any definition Jesus was connected to a dysfunctional family.



The New Adam

Jesus is a new genesis for failed families.



The New Adam

The meaning of the genealogy is summarized in Matthew 1:17.



The New Adam

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.



Matthew 1:17

The Genealogy is comprised of three groupings of 14, which together adds up to 42.



The Number

In Numbers 33, Israel camped 42 times before they entered the Promised Land.



The Number

42 months is three and half years
– a time, times, and dividing of
times.



The Number

In the book of Revelation the church goes into the wilderness for 42 months.



The Number

The number 42 represents a time of wilderness wandering.



The Number 42

From Abraham to Jesus the
people of God wandered without
God's true shepherd.



The Number 42

Joseph finds his place in the
genealogy as the son of captivity
just before number 42.



Joseph

In the genealogy Jesus is born as number 42.



The Number 42

Jesus represents the transition
from captivity to freedom.



The Number 42

Jesus is the only way out of the wilderness.



The Number 42

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit;



Matthew 1:18

and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.



Matthew 1:19

The Greek says literally, “Now the Genesis of Jesus took place in this way.”



Genesis of Jesus

“In the
Beginning” the
gospel of
Matthew starts
with a scandal.



Just a young girl
– with a bump –
very pregnant
after her
engagement.



The New
Genesis starts
with a scandal.



The text says,
“before they
came together
she was found
to be with
child...of the
Holy Spirit.”



Joseph
knew
everything
but the last
part.



In ancient times,
the engagement
ceremony was
binding.



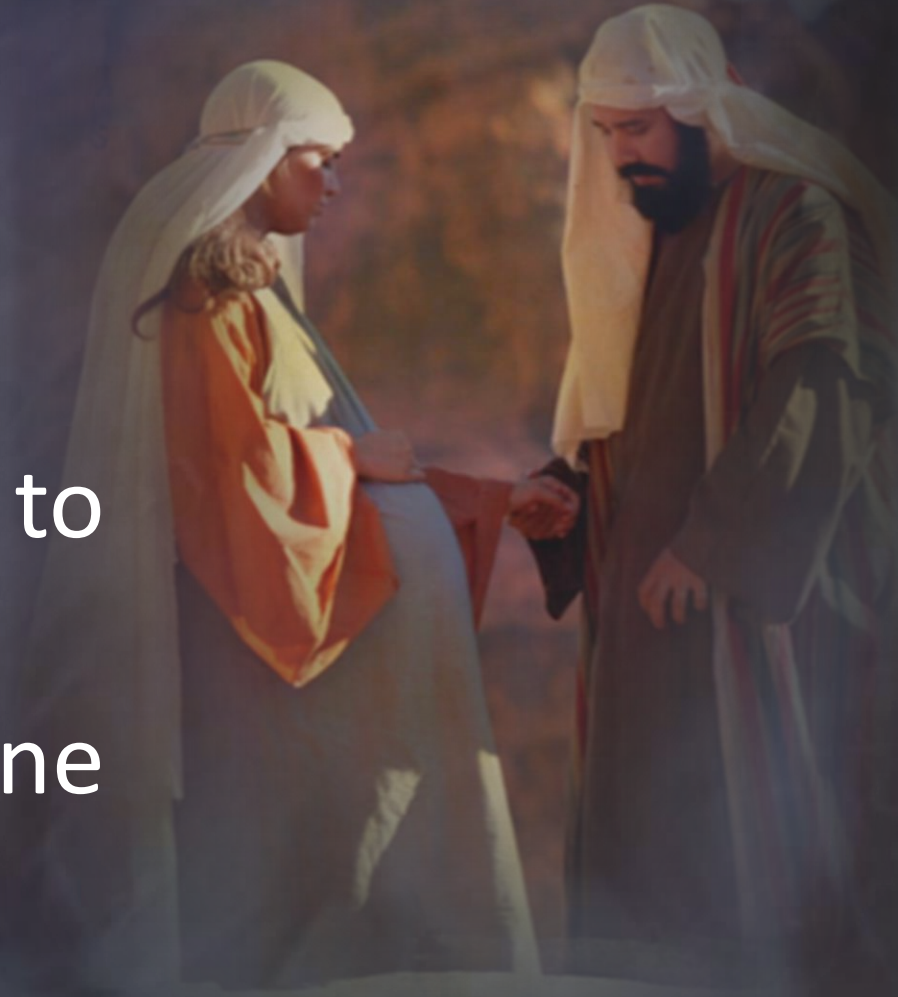
If you were
unfaithful at that
time, you were
considered an
adulteress or an
adulterer.



The text says “Mary was found to be with child.”



I'm sure she tried to
hide it, but
somehow, someone
found it out.



And so the Genesis
of Jesus starts with
a scandal.



It looks like
Jesus will be
number 42 in a
long line of
losers.



If Joseph had exposed Mary publically, Joseph would have no doubt avoided the stigma of violating the waiting time of the engagement.



Unless Joseph exposed Mary publically, he would no doubt become himself a possible candidate for the man that had made Mary pregnant before the appointed time of marriage.

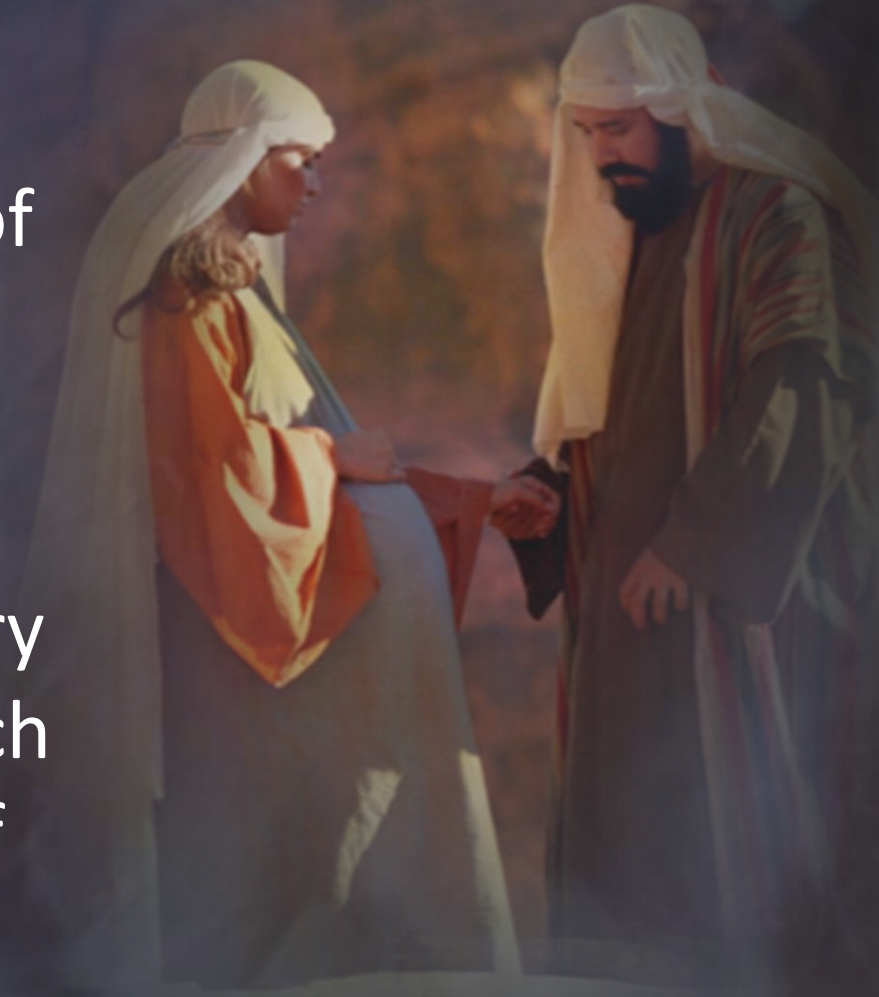


So Joseph's
decision to divorce
her quietly left
Joseph with the
stigma of
suspicion.



Matthew 1:20

But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit;



Joseph was not a theologian, but he knew who the Holy Spirit was in the law of Moses.



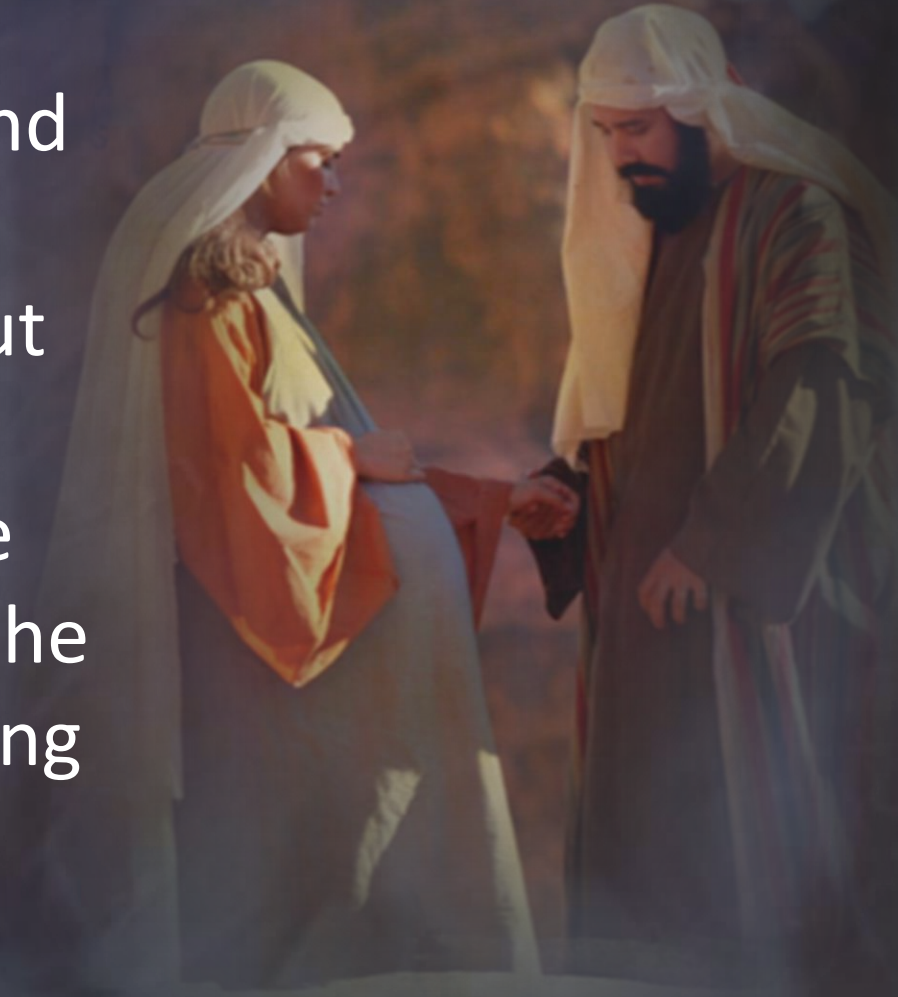
The spirit of
God is present
in the very
lines of
scripture at
the creation of
the world.



Genesis 1:1, 2

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

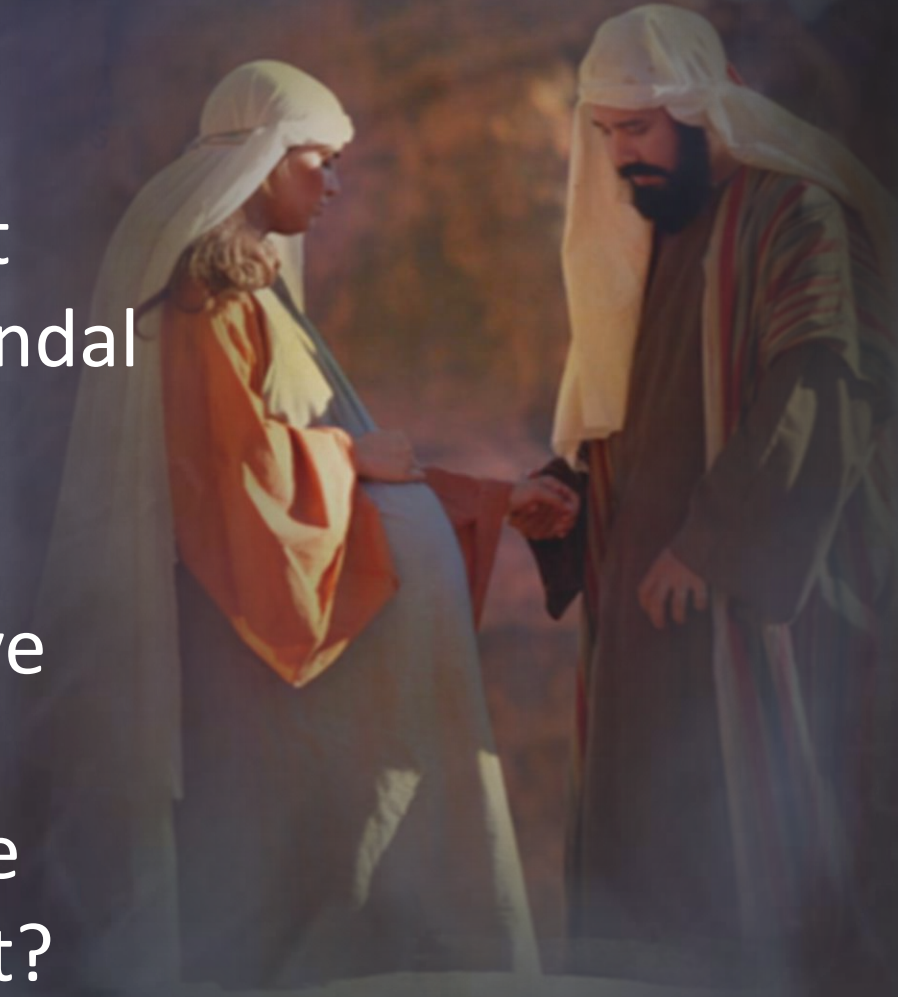
² The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.



The prognosis for
Joseph and Mary
was dark.



- How do you fix a mess you didn't make?
- How do you extract yourself from a scandal you don't deserve?
- How do you survive the shame and the blame for the crime you did not commit?



The angel in the dream told Joseph that the Holy Spirit was the one who made Mary pregnant.





How believable is that?

Imagine Joseph trying to explain the whole thing at the door of the synagogue.

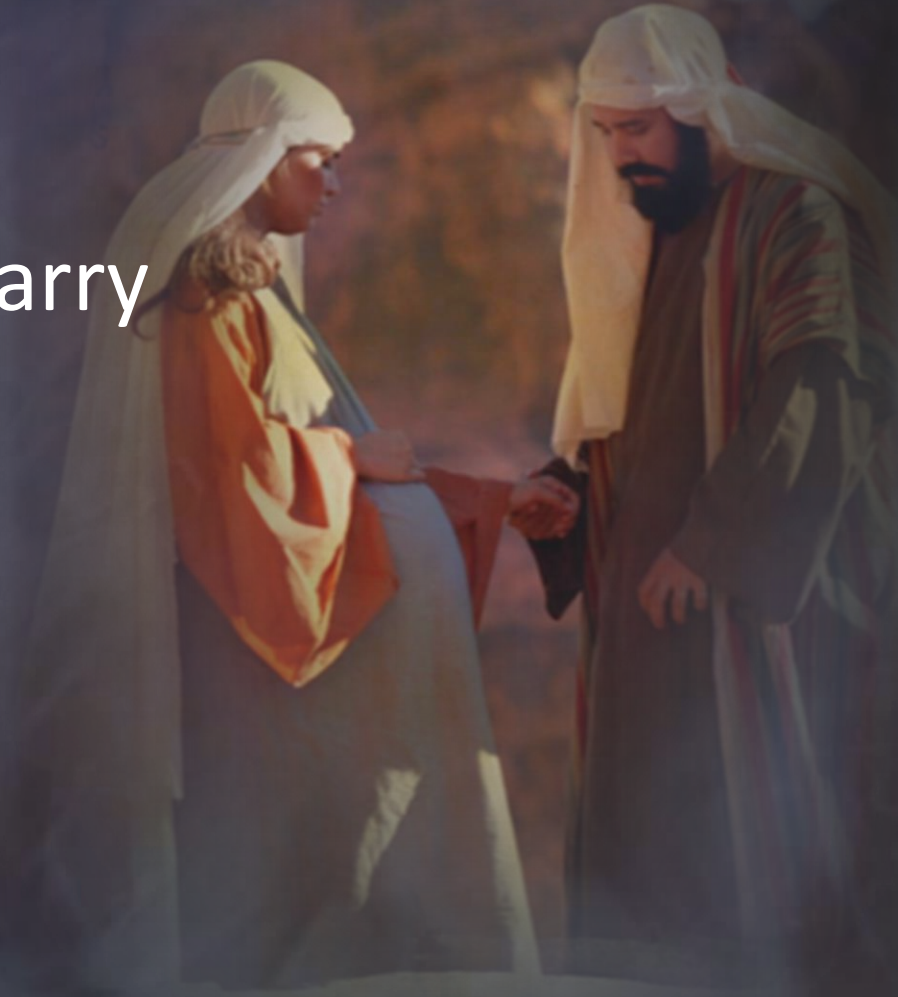


With a stutter in his
voice he says:

“I’m planning to marry
Mary.

Yes she’s pregnant.

No the Baby is not
mine.



Yes we're engaged.

But the baby isn't anyone else's either.

It's true – really!

The baby has a mother – but no Daddy.

I'm just a fill in.



Mary is the first woman in history to have a baby without a man to help her have the baby.



A woman in a white and orange robe and a man in a white and brown robe standing in a cave, holding hands. The woman is on the left, looking towards the man on the right. They are both wearing white head coverings. The background is a dark, rocky cave with a bright light source in the distance, creating a dramatic atmosphere. The text "The Holy Spirit did it to her!" is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

The Holy Spirit did it to her!

At that point the scandal moves into the realm of blasphemy and there is little doubt left in anyone's mind at the door of the synagogue that Joseph is crazy.



As the Angel comes to Joseph in a dream, Joseph is the one at the center of the scandal right there with Mary.



The message of
the angel is
pretty clear.
Joseph - marry
Mary - and
adopt that little
boy she's
carrying as your
little boy.



Matthew 1:21
she will bear a
son, and you
shall call his
name Jesus, for
he will save his
people from
their sins."



There is so much in
this simple
command to
Joseph.



“She will bear a son,
and you shall call
his name Jesus.”



In the Old
Testament, a
father named his
son.



In any scenario,
you don't have a
right to name a
child that is not
yours.



And so the command of the angel is the offer to a man with an uncertain future – the choice - to adopt the little Lord Jesus.



The Son of God
must become the
son of Joseph,
the carpenter, to
become the son
of David and the
son of Adam.



His people must
choose him by
Joseph's choice
for Him to save
his people from
their sins.



Joseph was
named after the
son of Jacob
who would
become Israel.



The ancient Joseph went to Egypt and lived in captivity.

He saved his brothers, his Father, and his whole family from famine and certain death.

He brought them all to Egypt and he protected them from a certain death in a foreign land.



The new Joseph stands on
a new plain in salvation
history.

The new Israel is not a
nation this time.

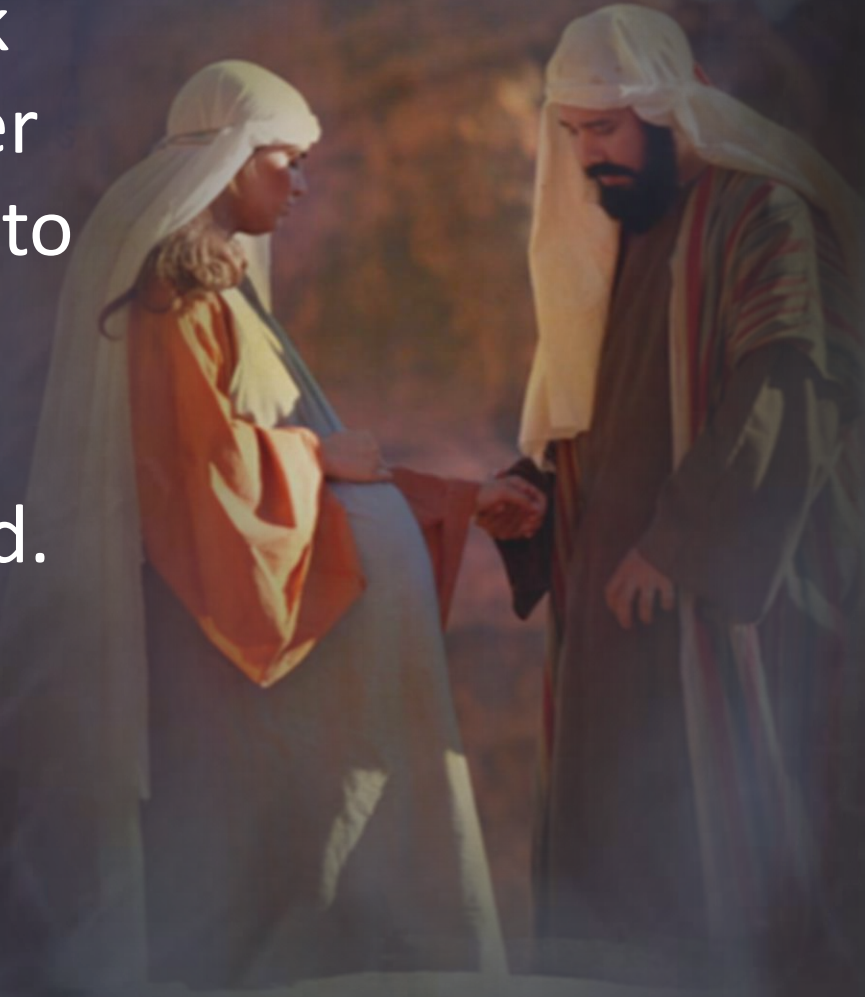
The new Israel in the
gospel of Matthew is a
child.



Matthew 2:14,15

¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt,

¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."



And like Joseph
in the Old
Testament, the
new Joseph will
lead the new
Israel into Egypt
to save his life
from king Herod.



And just like
Israel in the Old
Testament, God
will lead his son
out of Egypt in
the New
Testament.



Matthew 1:21

“You shall call his
name Jesus for he
will save His people
from their sins.”

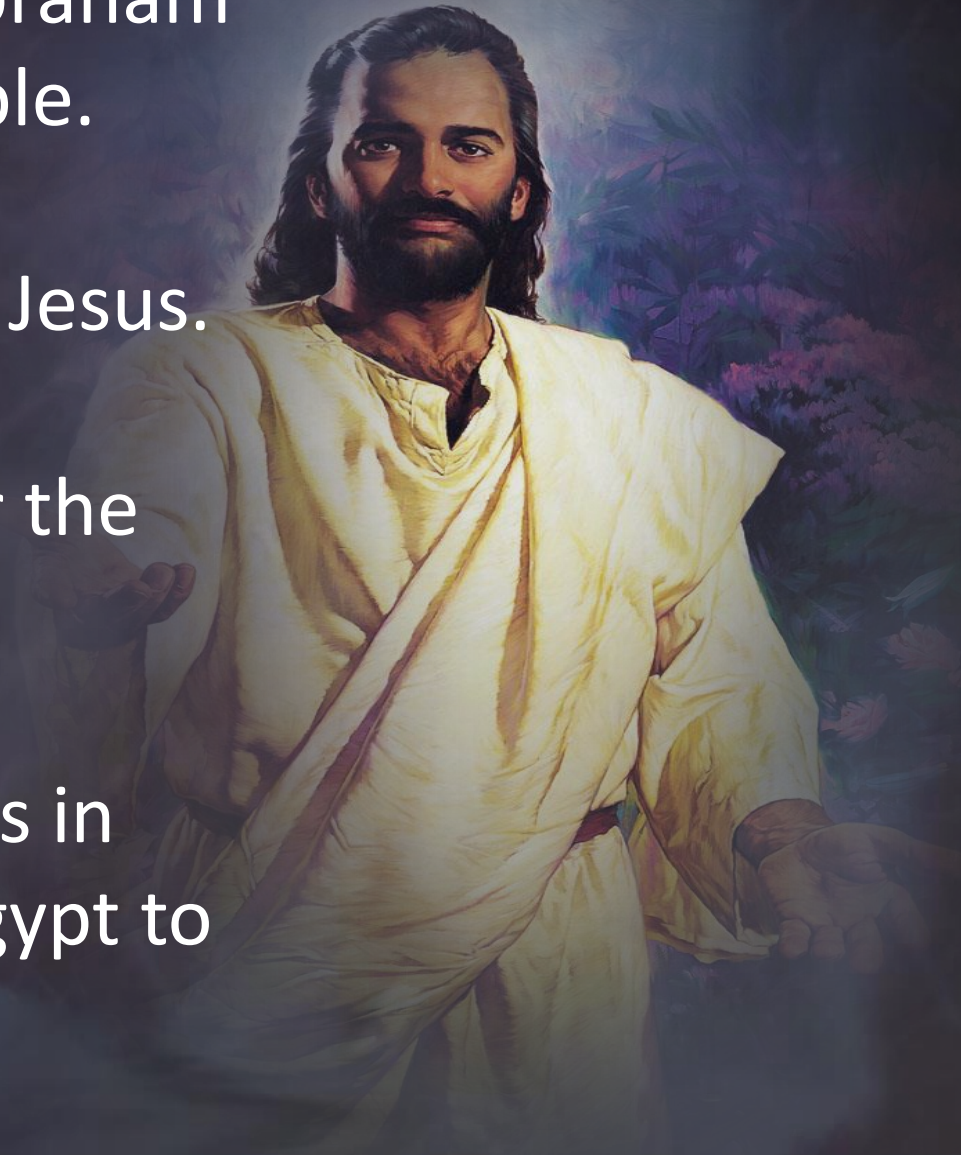


His people - from Abraham
to Joseph – His people.

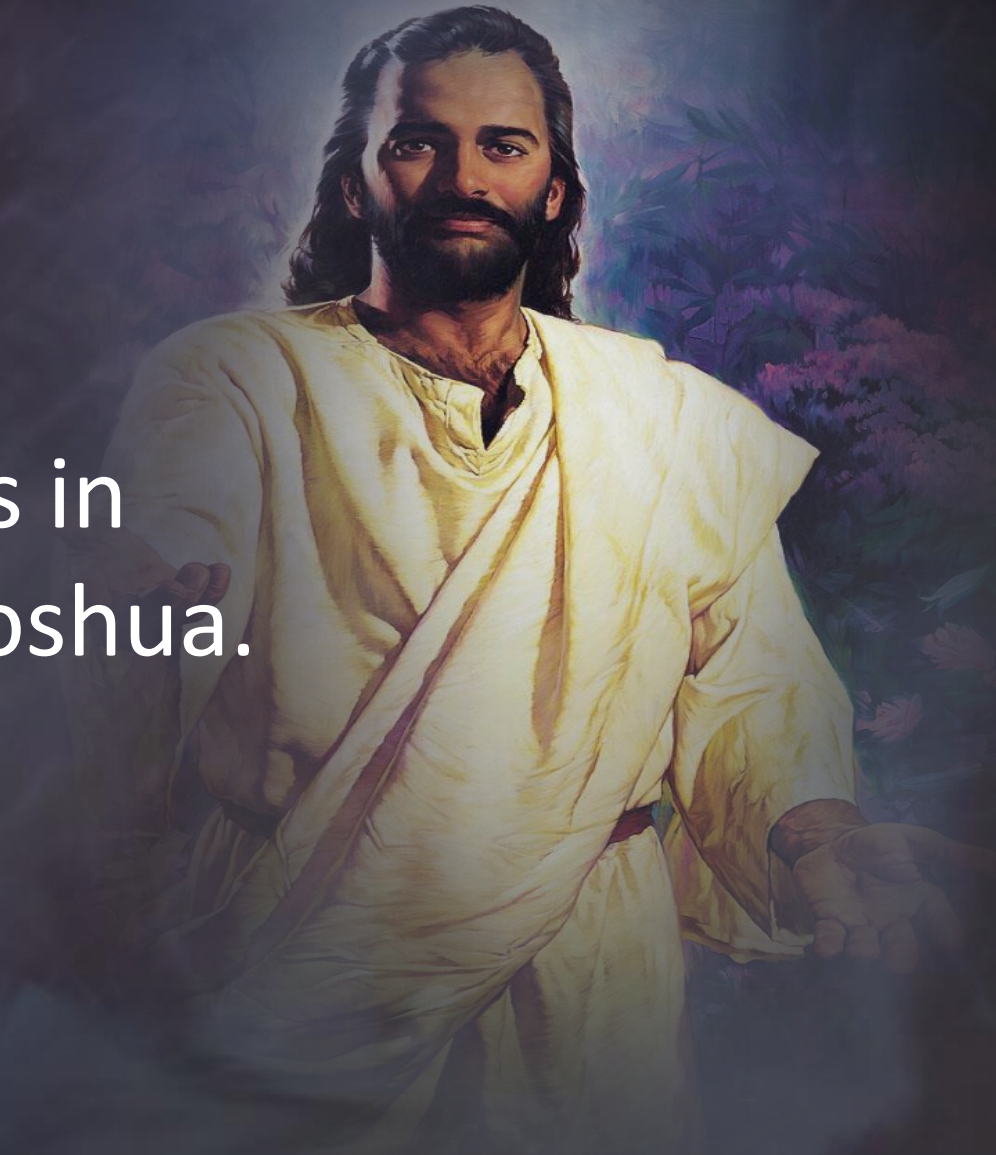
42 generations until Jesus.

42 is the number for the
wilderness.

There were 42 stages in
Numbers 33 from Egypt to
the promised land.



The name Jesus in
Greek means Joshua.



You shall call his
name Joshua, for He
will save His people
from their sins.



The story of
Christmas is the
story of Joseph and
Joshua.



Joseph is the
son of
captivity who
goes to Egypt
and leads
Israel into
Egypt.



Joshua is the leader after Moses who will take his people to the Promised Land and conquer the enemies of God.



The only way to
be saved is to
have a new
deliver who is
strong enough
to take God's
people to the
promised land.



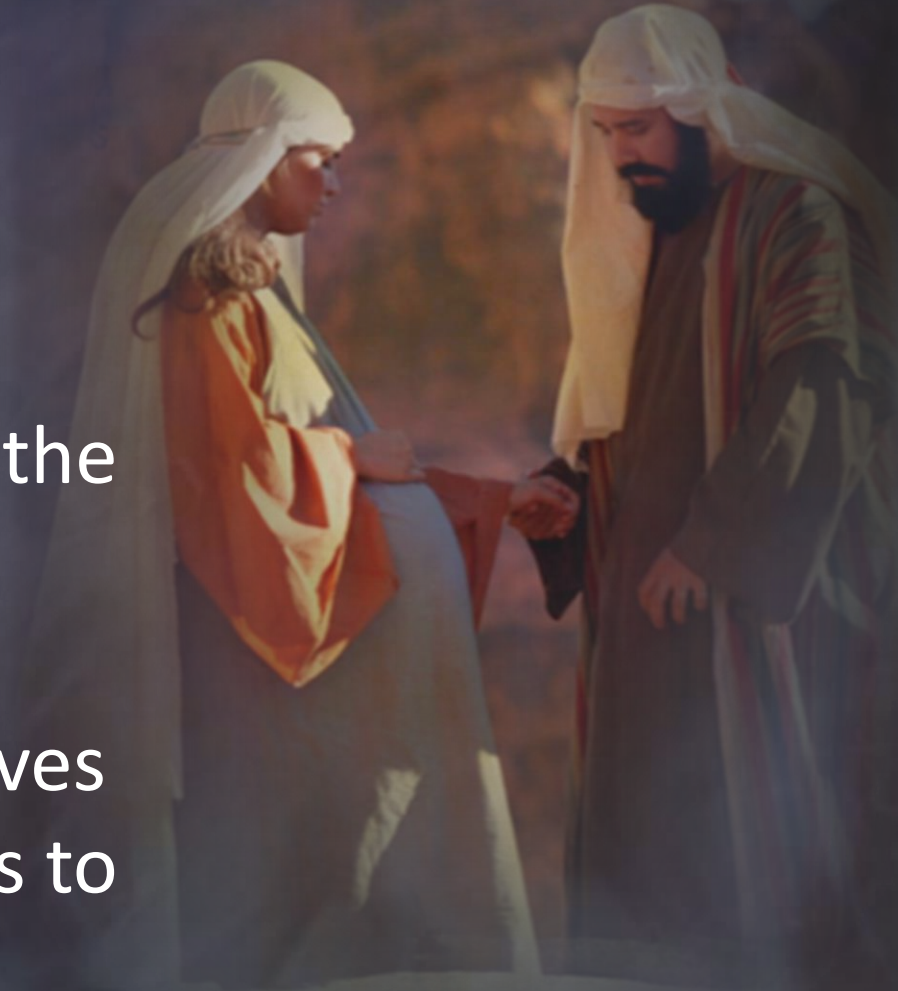
In his dream that night, Joseph understood the angel's command well.



The child in Mary's womb is no doubt the Son of God.

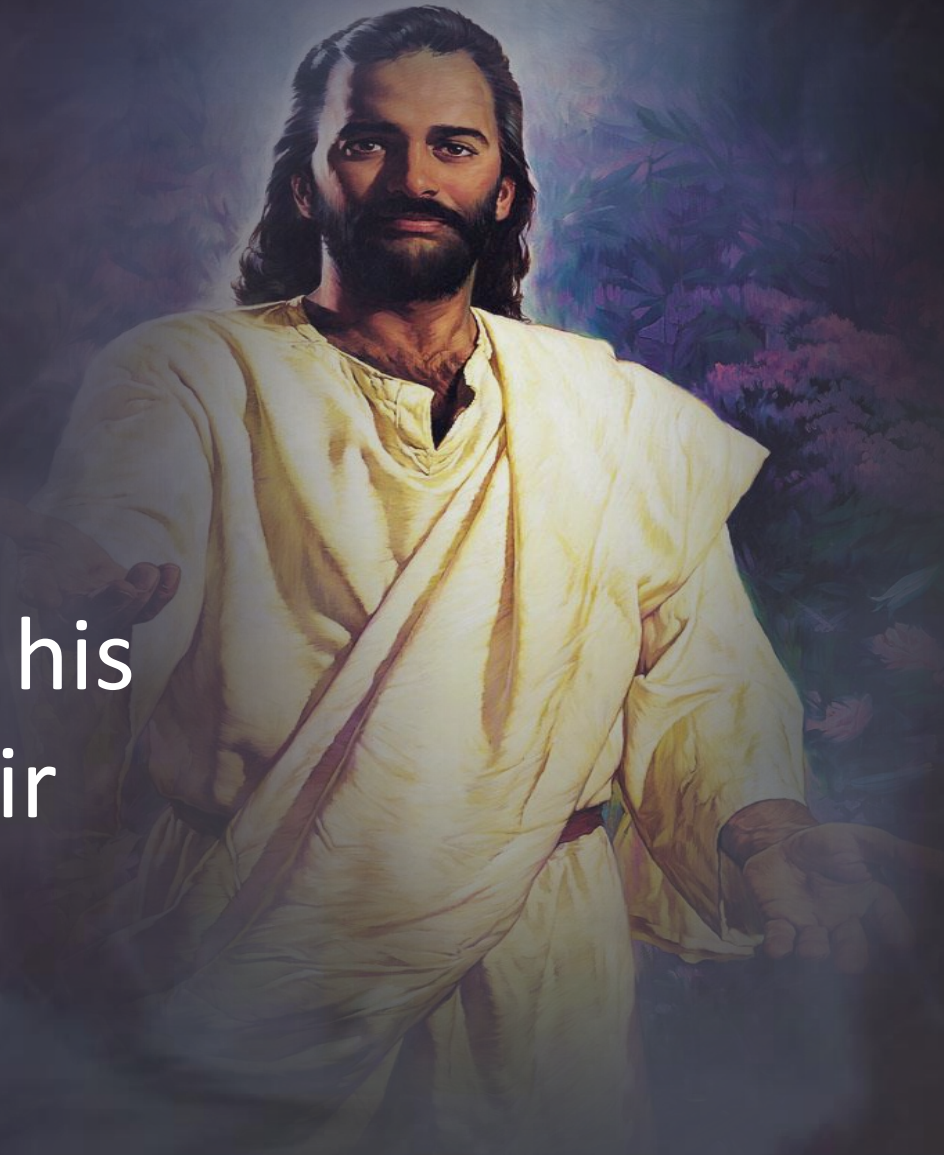
The force behind the scandal in the night is the Holy Spirit.

And the choice that gives him a home is Joseph's to make.



You shall call his
name Jesus –
Joshua!

And he will save his
people from their
sins.



Joseph could have walked away from the nightmare of the dream and the command of the angel.

He could have said, “I’m done with nightmares like this one.”

I don’t need this kind of stress in my life.

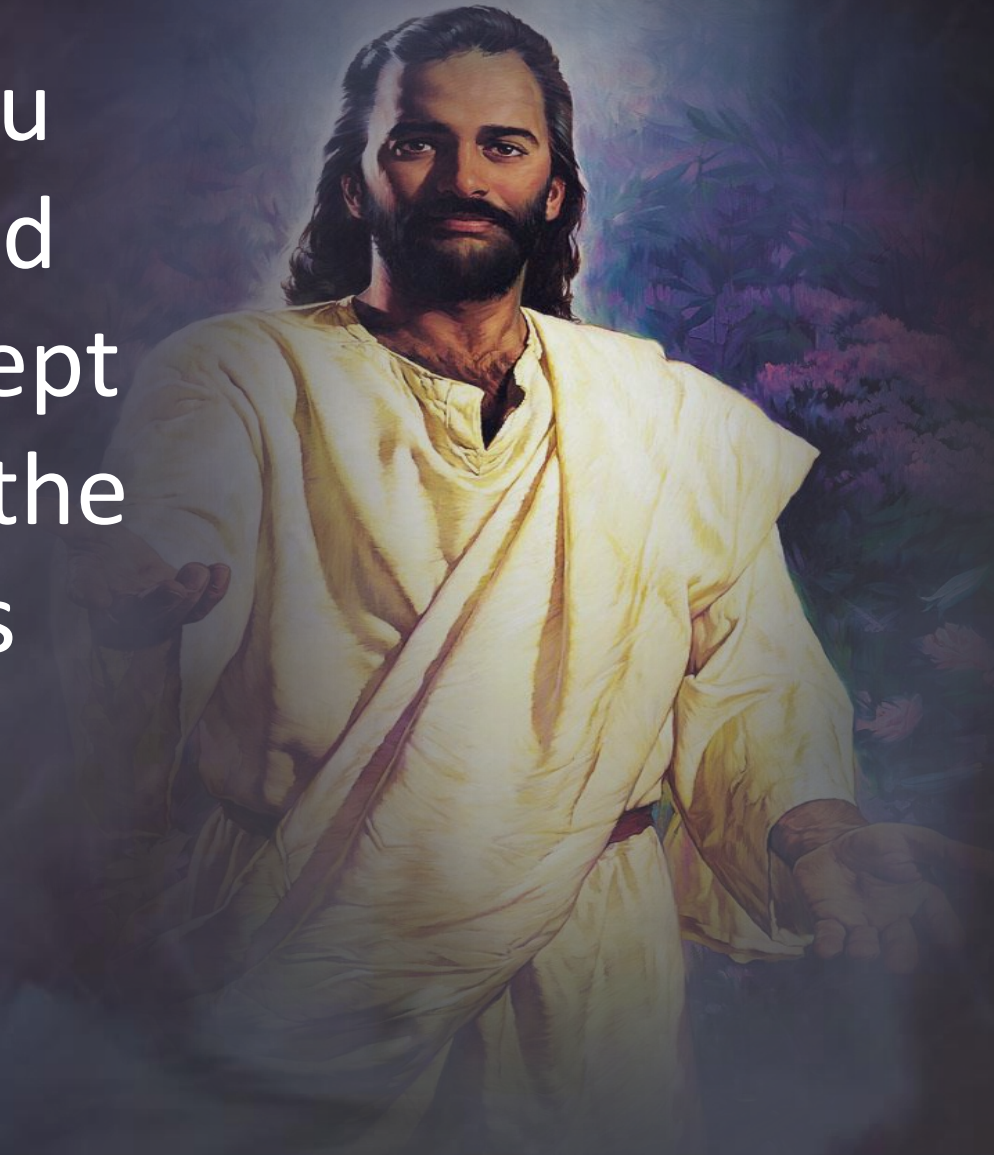


But he didn't do it.

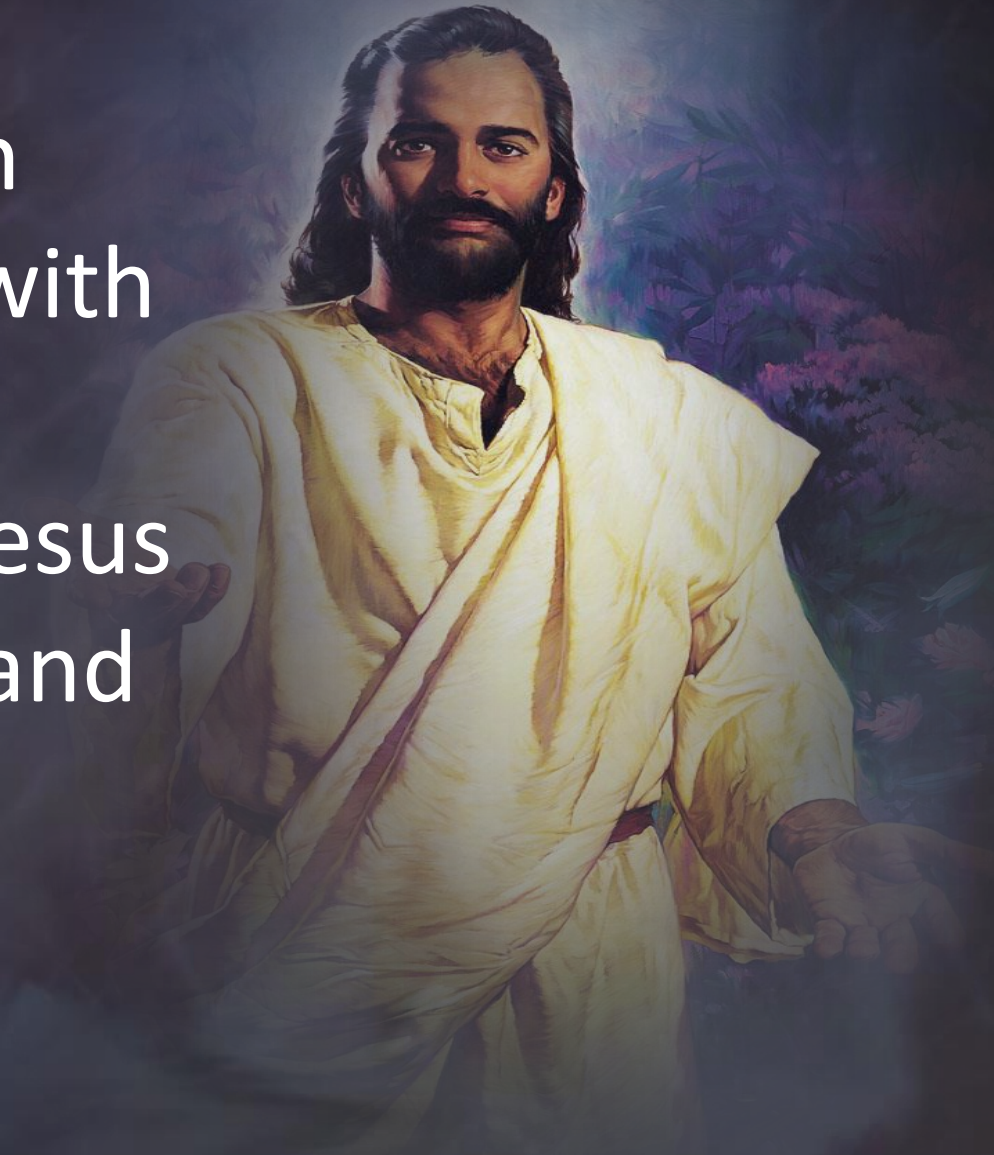
He accepted Jesus as his son with the entire stigma and all the shame that comes with the scandal of salvation that is the Genesis of Jesus.



Like Joseph, you
cannot be saved
unless you accept
the scandal of the
Christ child this
Christmas.

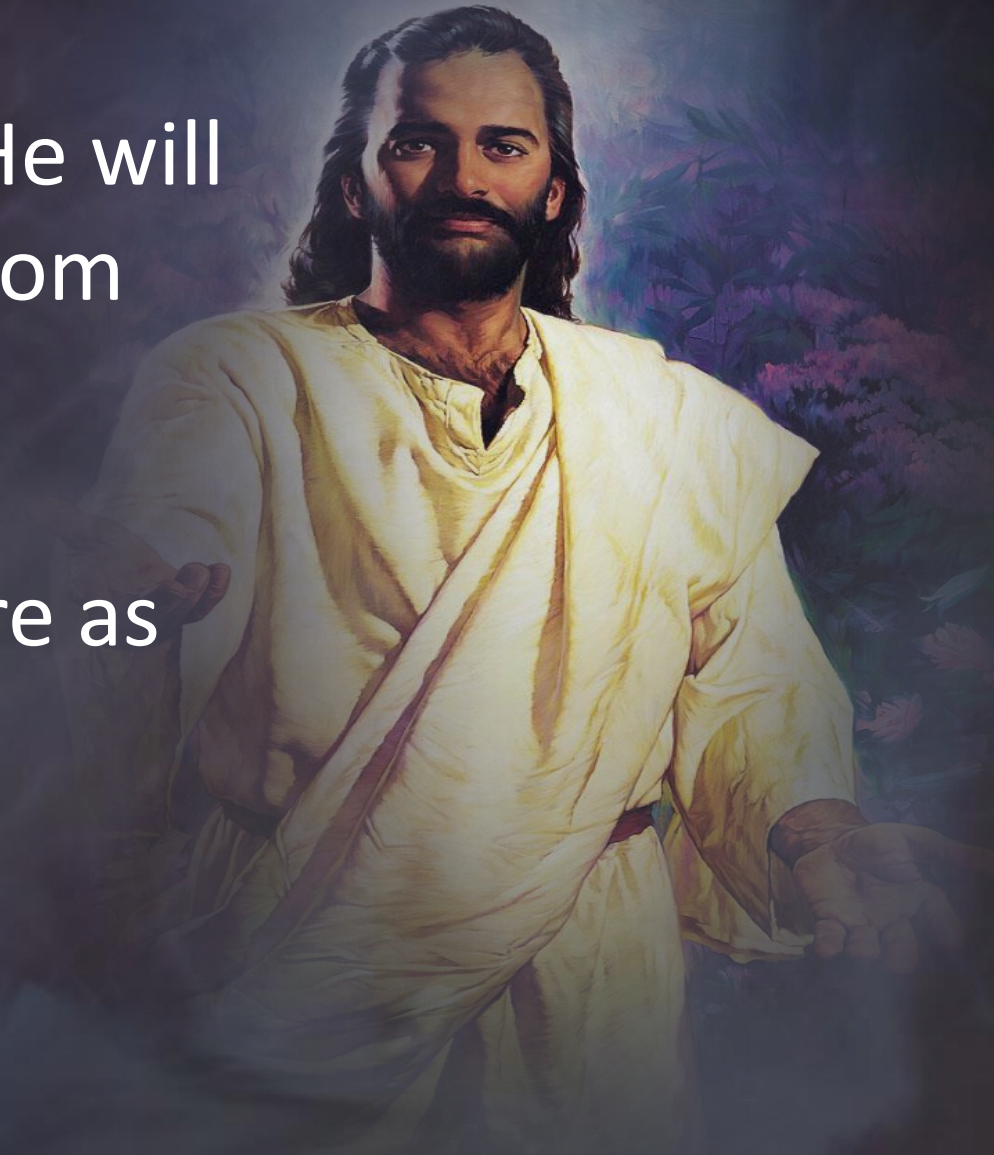


To be a Christian
means to align with
Christ and to
recognize that Jesus
is the deliverer and
not you.



The angel said, “He will save his people from their sins.”

Who qualifies here as his people?

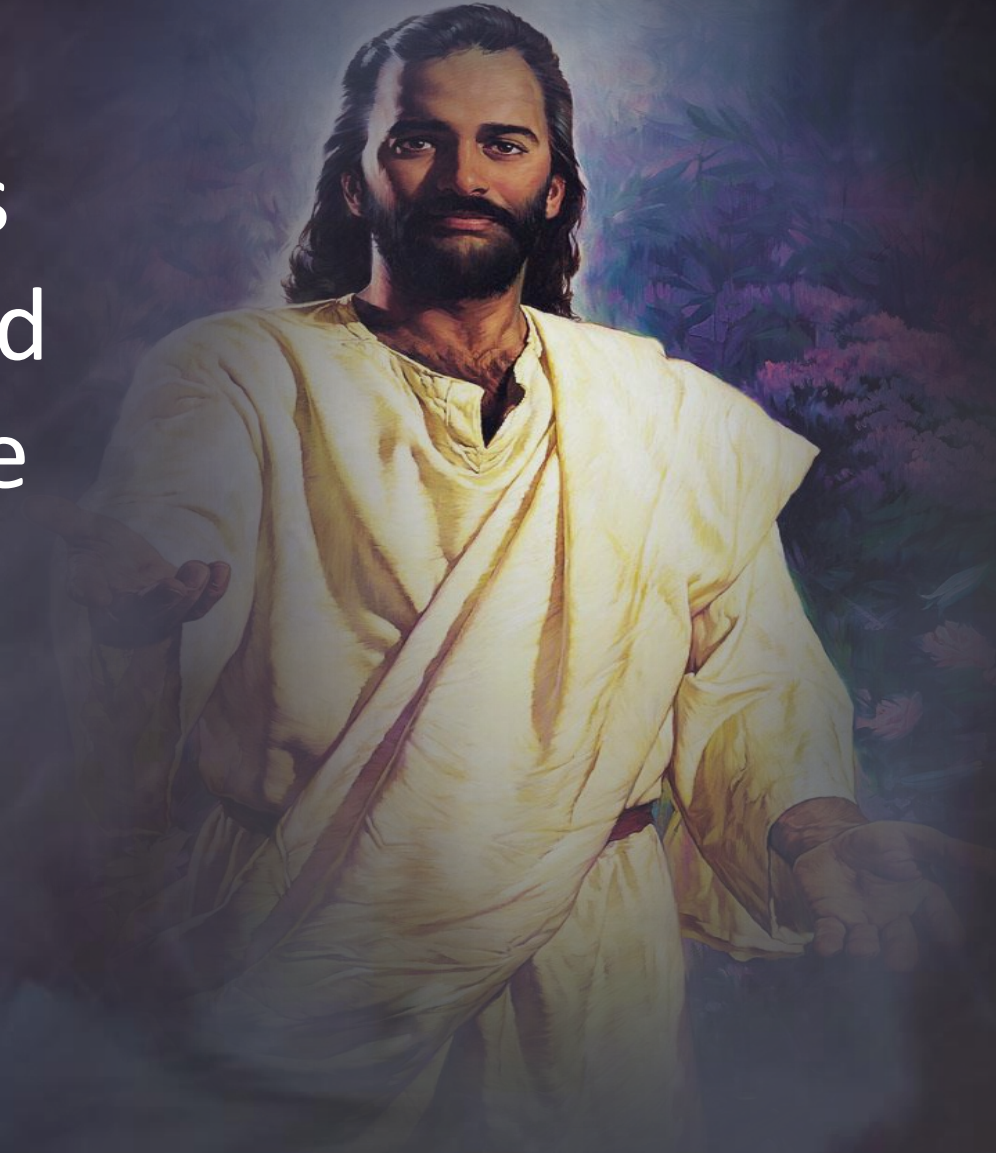


John 1:10
He was in the
world, and the
world was
made through
him, yet the
world knew him
not.



John 1:11

He came to his
own home, and
his own people
received him
not.

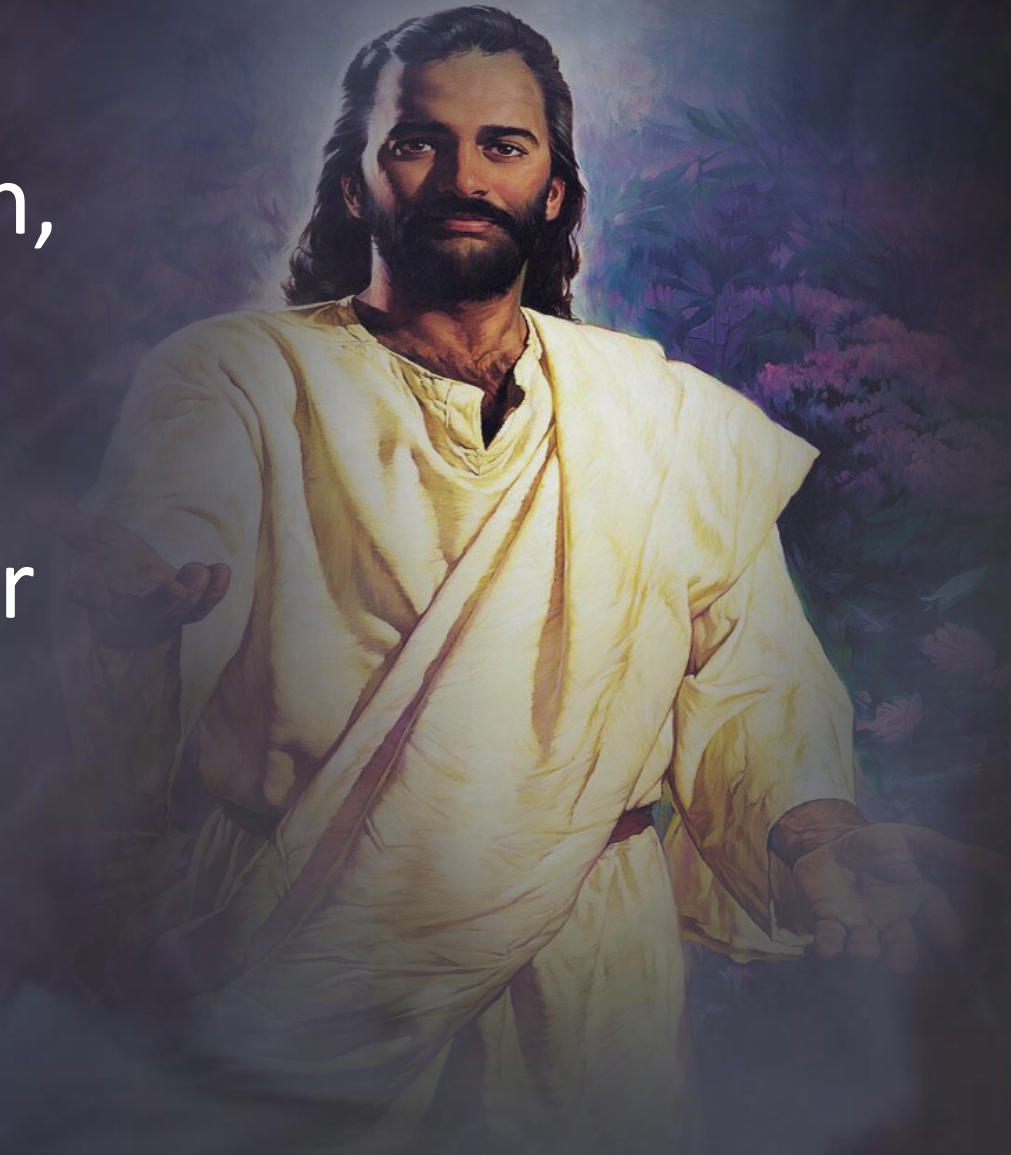


John 1:12

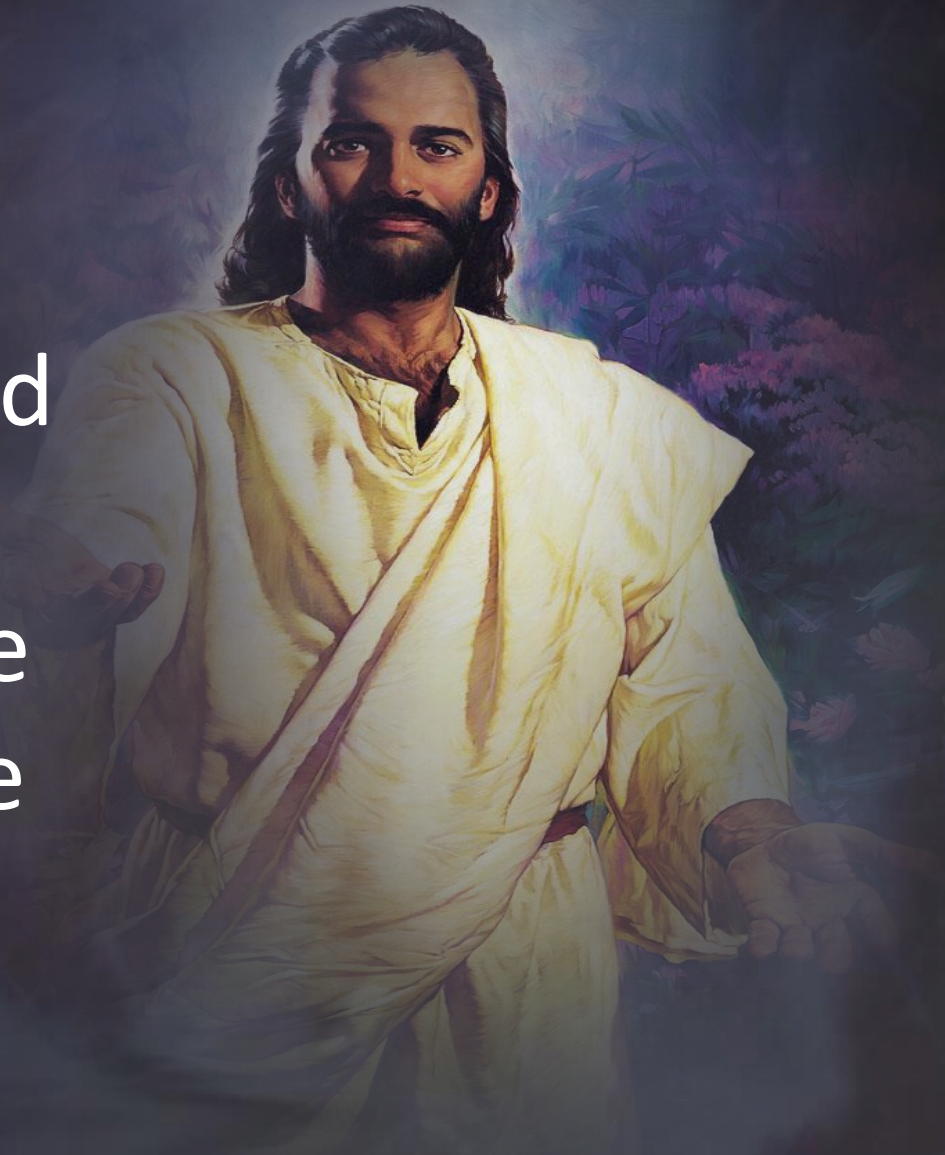
But to all who
received him,
who believed in
his name, he
gave power to
become
children of God;



John 1:13
who were born,
not of blood
nor of the will
of the flesh nor
of the will of
man, but of
God.



In the Old Testament, a conqueror named Joshua led God's people out of the wilderness to the Promised Land.



In the New
Testament the
Joshua dies on a
cross to get them
there.



The Angel said:

Matthew 1:24-25

²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife,

²⁵ but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name **Joshua**.

