

THE BIRTH

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EXT. DESERT - DAY

1

Large black ant crawling over rocks and sand.

A large front hoof misses the ant.

Ant continues to crawl.

A sandal with a dirty and crusty foot misses the ant.

Large back hoof misses the ant.

Ant continues to crawl.

Ant is hit with a wooden plow and is buried under rock and sand as the earth is torn up.

EXT. DESERT FIELD - CONTINUOUS

2

Two burros are being led by two men dressed in desert attire from 2000 years ago. There is another man on the back of each team working the plow. They are working side by side.

Twenty feet behind them there are about 15 women and children all above the age of 10 spreading seed.

On the side of the field, there are about a dozen Roman soldiers.

The soldiers are walking back and forth talking to each other. None are too concerned about the people working in the field.

Four Roman riders on horseback come over a small hill and down a road to the edge of the field.

All the guards stop talking and become much more attentive.

A young boy runs to a woman, his mother.

JONATHAN

Mom, I wanted to show you this.

He reaches into his cloak and pulls out a small bag.

His mother is a young woman in her early twenties.

MOTHER

Jonathan, what are you doing?

JONATHAN

I cut a hole in my tunic. I have been putting grain into this bag underneath.

MOTHER

Jonathan, I did not teach you to steal.

JONATHAN

But Mom, you have been so hungry lately. You can make bread tonight.

Two guards see the exchange and start to come over.

The mother sees the men and becomes scared.

MOTHER

Jonathan, run home. I will take care of this.

Jonathan starts to run off.

Now the other guards are moving in.

Jonathan darts one way then cuts back.

The men on horseback are watching and one takes off towards the boy.

The horse races in front of the boy and rears up on its hind legs.

The boy, scared, falls back and is captured by the guards that first saw him.

His mother has now run-up.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

He has done nothing. He is just running home. I told him to run home.

One of the guards reaches under the boy's tunic and pulls out the bag.

GUARD

Sir, this boy is stealing seed.

Now the other riders have come over. So have the guards and the crowd.

The guards stand between the mother, son, riders, and the crowd. They draw their swords on the women and their children.

The man on horseback who stopped the boy.

PHILO

(speaking to the crowd)

I am the new Praetor of the region.

(speaking to the boy)

You will not steal from Caesar or the Roman Empire.

MOTHER

Sir, I beg of you. He is just a boy. Mercy, please.

PHILO

Marcos, give 40 lashes to the woman in front of the boy.

A man on horseback nods to the guards and two of the guards grab the woman. She falls to the ground wailing, but they lift her up easily yet roughly.

PHILO (CONT'D)

Then crucify the boy in front of the mother.

Now all the women wail and protest no's.

MOTHER

No, please, NO

PHILO

(to the boy)

You will not steal from Caesar. Any of you. Is that clear?

The boy is in total shock realizing what he has done.

Philo turns his horse and there is a young girl MARY blocking his way.

She looks about 11 or 12. Her head is bowed and she does not look up. She is not wailing like the others.

The horse takes two steps backwards.

He kicks the horse towards the girl but it whinnies and takes another step backwards in the wrong direction.

PHILO (CONT'D)
 What do you think you're doing
 little girl?

MARY
 I am praying Sir.

PHILO
 Really?
 (amused)
 Which gods do you pray to?

MARY
 There is only one God.

PHILO
 And what is this god's name?

Philo slides off his horse. The guards surround him facing the crowd of women. The mother is still crying. The boy is still being held.

MARY
 Jehovah Jireh.

PHILO
 I have heard about your God -- the
 God of the Jews. So, are you
 praying for our destruction?

He laughs at this and looks at his men.

MARY
 No sir, I am praying for a savior.

PHILO
 To save you from this awful desert
 or from us Romans.

MARY
 Our Savior will save the entire
 world.

PHILO
 Do I not scare you, little girl?

MARY
 I am terrified of you, Sir.

Philo likes that answer.

PHILO
 And is this God of yours all-
 powerful?

Mary nods.

PHILO (CONT'D)
So can he make a rock so big He
cannot lift it?

His men laugh.

MARY
He already has, Sir.

PHILO
What, this hell of a world?

His men laugh louder.

MARY
No sir, your heart.
(She looks up)
But if you lift your heart to God,
he can again make it flesh.

INT. ROMAN LIVING ROOM - DAY

3

Past Sequence.

Philo is at his home. Two young girls run into the room and jump on his lap. JUSTA is about 8 and MATA 10.

JUSTA
Daddy, do you have to go away
again?

MATA
We don't want you to leave. You
have only been home for a few
weeks.

PHILO
Yes my loves, I have to go. I have
a new promotion. But after two
short years, I will be back. My
service to Rome will be finished
and I will be here all the time.

JUSTA
Are you really going to the desert?

PHILO
Afraid so.

JUSTA

Well, just be careful. Daina at school said the desert can turn your heart to stone.

PHILO

My heart will never harden. I promise.

With that, the girls hug their dad.

EXT. DESERT FIELD - PRESENT

4

Philo's memory of his girls has changed him somehow. He has just noticed that this is also a young girl.

PHILO

Do you think my orders are too harsh child?

MARY

Sir, the crows will come this evening and eat the seed from Caesar, but you do nothing to them. They do nothing at all, not even the planting.

Philo eyes her suspiciously.

PHILO

What is your name child?

MARY

Mary.

PHILO

And Mary, you think your God can turn my heart back to flesh?

MARY

With God, nothing is impossible.

PHILO

Well, Mary, your God must favor you.

He mounts his horse.

PHILO (CONT'D)

Stay that last order Marcos. Do not lash the mother or crucify the child, but give him, three lashes.

To Jonathan he repeats

PHILO (CONT'D)
You do NOT steal from Rome.

He turns to Mary and throws back his cape to show scars on his back.

PHILO (CONT'D)
I was once shown mercy for doing something stupid.

PHILO (CONT'D)
(slowly to Jonathan)
Once!

To Marcos.

PHILO (CONT'D)
And Marcos, bring four archers to the field every evening and morning for the next week. Shoot every crow that steals Rome's grain.

To Mary.

PHILO (CONT'D)
I have never liked crows. Annoying creatures.

Mary slightly smiles.

PHILO (CONT'D)
Now, get back to work.

The horseback riders take off the way they had come and the boy is walked in the same direction. His mother follows by herself crying. The crowd again gets to work. One woman ANNA walks up to Mary.

ANNA
What do you think you're doing child?

MARY
I'm sorry Momma. I didn't know what to do but pray.

ANNA
That was the new leader of the Roman garrison. You had no idea what he could have done to you.

MARY

I know, I'm sorry.

ANNA

Your father is going to kill you
when he hears of this.

MARY

Well, We don't really have to tell
him, do we? We can keep it a secret
like you told me to about the
pillows you bought last week.

ANNA

Oh Mary, what am I going to do with
you?

Mary and her mother continue to seed the field. Pull back to
see crows begin to fly in.

INT. JOACHIM HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

5

This is a small room, part living room part kitchen. Mary is
working with vegetables and Anna is stirring a pot over the
fire.

In walks Mary's father, JOACHIM, a very good-looking man with
dark hair and a beard. He is wearing gold scarves.

JOACHIM

(singing)

Family, I am home.

MARY

(also singing)

Welcome Father, how was the
rehearsal?

JOACHIM

(singing)

Rehearsal was wonderful. I sing to
our God. He blesses us, but

(he lowers his voice)

I heard there was some trouble in
the field today.

ANNA

Bernice's child Jonathan was caught
stealing grain. They took him to
lash him.

JOACHIM
 (Singing again low)
 Praise God they didn't do anything
 worse.

Mary and Anna share a look.

JOACHIM (CONT'D)
 What was that?

ANNA
 What was what?

JOACHIM
 I saw a look.

MARY
 It is nothing. The new Praetor was
 there. I think he was getting a
 tour.

Joachim raises his head like he knows something is going on.

MARY (CONT'D)
 So are there any new songs this
 week?

JOACHIM
 You always want a new song, Mary.

MARY
 I just love hearing you sing,
 Daddy.

JOACHIM
 Being the only Cantor in our
 Synagogue does have its privileges.
 Then I come home and am surrounded
 by two beautiful women.

He goes over and grabs Anna.

Anna pulls away. She has heard this before.

ANNA
 Frisky means there is something you
 are hiding. What's up?

JOACHIM
 I don't know. After rehearsal, the
 Rabbi said he wanted to ask me
 something. He wanted us both to
 come over at sunset.

ANNA

Nothing good happens with secrets.
This worries me.

JOACHIM

Oh, I'm sorry. Was I not to notice
the new pillows no one told me
about?

Mary smiles at her mom who tilts her head like 'did you
tell?'

JOACHIM (CONT'D)

Let's just have dinner. Go over and
expect a blessing.

ANNA

You just go outside and expect to
wash your hands for dinner. Mary,
bring me the vegetables.

Mary runs a bowl across the room and Joachim goes out the
door but the latch sticks.

JOACHIM

This stupid door. I wish I knew how
to fix it.

Joachim exits.

INT. ROMAN OFFICE- EVENING

6

Philo and Marcos are talking at a table.

PHILO

I do not understand these Jews. How
long have you been here?

MARCOS

Three and a half years.

PHILO

Then you leave in six months.

MARCOS

Yes sir.

PHILO

And where is home?

MARCOS

I am from Ostia on the Tyrrhenian
Sea coast.

PHILO

Beautiful, do you miss the water?

MARCOS

You have no idea. I miss my family more. Where is your home?

PHILO

I am from Verona in the Province of Boii. Beautiful trees and hills covered in grapes. Kids?

MARCOS

A son. He is in Rome studying. You?

PHILO

Two girls. Eleven now and eight.

MARCOS

So what is it you do not understand?

PHILO

Everything. These Jews have the worst piece of land I have ever seen. Strategically placed between three continents and every land trade route between them crosses here.

Marcos smiles and nods.

PHILO (CONT'D)

They have no industry, no natural resources, and enemies on all sides. Not a friend in the world and still they give thanks to a God who is silent. They pray for a Savior who does not come. It is like the only thing they have is, faith?

Marcos nods.

PHILO (CONT'D)

I have been reading about one of their heroes, Joseph. Do you know him?

Marcos shakes his head no.

Philo lifts a scroll from his table.

PHILO (CONT'D)

He was his father's favorite but not the oldest and his brothers hated him, but it says here his God was with him. They threw him in a well to die and it says here that God was still with him.

(beat)

Then some travelers came by and took him out of the well and put him into slavery, and once again his God was with him. He was made his master's favorite and the woman of the house tried to seduce him. When he denied her advances she claimed he tried to rape her. He was put into prison and His God was still with him. Then he gave information to a cellmate who used it to get out and was to come back and get Joseph out after he was freed, but he forgot and left him there. Again, it says His God was with him. I don't know about you but I would be "God, could you go and visit someone else for a while?"

Marcos laughs.

MARCOS

Hey God, do you know my brothers?

PHILO

Exactly. This land gives you a choice. Saltwater or saltier water. Nothing can live here but goats and bees and then these Jews give thanks for a land of milk and honey. I wonder if they know they've even been invaded?

MARCOS

I think they know. I just don't think they care. They really believe that their God will come and save them.

PHILO

Well, if what I read is right, it won't be like anything they expect.

MARCOS

Let us hope we are not here to see it.

PHILO

Agreed. (beat) I hear our carpenter came today.

MARCOS

Yes, he came up from Bethlehem. He has a son but no wife.

PHILO

Do you think he noticed there are no trees here?

Marcos again laughs.

MARCOS

I was told he has a friend who can supply wood.

PHILO

(slightly frustrated)
Great.

INT. RABBI'S HOUSE - EVENING

7

The house is bigger than Joachim's but there is less there.

The Rabbi is a rather large man and he is sitting on some pillows. Two other men sit with him. Candles and a fire light the room

JACOB is a thin Indiana Jones-looking man and his son YOSEPH appears to be about 16 with lighter curly hair. Both are seated on pillows as well.

A knock on the door and a woman, the Rabbi's wife, runs out of another room to answer the door.

Joachim and Anna enter.

RABBI

Ahh, Joachim, Anna. We were expecting you.

All rise.

RABBI (CONT'D)

Joachim, this is Jacob and his son Yoseph.

All nod at each other.

RABBI (CONT'D)

Jacob is a carpenter who has been working in Bethlehem and has been commissioned by the Romans for their garrison here in Nazareth.

ANNA

A carpenter? We are in the desert. Do you see any trees around here?

JACOB

I have a friend. He will be bringing wood as I need it. Each garrison is required to have a carpenter now. I think it is a new rule.

JOACHIM

Welcome, but how does this involve us?

RABBI

I know you have been renting your brother's house since he passed.

JOACHIM

I had, but the family left in the middle of the night last month and it is in no shape to rent.

JACOB

We wouldn't need much. I can repair anything damaged and I can pay.

JOACHIM

You can pay?

ANNA

He may be able to fix our door.

JACOB

The Romans are paying me a talent a month and I can pay you a tenth.

ANNA

A talent a month, you must be a good carpenter.

JOACHIM

A third.

JACOB
A fifth and I'll look at your door.

JOACHIM
(pause nodding slowly)
Okay, a fifth of a talent, paid in
advance and you get the place back
into shape.

JACOB
Agreed.

JOACHIM
And look at my door.

Jacob holds out his arm and smiles.

JACOB
Agreed.

They grab arms.

JACOB (CONT'D)
We have heard about your singing.
So you are the Cantor?

JOACHIM
Yes, I am. I hope you will be
coming to...

Audio fades and so does the scene as you see the men sit on
the pillows and Anna leaves the room in the direction of the
Rabbi's wife.

FADE OUT.

EXT. ANCIENT STREET - LATER

8

Anna and Joachim are walking arm in arm.

JOACHIM
They seem nice.

ANNA
Hmm, you like them because they can
pay.

JOACHIM
We have not had a carpenter in the
city for a few years.

ANNA

Why do we need a carpenter? We have no wood, besides what we need to make charcoal.

JOACHIM

He said he has a friend. A supplier from Egypt.

ANNA

Hmm, a friend.

JOACHIM

Okay, what is it?

ANNA

I am worried about Mary.

JOACHIM

What is wrong with Mary?

ANNA

She just doesn't seem interested in boys.

JOACHIM

I have told her that the first boy she brings home she must not really like.

Anna stops and looks at him with a question on her face.

JOACHIM (CONT'D)

Because I am going to kill him.

Anna pushes him in the arm. They continue to walk.

ANNA

There are just so few boys her age.
(Changes tone.)
Yoseph was nice.

JOACHIM

Anna, we are blessed. Mary has yet to grow into a woman's form. It has protected her from the Romans. They still see her as a child, and she will always be our child.

ANNA

In many ways, she is still such a child.

JOACHIM

We trust God with our tomorrows. We
must trust Him with our today's,
and also hers.

Anna sighs as she holds him a little tighter and rests her
head on his shoulder as they continue to walk down the
street.

INT. JOACHIM HOUSE - NIGHT

9

Anna and Joachim enter from the front door. The fire burns
but all the candles are out. Anna lights one from the fire.

ANNA

Mary, are you here?

INT. MARY'S ROOM - NIGHT

10

She is in bed and rises on an arm when she hears her mom.

MARY

Yes Mom. I'm in bed.

INT. JOACHIM HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

11

ANNA

Good night, Honey.

MARY (O.S.)

What did the Rabbi want?

ANNA

Men stuff. I will tell you in the
morning.

MARY (O.S.)

Okay. Good night.

ANNA

Good night.

JOACHIM

Sweet dreams.

MARY (O.S.)

Good night, Daddy.

INT. MARY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 12

Mary snuggles into her pillow and falls asleep. A smile crosses her face.

EXT. FIELD - DAY 13

Flowers of every color. Mary waves at a group of girls who are dancing in the distance.

All wave back.

Rabbits hop and birds fly around. Hummingbirds are humming a very Middle Eastern tune. (Maybe Mary's theme song.)

One lands on her finger.

MARY

You only hum because you haven't learned the words yet.

The bird sticks out its tongue and flies away.

A line of young boys her age are doing strongman poses to impress her. She laughs at them.

Looking at her feet she sees puppies. She sits on the ground and begins to play with them. She picks one up.

MARY (CONT'D)

Now you're the silly type of boy I can hang with.

The puppy licks her face.

GABRIEL (OS)

Hey Mary, full of grace?

Mary turns to see GABRIEL standing behind her. He is wearing a light beige tunic and has curly black hair. Super cute. In fact, it is hard to tell if he is a man or a woman. Except no breasts so he's a he. Just really a cute he.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

The Lord is with you.

MARY

Wow,

(to herself)

So, that's what the term tall drink of water means?

GABRIEL

I am the Angel Gabriel.

MARY

Angel huh, I am not sure I believe in angels.

GABRIEL

Just because you don't believe in something does not mean it isn't true.

MARY

Okay, now you sound like my dad.

GABRIEL

Good singer. I like his voice.

MARY

I do too.

GABRIEL

Mary, you believe in prophets and messengers?

MARY

Maybe from a long time ago, but I'm going to need a little proof here.

The sky turns from blue to gold. The clouds begin to move rapidly from left to right across the sky and change from white to metallic silver. The field changes to all purple. The animals disappear.

Gabriel grows to twice his height and in one motion pulls a shield adorned with a lion and a lamb from behind his back. He draws a flaming sword and, as he swishes it back and forth - Whoosh Whoosh, giant blazing white wings unfold from his back.

Mary still sitting covers her eyes with her arm and turns her head.

MARY (CONT'D)

Oookay, Oookay. That, that's Impressive.

GABRIEL

Do not fear, Mary.

MARY

Really, do not fear? Have you ever seen you do that??? Cause, there's really only one response.

GABRIEL

Mary look.

Mary turns her head back, lowers her arm and opens her eyes.

The world is as it was. She picks up her favorite puppy kisses its head and puts it under her chin.

MARY

So an Angel, Gabriel, really cute Angel, so are all angels as cute as you???

GABRIEL

Mary focus.

Mary pouts a little at that rejection.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

I have come to bring you a message. You are as beautiful on the inside as you are on the outside.

Mary doesn't know how to take that. Is this angel hitting on her?

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

God has smiled on you and has chosen you to deliver a son. His name will be God Is With Us since he is the Son of the Most High and will sit on the throne of David. He will rule the house of Jacob forever and have no end.

MARY

Umm, Gabriel,
(Mary smiles with her teeth closed and shakes her head back and forth)
Ummm, I've never, um, actually been with a guy that way? How's this going to happen?

GABRIEL

The Holy Spirit of God will hover above you and that is why your child will be called the Holy Son of God. Did you know your cousin Elizabeth has conceived a child in her old age? Everyone believed she was barren but now she is six months pregnant. See, with God, nothing is impossible.

Remembering her own words from earlier that day.

MARY

Got it, sure, why not. Holy Spirit,
Dream Angel, really dreamy Angel,
Son of God. Sure, okay.

GABRIEL

And Elizabeth.

MARY

And my 60-year-old cousin is going
to have a child. No, got it. Let it
be as you say. I'm in, what could
happen?

Mary again smiles, kisses, and snuggles the puppy.

GABRIEL

Blessed are you among women.

INT. MARY'S ROOM - MORNING

14

Mary is snuggling her blanket as she did with the puppy. Her eyes open and she turns on her back and looks out the window.

On the only leafless branch of an olive tree outside of her house sits a dove. It's watching her.

MARY

That's funny.

She throws back the covers and grabs a day dress and starts to change.

Looking out the window, she sees the dove is still watching her.

MARY (CONT'D)

Going to change my clothes you can
go away now. Nothing to see here.

Looking down at her chest.

MARY (CONT'D)

Unfortunately.

Looking out the window the dove flies off.

MARY (CONT'D)

Weird.

INT. JOACHIM'S HOUSE - MORNING

15

Mary enters as Anna is taking a pot out of the fireplace.

MARY

Good morning Mom. Where's Dad?

ANNA

Your father is opening his brother's house for the new carpenter and his son. That is what the Rabbi wanted to talk to us about.

MARY

A carpenter? Do they know we are in the desert and have no trees here?

ANNA

I guess he has a friend. He works for the Romans.

MARY

Why would the Romans need a carpenter?

Anna shrugs and puts some of the contents in a bowl.

ANNA

Who understands anything about the Romans? Breakfast?

MARY

Sure, I'll have a bite.

ANNA

Are you okay Mary?

MARY

I'm fine. Why?

ANNA

I don't know. You just look, different. Not look just, something.

MARY

I had a weird dream last night. Have you heard anything from your cousin Elizabeth?

ANNA

My cousin Elizabeth, in Judea? No not a thing.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

There was a traveler that told your father that her husband Zachariah had stopped talking for some reason but that may just be a rumor. Was she in your dream?

MARY

Well kind of, in my dream she was pregnant.

ANNA

(Laughing)

That wouldn't be possible. She must be in her 60's by now. There is no way she could be pregnant. That doesn't happen.

MARY

Well, with God, all things are possible.

Looking down as she remembers the dream and what she told the Roman Soldier yesterday.

ANNA

But some things are certainly not likely. Are you sure you're okay?

MARY

I'm fine. Just the same, would you mind if I went to visit?

ANNA

By yourself? YES, I would mind. I don't need you traipsing off to Judea. Especially because of a dream.

MARY

What if I got a couple of my friends to go with me?

ANNA

Like who?

MARY

Sarah, Imma, maybe Aaron, and Jonathan if he is feeling better.

ANNA

The carpenter's son, Yoseph, seems to be a nice boy. Maybe you could ask him also?

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

He's about your age and I'm sure he would like to meet some kids.

MARY

Okay, so if I can get a group together who want to go on a trip, I can go?

ANNA

Only to visit Elizabeth.

MARY

Promise, that's all we are doing.

Mary gets up and heads toward the door.

ANNA

Where are you going now?

MARY

I'm going to go to the well and see if anyone's there.

Mary pulls on the door.

MARY (CONT'D)

This stupid door.

ANNA

Take a jug with you and bring back some water since you're going there.

The door finally opens and Mary grabs a jug by the door. She looks inside and turns it upside down and taps the bottom.

MARY

Okay, I will. Be back in a little while.

ANNA

And if you see your father, remind him to have the carpenter look at our door.

Shutting the door behind her, she runs by a window.

EXT. NAZARETH - DAY

16

Mary walks through the village passing a couple of people, but there are not a lot around. Two Romans walk by.

As she passes a few other villagers standing together, they pay her no attention. She turns a corner and sees her father with Jacob.

Joachim sees her.

JOACHIM
Mary, Mary, come here.

Mary walks over.

MARY
(Sings)
Good Morning.

To Jacob.

MARY (CONT'D)
Hi.

JOACHIM
Jacob, this is my daughter, Mary.

MARY
Pleased to meet you, Sir.

JACOB
Joachim, I didn't know you had any children. Hello. Do you have any others?

JOACHIM
No, Mary is all the Lord has blessed me and Anna with.

Mary blushes at the fact she was just called a blessing.

INT. JACOB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

17

Hearing voices outside Yoseph sneaks a peek out the window. Seeing Mary he backs up and begins to straighten himself up. Teasing his hair and checks his armpits. After making a face he reaches on the table and applies something to the pits.

EXT. JACOB'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

18

JACOB
Yoseph is my only child also.
(yelling)
Yoseph can you come out here?

YOSEPH (O.S.)
Be right out.

JOACHIM
What are you doing out, Mary?

MARY
I am going to the well to get some water for Momma and to see if any of the village kids are there.

A door opens and Yoseph exits.

JACOB
Yoseph this is Mary. Joachim's daughter.

Yoseph and Mary see each other for the first time and are unable to take their eyes off each other, they speak very slowly and carefully.

YOSEPH
Hi.

MARY
Hi.

JOACHIM
Mary, you're getting water at this time?

MARY
It's a long story. I wanted to see if any of the kids wanted to take a small trip.

JOACHIM
Where to?

MARY
I had a dream last night about one of Momma's cousins and I just wanted to check on her. Momma didn't want me to go alone.

JOACHIM
Which one?

MARY
Elizabeth?

JOACHIM
Elizabeth in Judea? Yes, that is too far of a trip to go alone.

MARY

That is why I am seeing if Imma,
Sarah, Aaron, or maybe Jonathan
wants to come.

YOSEPH

Judea is about the same distance as
Bethlehem and we just came up from
there last week.

Both adults look at him.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

Just, saying.

Looking again at Mary.

JACOB

Mary, maybe can you show Yoseph
where the well is?

He turns to Joachim.

JACOB (CONT'D)

If that is okay?

Joachim nods.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Take a couple of pots with you.

YOSEPH

Two?

JACOB

For now. You can get more later. We
have a lot of cleaning to do.

MARY

C'mon. It's not very far. You sure
you can handle two?

Yoseph stands a bit straighter.

YOSEPH

Yes, of course, I can carry two.

He looks at the pots concerned.

MARY

Okay, we'll be back in a bit.

Mary and Yoseph walk off. The men watch and talk silently to
themselves.

Mary, remembering something, turns.

MARY (CONT'D)

Hey Dad, Mom asked me to remind you about the door.

Joachim makes a motion like he is opening a stuck door. Jacob nods and looks in the back of a small cart. Taking out a toolbox and both men walk off-screen.

Yoseph and Mary continue to walk toward the well.

MARY (CONT'D)

So you are from Bethlehem?

YOSEPH

Born and raised.

MARY

I've never been there. What's it like?

YOSEPH

It's about half the size of Nazareth I guess. We had a cart with all our stuff in it so it took us a bit longer to get here.

MARY

How long?

YOSEPH

Ten days.

MARY

Ten Days? It only takes us four to get to Jerusalem.

YOSEPH

We spent two days in Jerusalem. My dad had a bunch of business there.

MARY

I love Jerusalem.

YOSEPH

I know. Huh? It's great. I don't know if I could live there permanently, but it is so fun to visit.

MARY

Have you thought about where you would like to live permanently?

YOSEPH
No, right now I just want to
travel. I would love to see Greece.

MARY
Egypt.

YOSEPH
Asia.

MARY
Turkey.

YOSEPH
Rome?

They both stop, turn and look at each other.

MARY
No way.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)
No way.

MARY
I am so not interested in going to
Rome.

YOSEPH
I know can you imagine a city full
of Romans?

MARY
Scary.

Both start marching like Roman soldiers.

YOSEPH
You must kneel before Caesar.

MARY
You must die.

YOSEPH
No, you must die.

MARY
And after you die make sure you
kneel. Cause I am super smart. We
wear metal in the desert.

Turning a corner they pass two Romans standing in the sun,
sweating. Laughing they begin again to walk normally.

YOSEPH
I would like to go to Lebanon and
see the cypress trees.

MARY

Being a carpenter's son, I bet you would.

YOSEPH

Wanna know a secret?

MARY

Sure.

YOSEPH

I have never seen a real tree.

MARY

We have trees all around us. Olive trees, palm trees.

YOSEPH

I know, but most are just like tall bushes and you can't really make anything easily. I meant like an oak, and cypress and, and pine. I really would like to see a real pine tree. The stuff they use in Jerusalem for the temple. You know real wood.

Mary just looks at him and smiles.

MARY

Here, let me have one of your jugs.

YOSEPH

No, I've got them.

MARY

I know, just place one on my head and I can help carry for a bit. Just for a little while, we're almost there.

Yoseph puts one jug down and the other on Mary's head. He then shakes out his arms and picks the jug up again.

YOSEPH

I don't know how women do that?

MARY

We all have our gifts.

Yoseph is now looking at Mary the way she had just looked at him. Neither one noticed the other.

EXT. WELL - MOMENTS LATER

19

Mary and Yoseph round a corner of buildings. There are Seven women at the well sitting and talking. It is late morning but not yet noon.

A few feet away under a shelter of sticks are a few teenagers and smaller kids.

Walking over.

MARY

Hey guys.

Everyone says hi back.

SARAH and IMMA look about the same age as Mary but have developed.

A couple of younger kids are with them. One of the boys jumps out from behind some barrels.

BOY

Hi Mary, Guess what?

MARY

What?

BOY

I found a dead scorpion this morning and cut off his stinger. Want to see?

MARY

No thank you. I'm good. Hey everyone this is Yoseph. He just moved here from Bethlehem.

SARAH

Never heard of it.

YOSEPH

It's a small town about a day South of Jerusalem.

BOY

Do you want to see my scorpion?

YOSEPH

Yeah!

The boy grabs Yoseph's hand and leads him around the building.

SARAH

He's cute.

Mary watches him leave.

MARY

Must be a boy thing.

IMMA

Maybe a new boy will add some excitement around here.

MARY

Speaking of excitement. I was wondering if anyone wanted to take a trip?

SARAH

Maybe, where?

MARY

Judea.

Sarah and Imma look at each other. Not excited.

SARAH

That's like a four-day walk.

MARY

Five if we add a day in, Jerusalem.

IMMA

Now you're talking.

Another young man with the beginnings of a beard shows up.

AARON.

MARY

Hey Aaron.

AARON

Morning Mary. What's going on?

Sarah opens up a part of the blanket she is sitting on. Aaron sits next to Sarah. They might be a thing.

MARY

I was just seeing if anyone wanted to take a journey.

Yoseph comes back alone.

AARON
Journey to where?

SARAH
Judea.

MARY
Aaron this is Yoseph. He just moved
here from Bethlehem.

Aaron gets up. He is about a head taller than Yoseph. He sticks out his arm and they shake.

AARON
Bethlehem, that's as far as Judea.
What made you move up here?

YOSEPH
My dad has a job working for the
Romans. He's a carpenter.

IMMA
A carpenter. Um, you might not have
noticed but we don't have any trees
here. We're in the desert.

YOSEPH
My dad has a friend that will get
him wood.

AARON
Works for the Romans. They're not
very popular around here. They just
lashed one of our friends
yesterday.

MARY
How is Jonathan? Has anyone checked
on him?

SARAH
No, we were waiting for Aaron and
then we're all going to go over at
the same time.

AARON
I want to get back to the fact this
guy's dad works for the Romans.

YOSEPH
He works for them. He isn't one of
them.

MARY

My dad says to let God take care of the Romans. We need to take care of ourselves.

IMMA

My dad says the same thing. The Romans won't last forever, but God will.

Aaron isn't liking Yoseph.

SARAH

Lighten up, Aaron. It's his dad, not him. Come on, let's go visit Jonathan.

Everyone gets up and heads up the street.

YOSEPH

(To Mary)

I left my pots.

MARY

Don't worry. They're safe.

INT. JONATHAN HOUSE - DAY

20

Again a small and very sparsely decorated home.

Jonathan is laying in the living room on some pillows. His mom is folding clothes and putting them on the counter.

Knock on the door O.C.

Jonathan's mother opens the door.

SARAH

Good day. Ma'am, we've come to check on Jonathan.

MOTHER

He is resting. Let me ask.

She turns.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Are you up, honey?

JONATHAN

Yes Mom, let them in.

All the kids come in and some stand while some sit on the floor. Mary stands between Aaron and Yoseph, next to Yoseph.

Imma is the closest to Jonathan.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Hey guys. Thanks for coming by.

Imma reaches into a bag and takes out a loaf of bread.

IMMA

My mother baked a loaf of bread for you.

SARAH

My mother sent over some vegetables and dried fruits.

Both hand their bags to the mother.

MOTHER

(to Imma)

Did you or your mother send this?

IMMA

(sheepishly)

My mother helped.

Mother smiles at the offer.

Noticing Yoseph.

MOTHER

And who is this?

MARY

His name is Yoseph. He just moved to town with his father.

AARON

His father works for the Roman scum that did this to Jonathan.

MOTHER

Really?

YOSEPH

My father is a Carpenter. What happened?

AARON

I'll tell you what happened. They have taken our land and are eager to put us into slavery or just kill us all.

MOTHER

My son did something very stupid.

Looking at Aaron.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

The new Praetor had him lashed. The old one would have had him crucified.

Walking over to Mary.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Thank you, Mary.

Beginning to cry.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

You saved my son's life.

She hugs Mary tightly.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

(looking her in the eyes)

I am, we are, both indebted to you forever.

YOSEPH

What did you do?

MOTHER

She stood up to him.

MARY

I prayed and answered a few questions.

YOSEPH

Stood up to whom?

MOTHER

You saved my son's life.

JONATHAN

You saved both me and my mother.

IMMA

It was pretty awesome.

SARAH

I never would have had the courage to do what you did.

YOSEPH

Wait, you stood up to the Roman Praetor?

MARY

I answered a couple of questions. I prayed. We all were praying.

MOTHER

No Mary, You were praying. Only you. You engaged. You saved my son's life.

YOSEPH

You stood up to the Roman Praetor?

IMMA

It was seriously awesome.

AARON

If I had been there...

MOTHER

Aaron, you weren't there and what Mary did, It should be an example to us all. Stand firm and pray. We saw the results. You saved my son's life.

MARY

I am so sorry I didn't even think about bringing anything over.

YOSEPH

I could go and get some water. I have a couple of pots over by the well.

MOTHER

That would be great. Thank you. I haven't had a chance to get to the well this morning.

MARY

Yoseph, I'll go with you. Are you guys sure you're okay? You don't need anything else.

MOTHER

(with so much love and
gratitude in her eyes)
No, we're fine. Thank you again so
much. I can never thank you enough.
You are the most, amazing girl.

Aaron glares at Yoseph as they leave.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

21

On the way to the well.

YOSEPH

Looks like Aaron doesn't like me
very much.

MARY

He's been angry for a long time.
His family had a run-in with the
Romans and they lost all their
property. He is his father's oldest
so he lost the most.

YOSEPH

You really stood up to the Romans?

MARY

No, all I did was pray. Really it
just got out of control. I was
scared to death. Then last night I
had a dream and this morning all I
could think about is getting to see
my cousin in Judea.

At the well, they begin to fill the pots.

YOSEPH

So you forgot about the Romans,
must have been some dream.

Mary looks up and sees a dove on the ledge of the building.

MARY

Yes, it was SOME dream.

EXT. WELL - MORNING

22

The kids have gathered.

Aaron, Yoseph, Mary, Imma, and Sarah.

MARY

Good morning everyone. Thank you so much for coming on the trip with me.

IMMA

When you told us you were going with us or without us we didn't have a choice.

SARAH

Plus ten days with Aaron

MARY

You guys are going to behave, right?

AARON

Of course.

Looking at Yoseph.

AARON (CONT'D)

Why's he coming.

MARY

He just traveled most of the way last week.

SARAH

Aren't you tired?

YOSEPH

No, not really. I've been walking since I was a kid. I'm getting pretty good at it.

(beat)

Besides, as I keep hearing, there isn't any wood around here.

MARY

I tell you what, your dad did a great job on our door.

YOSEPH

I know we are paid by the Romans, but we really are here for the community. If anyone else needs anything done just let me or my Dad know.

AARON

For a charge I'm sure.

YOSEPH
Do you work for free?

Aaron looks at Sarah.

AARON
Sometimes.

MARY
Okay, guys, we have a long way.
Let's head out.

IMMA
Can we stop by Jonathan's?

MARY
YES!!!

The kids put their sacks over their shoulders and head off.

Music interlude EDM track of Jewish Trance music.

Shot sequence ideas.

-The kids are coming out of Jonathan's and walking down the trail.

-Stopping for lunch at an oasis, eating figs and bread, refilling their jugs of water, and head out again.

-Preparing to bed for the night and making camp.

-Waking up and the boys go one way around a boulder and the girls go another.

-While walking, Mary points at a bush and Yoseph shakes his head and mouth. "That's not a tree."

-Later sitting in the shade of an overhang and pantomime their dreams.

-At a stream, the boys carry the girls over. Aaron and Sarah, Mary and Yoseph share a moment in the middle of the stream. Aaron and Yoseph do a fireman's carry with Imma. Lunch is on the other side.

-Next morning Mary points to trees on the side of the bank. Yoseph mouths "Bushes." She gets a pouty face.

-Mary says "what's a tree?"

-Yoseph cuts a bunch of reeds and grasses and stands in the early sun. His body's shadow looks like a trunk and the grasses look like a tree? He shows Mary his shadow.

-She mouths "You've never seen one?"
Yoseph mouths "I can dream."

-Imma comes over and sticks a reed in his armpit.

-Now all the kids come over and start sticking reeds and grasses in every open area.

-He starts to wiggle he reaches into his tunic and pulls out a small lizard.

-Laughing, Mary shares a look with him.

-More trail and passing shepherds with flocks, a group of about 20 Romans. More walking and talking.

-Crossing the top of a hill, they stop and from over their shoulder, there is a very large city.

EXT. DESERT TRAIL - DAY 23

IMMA
Jerusalem.

Off they continue.

EXT. JERUSALEM WALL - EVENING 24

As they talk people pass, villagers and Romans.

MARY
So do we want to leave in the morning? It's one more day to Judea.

SARAH
We could stay here for a day on each side of the journey.

AARON
We just walked for three days and never got around to talking about this?

YOSEPH
Mary, what do you want to do?

MARY
I want to see my cousin as soon as I can.

YOSEPH

So sleep here and we leave in the morning.

SARAH

Or, Aaron and I stay here for a couple of days and you guys continue without us.

IMMA

Yeah, you could meet us back right here in three days.

Looking at Aaron and Sarah?

IMMA (CONT'D)

Someone has to watch you two.

MARY

That's not what we planned.

AARON

We didn't really plan anything.

YOSEPH

Mary, I could walk with you.

IMMA

Wow, I didn't see that coming.

Everyone smiles at Mary and Yoseph.

YOSEPH

C'mon, you guys we had told Mary we would walk with her to her cousin's.

You hear music and partying going on over the wall.

AARON

Or we change our plans.

Mary, seeing she is not going to change their minds, looks dejected and asks Yoseph.

MARY

You wouldn't mind going the rest of the way with me?

YOSEPH

I did tell my dad I would talk to a friend of his here but I can do that on the way back if that's okay?

She seems to be moved by him.

MARY

Thank you.

AARON

We'll bed here or, do a quick walk-through.

SARAH

Walkthrough?

YOSEPH

Dude, this is Jerusalem. It's a day from one side to another. There is no quick anything here.

IMMA

Yoseph's right. We should get some rest. I've been walking for three days.

Taking off their gear, they begin setting up camp.

EXT. WALL - MORNING

25

The kids are all packing up their gear.

MARY

Okay, we meet right back here tomorrow evening.

IMMA

Are you sure you can make it there and back by tomorrow night?

MARY

We should be there by evening.

YOSEPH

Sleep the night.

MARY

Leave in the morning.

YOSEPH

Be back tomorrow evening.

IMMA

You guys are kind of cute,

Mary and Yoseph give each other a look, pick up their stuff and head out.

EXT. DESERT OASIS - LATER

26

Mary and Yoseph are at an oasis and are finishing some pita bread.

Yoseph puts his gear on and reaches down to help Mary up. As she gets up, he looks at her hand. Then he looks into her eyes.

She blushes and picks up her stuff.

They begin to walk down the path.

YOSEPH

You know that felt really nice.

MARY

What?

YOSEPH

Holding your hand.

Mary reaches out her hand and Yoseph takes it. They continue walking hand in hand.

Begin track Group: Hillsong United. Album: Wonder. Track: **Glimmer in the Dust** from 3:22 to end.

Mary and Yoseph continue walking, pantomiming and stealing glances.

EXT. DESERT TRAIL - LATER

27

Coming over a small hill, there is a small city. The buildings are different. They are brightly painted. Think Bahamas meets Middle East.

Walking down the hill, they pass flocks of goats and another group of Romans.

They stop to talk to a couple of people close to their own age and they point into the city getting directions.

Stopping at a nicely painted blue house, Mary knocks on the door.

An old weathered man opens the door and nods his head up.

MARY

Hi Cousin Zachariah, I don't know if you remember me, but I am Mary, the daughter of Joachim and Anna from Nazareth.

His expression changes to one of absolute joy.
 He nods and nods and walks out to hug Mary.
 This is my friend Yoseph. He has helped me on the journey.
 The old man extends an arm and Yoseph grabs it in greeting.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Is Elizabeth here?

He again nods and nods and opens the door and motions them in.

YOSEPH
 (whispering)
 Why doesn't he speak?

MARY
 I don't know.

INT. ZACHARIAH HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

28

Pointing at some pillows, they sit as he leaves the room.

MARY
 There was a rumor that he had lost
 his voice. I guess it's true.

Zachariah comes into the room with a very pregnant Elizabeth.

Mary and Yoseph get up.

ELIZABETH
 Mary, is that really you? Oh my,
 how you've grown.

MARY
 It looks like you've grown also.

All of a sudden she grabs her belly and moans in a little pain.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Are you all right?

ELIZABETH
 Yes, well I think so. Zachariah. I
 need to speak to Mary. Can you and
 her young friend go and get some
 water?

Zachariah points to a couple of pails by the door.

Yoseph gets up and grabs two.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I didn't even introduce myself. I am Elizabeth, Mary's cousin.

YOSEPH

No, that's alright. I mean it's nice to meet you. My name is Yoseph. Can we get you anything else?

ELIZABETH

No, just some water, and take your time. We need to visit.

Yoseph looks at Mary who smiles and nods. He and Zachariah leave.

Beat

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Mary, blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you carry! But why am I so favored that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

MARY

I had a dream where an angel told me you were expecting. I know how, well, old you are and I came as soon as I could to see for myself.

ELIZABETH

As soon as the sound of your voice reached my ears the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!

MARY

Of course, I believe, but I don't know why he would pick me.

ELIZABETH

Of course, you wouldn't, but your whole body radiates love. It has ever since I have known you. I also know the love you have for God. Do you remember the song you wrote and used to sing on your visits here?

Mary softly sings, (May insert a track here)

MARY

My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on, all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me--Holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm. He has scattered those who are proud in their innermost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant, Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.

ELIZABETH

Why do you think you wrote that song as a little girl?

Mary shrugs.

MARY

Well, it has a whole new meaning now. I wasn't really good at rhyming back then.

ELIZABETH

So, you are carrying the Messiah?

MARY

Yeah, I am kind of sure I am.

Elizabeth's baby jumps again.

MARY (CONT'D)

Are you sure you're okay?

ELIZABETH

Yes, but I have a favor to ask.

MARY

Sure anything.

ELIZABETH

This is a big one?

MARY

Okay?

ELIZABETH

Zachariah is an old man. I am also really old to have a child. We really need help. We don't have any relatives in the area. I know this is a lot but can you stay with me until the baby comes?

MARY

Do you mean like months from now?

Elizabeth nods.

ELIZABETH

I know it's a lot.

MARY

No, no, it's okay. I would love to. I can send Yoseph back with the message. My parents don't know about any of this, about me. About you.

ELIZABETH

Thank you so much. You don't know how much this means. I have been so worried. Two old people having a baby. It's crazy.

MARY

Nothing is impossible with the Lord.

(beat)

You know, I seem to be saying that a lot lately.

ELIZABETH

Well, let me show you around the house. It's not much. The kitchen is over here.

Elizabeth gets up and so does Mary. They head off to another room.

FADE OUT.

EXT. ZACHARIAH'S HOUSE - EVENING

29

Yoseph is sitting by a fire pit in a courtyard attached to the house. He is next to his bedding and poking a small fire with a stick.

Mary comes out and sits next to him very close.

MARY

It's nice out here.

Yoseph shrugs. He is in thought.

MARY (CONT'D)

Do you know how our plans have been changing lately?

Yoseph looking at her.

MARY (CONT'D)

Elizabeth has asked me to stay with her and help her and Zachariah around the house until the baby comes.

YOSEPH

What did you say?

MARY

I said I would.

YOSEPH

Wow, that does change my plans.

MARY

How?

YOSEPH

I was thinking about going back to Nazareth and asking your Dad if I could, you know maybe, court you. Maybe ask you, you know someday, to marry me, someday.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

If you would be okay with that? The courting I mean.

MARY

I'd be okay with that. I would be really okay with that.

YOSEPH

But now you're four days away.

MARY
(looking sad)
Yeah.

YOSEPH
But let's think about this. I do
want to travel.

MARY
You do love to travel.

YOSEPH
And it's only four days.

MARY
Four days for a traveler is nothing
at all.

YOSEPH
And you will need clothes.

MARY
Yep, this is all I brought.

YOSEPH
And I know your parents will want
news.

MARY
About Elizabeth and Zechariah.

YOSEPH
And you.

MARY
Oh, and me, of course.

YOSEPH
And it would probably keep us from
fighting.

MARY
Wait, What would we fight about?

YOSEPH
For one thing, you're four days
away.

MARY
Oh yeah, there is that, Wait so we
wouldn't fight about me being four
days away because I am four days
away.

YOSEPH

Exactly.

MARY

Good, I got it.

YOSEPH

I get to travel. You get to help your cousins, I get to visit. You get an awesome fiance. I can only see one downside to this whole plan.

MARY

What's that?

Yoseph picks up Mary's hand and looks into her eyes.

YOSEPH

That I am going to miss you every single moment I'm gone.

Beat, okay two beats.

Mary stands.

MARY

Auuugggg!!!

Heading towards the door.

MARY (CONT'D)

Good night Yoseph.

YOSEPH

Good night Mary.

Mary goes in and shuts the door.

INT. ZACHARIAH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

30

Mary is on the inside of the door.

MARY

(looking up)

Please tell me this is part of your plan.

She heads O.C.

FADE OUT.

EXT. ZACHARIAH'S HOUSE - MORNING

31

The front door opens and Mary walks out.

Yoseph packed his gear and is ready to walk off.

MARY

Here is a list of the things I'll need. Just give this to my mom or dad.

YOSEPH

Wait, you can write, and read?

MARY

Yeah, I know I'm not supposed to, but my dad believes that women were made from a rib so that we would walk side by side with a man. God would have made us out of a toe if we were supposed to be below you.

YOSEPH

Makes sense.

MARY

Then you'd have to get your other foot circumcised.

Yoseph just looks blankly at her.

MARY (CONT'D)

So they'd be even.

YOSEPH

We, shouldn't circumcise, talk, bad.

Mary smiles.

MARY

So what's the plan?

YOSEPH

I'll meet up with the guys this evening. I have some business in Jerusalem for my dad. Then we will probably leave tomorrow late morning. I don't know what my dad needs when I get home. I'm sure he will want some help with something. I mean we just moved in and then hurry back here. It may be like two weeks though, maybe longer.

Mary pouts.

MARY

You don't have to leave right away.
Would you like some breakfast?

YOSEPH

It's a long walk and I should get
going.

Mary again pouts.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

Leaving on an empty stomach isn't a
good idea, so maybe a couple of
figs.

MARY

Good. I'll be right back.

Mary runs into the house, and before the door closes, she
comes out again with a tray of food.

YOSEPH

Are you feeding an army?

MARY

I got up early and watched you
sleep.

YOSEPH

You watch me sleep?

MARY

Yeah, from the window, and then I
got hungry. Then I thought you'd be
hungry. Then I started preparing
food. Then you got up and...

Motions to the tray.

MARY (CONT'D)

Breakfast, You don't have to eat it
all. You could take some with you
and share it with the guys tonight.

YOSEPH

I do have to leave sometime today.

MARY

I know, in a short time?

YOSEPH
I'm sure I have time for a couple
of figs.

Yoseph grabs a fig, biting into it he looks at Mary.

Mary is pleased that she is feeding her man.

INT. JOACHIM HOUSE - DAY

32

Knock (O.C.)

Joachim answering the door sees Yoseph standing there.

JOACHIM
Hi Yoseph, Where's Mary?

YOSEPH
That's why I'm here. May I come in?

JOACHIM
Of course, of course, what's
happened? Anna, come here.
Something's happened to Mary.

YOSEPH
No, No, nothing's...

Anna rushes in.

ANNA
Oh no, oh no, what has happened to
my Mary?

YOSEPH
No, no, nothing's happened.

JOACHIM
Where is she?

YOSEPH
Well, something's happened, a lot
really, but she is fine.

ANNA
Then where is she?

YOSEPH
She stayed in Nazareth with your
cousin.

ANNA
Why would she do that?

YOSEPH

Everyone, sit and calm down. Do you mind if I sit? I've just walked four days in two.

JOACHIM

Please sit. Would you like some water? Anna, get him some water.

YOSEPH

No, no, I'm fine. I'll get some in a moment.

Everyone sits.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

Mary was right about your cousin. She is pregnant, very pregnant. You were right about her husband, the Rabbi. He has been unable to speak. They are both also very old. I mean really old. Elizabeth asked Mary to stay with them and help. Mary said she would. She sent this to explain and also it's a list of things she'll need.

Yoseph hands them the scroll Mary had given him.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

I came straight here but I still have to check in with my dad before I can return to her.

JOACHIM

Then you know Mary can read and write.

Yoseph nods.

YOSEPH

I think it's cool. She's a very special girl.

JOACHIM

Well, you will not need to go. I can take her what she needs. I will leave this afternoon.

ANNA

But you have duties in the synagogue. Next week is Shavuot.

JOACHIM

Okay, I'll talk to the Rabbi and see what he says.

YOSEPH

Hold on. Mary knows it would be two weeks before I would return with what she needs. Let me help my dad and make sure he has settled in.

JOACHIM

I told you, you don't need to go. I need to check on my daughter.

YOSEPH

I do need to.

They both look at Yoseph.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

I gave her my word I would come. Besides, we all know it is not a good idea to travel alone. Anything can happen. So let me go with you. I am sure you would like the company and I know I will.

JOACHIM

But why would you go if you don't need to?

YOSEPH

Because I told her I would, If I am not allowed to go with you, I will just follow behind.

Anna and Joachim look and nod. This was the right answer.

JOACHIM

Okay, you go home and check with your dad.

JOACHIM (CONT'D)

He has been working every day with the Romans and in the community. We haven't had a carpenter here in a while. I'm going to go talk to the Rabbi and tell him I will not be here the week after Shavuot, and Anna, why don't you see about pulling some things together for Mary.

ANNA

Yoseph, why don't you ask your dad
and see if you two would be able to
come for dinner after Shavuot?

Yoseph looks at Joachim who nods approval.

YOSEPH

Thank You. I'll ask him.

They all get up.

Yoseph heads for the door.

Joachim follows.

JOACHIM

Yoseph, thank you for all you have
done for Mary, and I would like to
have you as a companion next week.

Reaching out his arm, Yoseph grabs it.

Yoseph exits.

EXT. JOACHIM'S - CONTINUOUS

33

The door shuts behind Yoseph.

YOSEPH

And we have a couple of other
things to talk about. I won't mind
a little bit of running room.

Yoseph exits O.S.

EXT. JOACHIM'S - MORNING

34

Joachim is rolling up a mat.

Yoseph appears O.S. and walks up to Joachim.

YOSEPH

Good morning, Sir.

JOACHIM

Good morning Yoseph. Ready?

YOSEPH

Yes Sir.

Anna exits the house.

ANNA

I have another bag of food for the trip. Oh hi Yoseph.

YOSEPH

Good morning Ma'am. I'll take it.

Joachim leaves him smiling.

JOACHIM

I have two bags for Mary. Can you take one also?

YOSEPH

Yes Sir.

Joachim hands him the biggest one.

ANNA

Don't you think he has enough to carry?

JOACHIM

He's young.

Yoseph picks up the bag and shoulders it.

YOSEPH

It's not bad. Besides,
(Looking at Joachim)
I doubt we'll be walking fast.

Anna smiles and slaps Joachim's arm.

ANNA

I like this boy.

JOACHIM

I know, I know. Anyone that can make a joke about me. Ha-ha. Okay, let's go, Samson.

Joachim kisses Anna and both men turn to walk O.S.

EXT. OASIS - LATER

35

Joachim and Yoseph are at a familiar oasis having a meal.

YOSEPH

So, how did you and Anna meet?

JOACHIM

Anna's father was the Rabbi before the Rabbi we have now. As a kid, I loved his messages, and his heart, for God. I would sit for hours and listen to him teach. A very wise man. He is the one who encouraged me to sing. Do you sing?

YOSEPH

Do I sing or do I sing well?

Joachim shrugs.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

I do not sing well.

JOACHIM

Mary loves to sing. We have been singing instead of talking to each other since she was a little girl.

YOSEPH

When did you notice Mary was special.

JOACHIM

To a parent, your children are always special, set apart, different, and better than other kids. When did you notice?

YOSEPH

What do you mean?

JOACHIM

Yoseph, your voice changes when you talk about her. Anna and I talked about it after our dinner the other night. I am a musician, I hear things.

YOSEPH

I kind of wanted to talk to you about that.

JOACHIM

Okay.

YOSEPH

I was waiting for the right time.

JOACHIM

You are waiting for a better time than now?

YOSEPH

I was hoping for a perfect time.

JOACHIM

Sometimes this is a perfect time.

YOSEPH

Okay, well, Sir. I know I haven't known you or Mary for a long time, but I really like her and was wondering if you would let me, maybe begin courting her.

JOACHIM

Have you talked to Mary about this?

YOSEPH

Yes Sir.

JOACHIM

And what was her reaction?

YOSEPH

She wanted me to talk to you.

JOACHIM

I am going to have to think about this.

YOSEPH

I understand.

JOACHIM

I really should walk more. I am a bit out of shape.

YOSEPH

You are doing well. We are making good time.

JOACHIM

Maybe you can carry another small bag and we can continue with this pace. Otherwise, I will have to rest more often.

YOSEPH

O, kay, Sure.

Joachim picks up the largest bag. He smiles at Yoseph who purses his lips and reaches out his hand. Joachim smiles larger and bends to pick up the smallest. He hands it to Yoseph who is relieved.

JOACHIM
Are you sure?

YOSEPH
Yes Sir, I can handle it.

Taking the bag and they begin walking.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

36

Yoseph and Joachim are sitting by a small fire. Again eating.

JOACHIM
Then Anna's friend turns and sees a snake. He jumps back into the camel who...

Joachim looks behind Yoseph and stops talking. Yoseph begins to turn and...

JOACHIM (CONT'D)
Yoseph. Stay still, remain calm.

Two men, very dirty and disheveled, appear out of the darkness. Thug One is smaller and heavier. Thug Two is tall and stronger. Both have terrible teeth.

JOACHIM (CONT'D)
Good evening gentlemen.

THUG 1
Gentlemen? Where?

Both laugh.

THUG 2
This is not a good place to be traveling alone.

THUG 1
What brings you to this place?

JOACHIM
We are traveling to Judea to visit a Rabbi and my daughter.

THUG 1
Oh, a man of God.

Both laugh again.

JOACHIM
Yes, in fact, I am.

THUG 1
You don't look like a Rabbi?

JOACHIM
I am a cantor.

THUG 2
And the boy?

JOACHIM
He may be becoming my son-in-law.

Yoseph smiles at Joachim at the thought.

THUG 1
And taking them money?

JOACHIM
(laughing)
No, clothes for my daughter.
Reaching in a bag he grabs
outerwear. Maybe a bit small for
you.

Yoseph pulls out a long cloth.

YOSEPH
Women's underthings. Do you need
these?

JOACHIM
Girls shoes.

YOSEPH
Maybe some hair care. Would you
like to steal a brush?

THUG 1
This isn't funny.

JOACHIM
No, it isn't. If you want something
to eat, we will be glad to share a
portion with you.

Yoseph looks at Joachim like what are you doing?

JOACHIM (CONT'D)
 But it would not be a good idea to
 steal from a man of God.

Looking at Yoseph.

JOACHIM (CONT'D)
 Or his companion.

THUG 2
 We are already cursed by God.

JOACHIM
 Really? Boils?

YOSEPH
 Scabies?

JOACHIM
 Teeth falling out?

Thugs smile and show missing teeth.

JOACHIM (CONT'D)
 All of them?

YOSEPH
 Leprosy?

JOACHIM
 Torture and imprisonment by the
 Romans?

YOSEPH
 They cut off hands and feet I hear.

JOACHIM
 And your ears.

YOSEPH
 And your tongue.

JOACHIM
 Then they crucify you.

THUG 1
 Okay, okay, you have no money,
 carry women's clothes and are holy
 men.

THUG 2
 Haven't we heard this before?

JOACHIM
Here, take this.

Joachim tosses a small bag to them.

JOACHIM (CONT'D)
There is enough food for a couple
of days. Do you need water?

THUG 2
No, we have water.

JOACHIM
Then can I pray for you?

THUG 1
Yes, Sir, that would be wonderful.

THUG 2
I don't think anyone has prayed for
me since my mother was killed. I
was a child.

Joachim stands and begins to walk towards them.

THUG 1
You mean now? Here? No, no, we are
not worthy to be touched by a man
of God. Thank you, but please pray
for us later.

YOSEPH
Sometimes now is the best time.

He can't believe he just said that.

Joachim looks at him.

JOACHIM
The boy is right.

THUG 2
No Sir, Thank you for the food.

THUG 1
Thank you for the prayers.

Both men turn to leave.

JOACHIM
Go in peace.

After they have left.

YOSEPH

Wow, real robbers. Why did you give them food?

JOACHIM

They were, like us, created in God's image but they have forgotten God. So they live so far beneath what they are capable of.

YOSEPH

Weren't you scared?

JOACHIM

Of course, I was. But sometimes a little fear is good. If you don't feel fear, you might not be doing enough. I am scared when I sing a lot. It just doesn't stop me.

YOSEPH

So when are you going to pray for them?

JOACHIM

Like you said, right now is a good time. Besides, I don't see us falling asleep any time soon.

YOSEPH

That's true. There is one problem.

JOACHIM

What's that?

YOSEPH

I don't know if I really know how to pray. I mean I pray, but I normally let the Rabbi do the praying.

JOACHIM

It's simple. You just talk to God. Here's a prayer Anna's father taught me.

Both men bow their heads,

JOACHIM (CONT'D)

Holy God. Blessed is your Name,
Your Kingdom come let your will be
done, in heaven as on...

AUDIO AND VIDEO FADE

EXT. ZACHARIAH'S HOUSE - LATE DAY

37

Joachim and Yoseph approach. Mary is outside hanging clothes on a line not seeing the men approach.

JOACHIM

There is a familiar face.

MARY

Dad!

Mary runs over and hugs her dad.

MARY (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

Noticing Yoseph and looking coyly.

MARY (CONT'D)

Hi Yoseph.

He stretches out his hands and she grabs them and looks longingly in his eyes

JOACHIM

So you two remember each other?

MARY

Yes, really Dad, what are you doing here?

JOACHIM

I am checking on you. Yoseph told us you were staying with your cousins, but your mother and I wanted to see for ourselves.

MARY

So Mom sent you.

JOACHIM

Yes.

YOSEPH

And I came because I promised you I would.

JOACHIM

Quite a young man Mary. I like him.

MARY

I do to Daddy.

He motions for them to give them a hand which they are still holding.

He places one of his hands below and the other on top.

JOACHIM

I give you permission to court my daughter Yoseph. If that is okay with you Mary?

MARY

(Nodding)

Thank you, Daddy.

YOSEPH

Thank you, Sir.

JOACHIM

Now, where are your cousins? I would like to check on them also?

MARY

How long are you staying?

Mary and Joachim hug and walk into the courtyard. Yoseph follows.

FADE OUT. VIDEO AND AUDIO

TITLE: 38

Three Months Later

INT. ZACHARIAH'S HOUSE - DAY 39

Knock on the door (os)

Mary answers it.

MARY

Yoseph!

Mary and Yoseph hug.

MARY (CONT'D)

Come in, come in. You have to meet the baby.

YOSEPH

Good afternoon Elizabeth, Good afternoon Zachariah.

Elizabeth nods

ZACHARIAH
Hello Yoseph.

YOSEPH
You can talk?

ZACHARIAH
Yes. My voice came back to me at the naming ceremony. We were told by an angel to name him John and the elders were against it because no one in my family is named John. I spoke up and...

ELIZABETH
He really spoke up.

Mary picks the baby up from Elizabeth and hands him to Yoseph.

MARY
Yoseph, meet John.

Yoseph holds him out a bit. Uncomfortably.

MARY (CONT'D)
Here, put him in your arm like this,

She moves his arm.

YOSEPH
Hi John. Look at all that crazy hair.

MARY
Look at you. You're a natural at this whole baby thing.

YOSEPH
Wow, He's a little baby man.

The baby makes cooing noises.

ZACHARIAH
See Yoseph. The reason I lost my voice is because I doubted a voice I heard while in the Temple giving an offering to the Lord.
(MORE)

ZACHARIAH (CONT'D)

It was the Lord, I mean it really was the Lord and he told me Elizabeth was going to give birth to the one that would announce the coming of the Messiah. I didn't mean to doubt. But we are so old and people our age don't have kids. I don't know why I doubted but I did. It just didn't make sense. I guess when you're God you don't have to make sense.

ELIZABETH

You know, Yoseph, we could not have done this without Mary's help.

Yoseph is totally engaged with the baby.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

You look like a natural with John.

YOSEPH

Thank You.

(looking at Mary)

I plan on having children someday.

He looks back at John. Mary and Elizabeth share a glance.

ELIZABETH

You know John is here to proclaim the coming of the Lord.

YOSEPH

(talking in baby speak)

Yes, you are. You're here to tell everyone about the coming of the Messiah.

ELIZABETH

So, John comes, then the Messiah.

YOSEPH

Yes, you will, tell everyone about the Messiah, but first, you have to learn how to talk.

ZACHARIAH

I'm sure that will come soon enough.

YOSEPH

It's pretty awesome that God chose you.

(looking at Mary)

(MORE)

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

And to think we could be part of
the story.

(baby speak again)

And all because of John.

Mary, Elizabeth, and Zachariah all look at each other. Yoseph cannot take his eyes off John.

MARY

Let's let John be with his mother.
Do you want anything to eat or
drink?

YOSEPH

To tell you the truth I would love
to wash my feet.

MARY

Great. I got water this morning.
Let's go out to the courtyard.

Mary takes John and gives him to his mother. She and Yoseph go outside to the courtyard.

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

40

Mary and Yoseph exit. Mary grabs a bowl as Yoseph takes off his sandals.

YOSEPH

Mary, I have so much to tell you.
How long before you can return?

MARY

I was only going to stay till the
baby was born. We talked the other
night and decided I can go any time
I want. I was hoping to return on
this trip. The next time you came
down.

YOSEPH

Wow, that's great. Sarah and Imma
have been such a big help. We've
been planning for your return.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

In fact, I guess I should make it
official.

Yoseph gets up and sets Mary on the bench. He gets down on one knee.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

Mary, your dad has taught me that there is no more perfect time than now. I have fallen so deeply in love with you. I would love you to agree to be my wife.

MARY

Of course, I would, But there is something I have to tell you.

YOSEPH

Okay???

MARY

We should trade places.

Mary gets up and has Yoseph sit.

MARY (CONT'D)

Yoseph, John has come to proclaim the coming of the Messiah.

YOSEPH

Yeah, I got it, but first, he will learn how to talk.

MARY

His just being here means that the Messiah will follow.

YOSEPH

Okay.

MARY

The scripture says he will be born to a virgin.

YOSEPH

Right.

MARY

Yoseph, This is so hard, I'm carrying him.

YOSEPH

Him, Who?

MARY

The Messiah.

YOSEPH

Carrying him where?

Slowly she holds her tummy.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)
Wait. What??? You're pregnant?

Mary nods.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)
Who did this to you?

MARY
No one did this to me. I'm still a virgin.

YOSEPH
You can't be pregnant and a virgin.

MARY
Yes, I know how it works normally.

YOSEPH
How did this happen?

MARY
I don't know. There was a dream and an angel and he said the Holy Spirit would hover above me, and then this dove is always here.

She points up to a dove on the roof.

MARY (CONT'D)
I mean this dove is always here. Then I came to visit Elizabeth and I'm, I'm pregnant.

YOSEPH
How far along.

MARY
I think about four months.

YOSEPH
Four MONTHS!!! That means you're going to bear a child in like five months from now.

MARY
I know, I can do the math.

YOSEPH
Mary, this isn't funny.

MARY

I know. I'm sorry. I am so sorry.

Yoseph gets up.

MARY (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

YOSEPH

Mary, I can't have another man's child.

MARY

It's not another man's. He is the Son of God.

Yoseph just looks at her. He's pissed. He picks up his sandals and bedroll.

MARY (CONT'D)

What are you going to do?

YOSEPH

I'll have to cancel the wedding and we'll figure something out with your parents. You know, they are going to think I did this.

MARY

Yoseph, please, no.

YOSEPH

I can't have another man's child, Mary.

He turns to leave.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

Pack your things. We will leave in the morning.

MARY

Where are you going?

YOSEPH

I'm going to...

MARY

Pray.

He turns to look at her.

YOSEPH

Think.

He leaves and Mary falls to the bench and begins to cry.
 Start track **God have Mercy on the Lonely** - Melody Guy.
 Mary goes upstairs and gathers her things while crying.
 Sobbing she falls on her bed.

EXT. DREAM FOREST - DAY

41

Yoseph is walking through great pine trees. He marvels at their size and the creatures that live in them.

Coming to the edge of a cliff, he sees millions of people fighting. Above them are angels also in battle.

One angel in full-fighting mode sees him and drops down to him. Frightened, he hides behind a tree.

GABRIEL

Yoseph.

Yoseph remains quiet.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

Yoseph. Do not fear. Come out.

YOSEPH

I don't know if you've ever seen you, but I'm okay here.

GABRIEL

Look again.

Yoseph peers out and sees a man in a beige tunic, the man Mary saw in her dream, sitting on a rock right on the edge of the cliff.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

I am the Angel that gave the message to Mary. Come join me.

Yoseph looks at the cliff and takes a seat a few feet away.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

Something troubles you.

YOSEPH

My fiancée is pregnant.

GABRIEL

She is carrying the Savior of the world.

YOSEPH
I can't marry a pregnant woman.

GABRIEL
Why?

YOSEPH
Really, uh, what will people think?

GABRIEL
Yoseph, see that eagle? Do you care what it thinks?

YOSEPH
No.

GABRIEL
See the squirrels in the tree? Do you care what they think?

YOSEPH
Wow, so those are squirrels. No. Do they even think?

GABRIEL
On the ground, there are millions of men all doing battle. Do you care what they think?

YOSEPH
Not really.

GABRIEL
And of all those men, God introduced you to Mary. What about the angels. Do you care what they think?

YOSEPH
Well, I don't want to make you mad. You guys are really fierce.

GABRIEL
What about Mary? Do you care what she thinks?

YOSEPH
Yes.

GABRIEL
Why?

YOSEPH
Cause I love her.

GABRIEL

Want to know a secret?

YOSEPH

Sure.

GABRIEL

In the center of God's heart, that is where your love comes from. The center of God is love. This child Mary carries, He is going to love you like nothing you have ever experienced.

YOSEPH

I still don't know.

GABRIEL

See these millions? God could have introduced any of them to Mary, but he chose you. He is very pleased that you two love each other. She loves you, Yoseph.

Gabriel stands.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

Tell you what. After you are married change, your name to Joseph.

YOSEPH

Like the son of Jacob?

GABRIEL

Yes, because your father is also Jacob and God was with him as God will be with you, You will raise the child as your own and name him Yeshua God is with us, So the question to ask yourself is, Do you want to be one of the millions who battle or one of the few who accept and just love God's love?

Yoseph looks out at the field.

YOSEPH

Why do they battle?

GABRIEL

Ever since sin entered the world, men have been battling each other.

YOSEPH
Why did God create sin?

GABRIEL
He didn't create it. It is more the
absence of God that is sin.

YOSEPH
Like at night when you blow out a
candle, you have darkness?

Gabriel nods.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)
Why do the angels battle?

GABRIEL
Some of us were affected also. But,
since we know God personally, it's
different for us.

YOSEPH
Why can't we just see God?

GABRIEL
Some people have, but you thought I
was scary, people who see God have
a habit of falling down dead. He
has a plan for you to know him
personally, but before you can, he
has to become a person.

YOSEPH
The Messiah.

GABRIEL
And out of those millions, he
brought you to meet Mary.

YOSEPH
And he made me fall in love with
her.

GABRIEL
He doesn't do that, but I am glad
you did.

YOSEPH
Me too.

They continue talking.

FADE OUT. VIDEO AND AUDIO

EXT. COURTYARD - MORNING

42

Mary still brings things out of the house.

Yoseph walks into the courtyard.

God have Mercy on the Lonely melody plays on the BG

YOSEPH
Morning Mary.

Mary is so dejected and sad. She is still crying.

MARY
Good morning. I am almost ready.

YOSEPH
Mary, I am sorry.

MARY
I know. How can you marry a pregnant woman?

YOSEPH
No, you don't understand. I am sorry I didn't trust you, I am sorry I hurt you, I am sorry I doubted your love for me. I am sorry I didn't listen. We will raise this child as ours. No one needs to know any different.

MARY
Okay, but, what happened?

YOSEPH
I had a dream last night.

Mary looks at him.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)
There was an Angel.

MARY
Did he get all scary?

YOSEPH
He started out that way. Pretty impressive, really.

MARY
I know, huh?

YOSEPH

But he turned out to be a pretty nice guy.

Mary stops crying and looks at him with love again.

YOSEPH (CONT'D)

I don't care what anyone thinks. People, eagles, angels, or squirrels.

MARY

Squirrels?

YOSEPH

He showed me trees. Wow, they are big.

MARY

With squirrels.

Yoseph nods.

Mary hugs him tightly.

MARY (CONT'D)

I am so glad you saw trees.

YOSEPH

I don't care what anyone thinks except for you. Because I love you.

MARY

You know, after we get married, I don't think I can get more pregnant.

YOSEPH

True, But you can become less virgin. So we can wait till after the birth.

MARY

I love you so much.

Yoseph cups either side of her face and they kiss for the first time.

As they separate.

EXT. JEWISH WEDDING NAZARETH - DAY

43

Yoseph stops kissing Mary and they step on glasses. (May have to research)

There is a party going on.

People are singing and a couple of musicians with ouds and drums.

Everyone is joyous. Sarah runs in with Aaron and announces their next to be married.

Jonathan and his mom are laughing with Imma.

The boy and others in the village are enjoying themselves.

Joachim and Jacob are sitting together and Anna is fetching food and wine.

JOACHIM

Mary, Yoseph, come over here.

Mary and Yoseph come over.

Joachim stands.

JOACHIM (CONT'D)

A toast. I have not lost a daughter
I have gained a son and a good
friend, a new brother.

He looks at Jacob and they toast.

JOACHIM (CONT'D)

To a long marriage and many
grandchildren.

Everyone laughs.

JOACHIM (CONT'D)

If she doesn't eat him out of house
and home.

Mary realizes that she is beginning to show.

Her mom, Yoseph, and Imma share looks. They are the only ones who know.

Jacob stands.

JACOB

As is tradition, we have added a room onto the house we are buying from Joachim. The newlyweds will stay there till they can get a place of their own.

Everyone cheers.

Yoseph walks to the parents. And turns to the crowd.

JOSEPH

Also, as is tradition, I can, on my marriage day, take a new name. So I chose Joseph. The same as the hero in the scriptures. His father was Jacob and mine is also.

JOACHIM

Then a toast to Joseph and Mary. Long life and many children.

The party continues.

FADE TO.

EXT. JOSEPH'S COURTYARD - DAY

44

Mary is outside in a new courtyard. Hers. She is hanging laundry. She is really big now.

Joseph enters from O.S.

JOSEPH

Hey, Mary.

MARY

Hey, Honey. What's up?

She puts her hand to her back and stands up.

JOSEPH

Is your back hurting?

MARY

Always.

JOSEPH

Another pregnant woman thing?

MARY

Yes.

JOSEPH

Like going to the bathroom every five minutes?

Mary gives him dagger looks.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Here, let me rub it.

He sits her down and pushes circles on her back.

MARY

Oh, that feels great. So, what's the news?

JOSEPH

It's not good. Caesar has ordered a census. Everyone must go to the city they were born in and register.

MARY

I was born here?

JOSEPH

But, since you're my wife, we have to go to Bethlehem.

MARY

No problem. We have made journeys that long in four days. You have done it in two. You're a traveler, remember?

JOSEPH

But not with a pregnant woman.

MARY

It won't be a problem. You know the way. We'll pack light. You still know people we can stay with, right?

JOSEPH

Yes, my father's friend, Earley, runs the Inn. I'm sure he'll give us a deal. Maybe even stay for free.

MARY

Okay, when do we have to leave?

JOSEPH

Can we leave tomorrow?

MARY
Great, walking will be good for me.

EXT. JOSEPH'S COURTYARD - MORNING

45

Mary is bringing out another bag. There are about (25).

Joseph exits the house and sees the pile for the first time.

JOSEPH
Mary, I can't carry all those.

MARY
I can help.

She picks up two small bags.

JOSEPH
Point to five.

MARY
Most of it is food. I am eating for two.

JOSEPH
Another pregnant woman thing.

He puts on as many as he can.

MARY
Okay, trade the blue one for the red-striped one and we're good.

Joseph pulls out the blue one. It was one of the first he put on so he has to take off most and start over, grabs the red striped one.

Mary grabs the blue one and starts to put some things into one of the small bags she is carrying.

MARY (CONT'D)
What? We can eat this at our first stop.

JOSEPH
That will be on the other side of the fence when you have to stop and pee.

MARY
Oh, great idea. I should go now.

He just stands there with 12 bags and bedding looking at her as she runs (O.C.).

EXT. DESERT TRAIL - DAY

46

JOSEPH

So your Dad has said nothing.

MARY

No, I really don't think he counted the time. He is just excited about having a grandchild.

JOSEPH

And your Mom?

MARY

Oh, she knows. She knew the morning it happened.

JOSEPH

But she hasn't said anything?

MARY

You don't understand. God has given my mother the gift every Jewish mother prays for.

JOSEPH

A grandchild.

MARY

No! I was an unwed mother. He gave her a reason to make me feel guilty every time we talk for the rest of her life.

Joseph laughs.

EXT. DESERT TRAIL - LATE DAY

47

They are at a split in the path.

JOSEPH

I don't remember which path to take.

MARY

We go this way.

JOSEPH

How do you know that?

MARY

The star.

She points to a star ahead of them.

MARY (CONT'D)

We should follow the star. When do you ever see a star in the day and, and where would you ask for directions anyway?

JOSEPH

I can't believe you're following a star. Is that another pregnant woman thing?

MARY

No, just a woman thing.

Walking about 10 steps. She points to the ground.

MARY (CONT'D)

And then there's that.

A medium-sized rock on the side of the road is scratched with the word Bethlehem and an arrow pointing in the direction she is going.

JOSEPH

Lucky guess.

EXT. DESERT OASIS - NIGHT

48

They have laid out the bedding.

JOSEPH

Wow, that star is really bright.

MARY

Have you noticed how it doesn't move like the sun, moon, or other stars?

JOSEPH

No, not really. Okay, the bedding is all laid out.

MARY

Do you have our special blanket?

JOSEPH

Right here.

Mary gets on the ground and turns on her side. Joseph cuddles in behind her and covers her with the blanket.

MARY
This is nice.

JOSEPH
My favorite part of the day.

MARY
Oh, oh.

Joseph pulls the blanket off of her.

MARY (CONT'D)
I've got to pee.

Joseph lies on his back.

JOSEPH
I know. First of 20.

MARY
Sorry, not enough room for baby and tinkle. Now, this IS a pregnant woman thing.

JOSEPH
I understand.

EXT. DESERT OASIS - MORNING

49

Mary turns from her back to the side Joseph was on. He's not there.

MARY
Joseph.
(to herself)
I just can't get comfortable.

JOSEPH (O.C.)
Just taking care of my business.
I'll be there in a bit.

MARY
Okay.

She grabs the covers and turns on her left side bringing the covers with her.

There on a rock beside her face is a large black scorpion.

MARY (CONT'D)

Joseph.

JOSEPH (O.C.)

In a minute.

The scorpion turns to look at her.

MARY

(whispers)

Joe...

The scorpion raises its tail in a striking pose.

Mary reaches behind her to pull herself back. She feels a small rock and, in one fast move, she squashes the bug.

Scorpion guts shoot all over her face.

MARY (CONT'D)

Auuuggg!!!

Spitting.

Joseph walks up.

JOSEPH

Good Morning.

Mary pushes herself up and looks at Joseph.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Ew, what's all over your face? Is this another pregnant woman thing?

Mary glares at him shaking.

MARY

NO! THIS IS NOT ANOTHER PREGNANT WOMAN THING. GET ME A CLOTH AND SOME WATER.

JOSEPH

We should save the...

MARY

GET ME A CLOTH AND SOME WATER. NOW!!

Joseph realizes something isn't right so he starts digging through their stuff and hands her a cloth.

EXT. DESERT TRAIL - LATER

50

They are climbing a small hill. She is about 10 feet ahead of him. He is definitely staying behind her.

MARY

Joseph, I feel so bad you have to carry so much.

JOSEPH

It's okay. The way we are going through food, it's getting lighter by the minute.

Mary stops and glares at the camera.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

I mean, I'm eating it too.

MARY

I was thinking. I could carry the bags downhill if you would carry them uphill and we could split them when it gets flat. That way we can make better time.

JOSEPH

Sounds good to me.

MARY

Look, it gets flat right up ahead.

They walk about 20 steps and Joseph takes off half his bags and hands them to Mary. It's a bit much for her but she is not going to complain.

They walk about another 20 steps and round a corner and it begins to go downhill.

It seems about 25 miles all downhill.

Joseph begins taking off all the bags and puts them on Mary.

She is bending over with the weight.

JOSEPH

Oh yeah. This is much better.

He stretches and notices her hunched over.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Oh honey, let me help.

He grabs a small bag and turns to walk away.

Mary begins to walk hunched over by the weight. She is not a quitter.

Joseph takes about ten steps and turns back to Mary.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

You know, maybe we could split them even going downhill. I am just not used to walking this light. I may get out of shape.

MARY

I wouldn't want that to happen to you.

He walks back to her and takes all the bigger bags leaving her four smaller ones.

MARY (CONT'D)

I just wanted to help.

JOSEPH

You are helping, I love you. Seriously, Mary, you are the strongest most incredible woman. I have no idea how you have been able to come this far.

He hugs her and they continue walking side by side.

EXT. OASIS - DAY

51

They are eating dates and resting. Joseph is rubbing Mary's feet.

JOSEPH

We can take the trail left and go to Jerusalem or right and go to Bethlehem. They are both about a half-day's journey.

MARY

I vote Bethlehem. I think the baby's going to come soon and I want to be at the Inn when it happens, I don't want to deliver out here.

JOSEPH

Do you think you may have it out here?

MARY

I don't know. This was farther than
I thought it would be.

JOSEPH

I don't know what to do if you go
into labor.

MARY

Like everything else, let's just
trust God, and take more breaks.

Joseph nods.

EXT. BETHLEHEM - EVENING

52

Walking, there are more people here than you can believe.

Hundreds. This is a small town with about 20 buildings and a
bazaar. There are tents and lean-to shelters of every type.

Small cooking fires on the street.

JOSEPH

Mary, I have never seen it like
this.

MARY

It's not a problem. I didn't expect
so many people though. Let's just
get to the Inn.

JOSEPH

Okay, it's down here.

They walk down a street and turn a corner.

They pass a few Roman Solders.

Tents and people are everywhere.

They come to a building with dozens of people on the inside.

Joseph goes up to the front door and peers in.

EXT. INNKEEPERS PORCH - NIGHT

53

JOSEPH

Earley, Earley.

A man in his late forties comes to the door.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Earley, I don't know if you
remember me. Yoseph, son of Jacob
the Carpenter.

EARLEY
Of course, I remember you.

A girl screams like she is being murdered.

EARLEY (CONT'D)
Hannah, leave your sister Mariah
alone.

JOSEPH
Do they still fight?

EARLEY
I think they wake up at night just
to kick each other.

JOSEPH
Earley, this is my wife, Mary.

EARLEY
Wife? You have only been gone a
little over a year. It is a
pleasure to meet you, Mary. And
you're having a baby?

A woman runs by the door.

EARLEY (CONT'D)
Zella, Zella, come here. Remember
little Yoseph?

Zella comes to the door.

ZELLA
(yelling to someone O.C.)
Mariah, don't throw things at your
sister.

MARIAH (O.C.)
She threw her bread at me.

ZELLA
Yoseph, so good to see you again.

JOSEPH
Well, my name is Joseph now. I
changed it when I got married. This
is my wife, Mary.

Two girls HANNA, and MARIAH appear at the door. They are so close to the same age, it would be hard to tell them apart.

HANNA

I want to change my name. I could be Wonder Princess.

MARIAH

They only named you Hanna because they couldn't spell. Blaauucckk.

HANNA

They did not. I want to be Wonder Princess.

ZELLA

Hannah, go upstairs and get ready for bed. Mariah, go pour water for the dishes.

HANNA

I don't want to go to bed.

She stomps off and up the stairs. For the rest of the scene, you hear her stomping.

MARY

They seem nice.

ZELLA

Pleasure to meet you, Mary. It's pretty crazy here right now.

EARLEY

Joseph, did you come here for the Census?

JOSEPH

Yes, I did. Any chance you have a room?

EARLEY

Not at all. I have ten people staying in the living room.

ZELLA

Mariah, fill the washing bowl don't play with the dishes. I've got to go. Nice meeting you.

Zella runs off. Mariah yells at her sister to stop stomping.

The stomping gets louder.

EARLEY

In fact, we have 25 people in town as census-takers, and maybe 200 more that were born here. It's crazy.

MARY

Joseph.

JOSEPH

We just traveled six days from Nazareth and Mary is really pregnant. We need something.

EARLEY

There's nothing I can do. We have the kids in our room and three or four people in all the others.

MARY

Joseph.

JOSEPH

There has to be someplace.

EARLEY

I don't even have a spare blanket to make a tent. You can have whatever you need; I just don't have any room.

MARY

Joseph.

Mary bends over in pain.

JOSEPH

Mary are you okay?

MARY

It's time.

JOSEPH

Time for what?

Mary gives him that look again.

MARY

(Taking a couple of deep breaths)
It's time to have the baby.

JOSEPH

You mean now? Here?

Mary is holding her tummy and nodding. Another pain.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Earley, you've got to help us.

EARLEY
I, I can't believe I am saying this, but I cleaned out the Manger in the back today. I was hoping to rent it to either a tax collector, a money lender, or a Roman if one came by. But that is all I have.

JOSEPH
Look, that will be fine.

EARLEY
Come on, it's back here.

JOSEPH
Come on Mary. Do you need a hand?

MARY
No, I can walk.

Earley leads the way and Joseph picks up the bags and follows. Mary takes his arm. In the back is a rather large open building made for animals and not humans.

INT. MANGER - NIGHT

54

Earley lights a lantern and hangs it above a stall.

Joseph sets up the bedding and helps Mary lie down. She has another contraction.

EARLEY
I'm going to get Zella. She may be able to help. Wow, look at that star. It's going wild.

Outside it is getting lighter and wilder as the star begins to dance in the sky. It is almost a lighthouse with hundreds of beams.

Earley leaves to get Zella.

JOSEPH
I am so sorry this is where you must have the baby.

MARY

This is fine. I just want to have
it out of me.

She grimaces in pain again.

MARY (CONT'D)

Ah, ah.

Joseph holds her hand.

JOSEPH

What do you want me to do?

MARY

Pray. Really pray, not just think.

EXT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

55

Zella and Earley come back followed by Hanna and Mariah.

MARIAH

Is she having a baby?

HANNA

I want to have a baby.

MARIAH

You are a baby.

HANNA

Am not.

MARIAH

Are too.

HANNA

Am not.

MARIAH

Are too.

ZELLA

You guys stay out here. I'll see
what's going on.

The girls keep fighting in the background.

INT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

56

ZELLA

Joseph, go outside. Mary, I am not
a midwife. I really have never done
this before.

Joseph exits the stall and stands near Earley outside.

Mary is having pains.

ZELLA (CONT'D)

Has your water broken yet?

Mary Nods.

ZELLA (CONT'D)

When?

MARY

It happened when we came into town.
I told Joseph that I had to tinkle
but it wasn't tin... ah.

Again with a contraction.

ZELLA

Okay, let me look.

Zella lifts up her dress.

ZELLA (CONT'D)

Mary, You have a Hyman.

MARY

I'm still a virgin.

ZELLA

How can you be a virgin? Joseph
have you not been with your wife.

EXT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

57

JOSEPH

I can be with her. I just haven't,
quite yet.

INT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

58

ZELLA

How can you be pregnant and still
be a virgin?

Mary shrugs and has another contraction.

ZELLA (CONT'D)
 Wait a minute, a virgin, the star,
 A baby, Bethlehem,
 (whispers)
 THE MESSIAH.

Mary again nods another contraction.

ZELLA (CONT'D)
 Oh my God, Oh my God, Oh my God.

MARY
 I think He is everyone's God.

Another contraction.

Zella runs out of the manger.

EXT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

59

Zella runs out and to the kids. She is freaking.

ZELLA
 I need you to get a pot of water as
 hot as you can. Hanna, I need you
 to get as many clean cloths as you
 can find.

MARIAH
 I want to get the...

ZELLA
 (yelling)
 Shut up. Shut up. SHUT UP! NO
 FIGHTING. NO BACK-TALK. JUST GO AND
 GET THE CLOTHS. CLEAN CLOTHS AND
 HOT WATER, NOW!!!

Both kids are standing with their eyes wide open. They have never seen their mom flip her _____. Mariah turns and run to the Inn. Hanna not knowing what to do spins around three times before she runs off.

EARLEY
 Zella, are you okay? You have never
 yelled at the girls like that
 before.

Zella walks to Joseph and Earley.

ZELLA

Earley, she's a virgin. A pregnant
virgin in Bethlehem, The star,
Virgin. Bethlehem?

Earley looks at Zella, then the star, then Zella.

EARLEY

The Prophecy?

Then he looks at Joseph.

EARLEY (CONT'D)

The Messiah?

Joseph squeezes his lips together and nods his head.

EARLEY (CONT'D)

Oh my God, Oh my God, Oh my God.

Zella hits him in the arm

ZELLA

And you put him in the manger?

EARLEY

I didn't know. There wasn't
anyplace else? I'm so sorry.
Anything you need is yours.

Zella runs back into the manger.

INT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

60

ZELLA

How are you doing Mary, was it?

Mary gives her the look she gives Joseph. Has another
contraction.

ZELLA (CONT'D)

Okay breathe like this.

Zella does four pushing breaths.

ZELLA (CONT'D)

It's really important that you
don't push till I tell you to.

MARY

Okay.

Mary has another contraction and does the breaths.

ZELLA

Now there might be a little ripping.

MARY

Ripping. What ripping? What's going to rip? No one said anything about ripping.

EXT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

61

The star is freaking out. There are long beams of light flooding the whole Earth like a searchlight.

Joseph looks at Earley.

JOSEPH

Ripping?

EARLEY

It's more like a little tear.

INT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

62

MARY

Tearing? There is no tearing no ripping. No, no, no. No one said anything about tearing and ripping.

Mary has another contraction and breathes four times.

ZELLA

Okay, it's almost here. It's almost time to push.

EXT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

63

The girls are running to the manger.

HANNA

Momma, I have cloths

MARIAH

I have water. It's very hot.

Zella sticks her head out of the manger and takes the items.

ZELLA

Girls, I am sorry I yelled.

The girls nod it's okay and move over to their dad.

MARIAH

Dad, what's happening?

Earley bends down and hugs his girls.

The star is freaking out.

INT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

64

ZELLA

Okay, it's time. Push.

Mary screams. You see her. Sweaty, screaming, crying, screaming, crying, screaming, crying. Head tossing back and forth. Light is strobing across her face as it moves right to left.

EXT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

65

The star is going wild. It disappears with a whoosh only leaving a full moon and the normal stars in the sky.

HANNA

Daddy, what happened to the light?

A baby cries from inside the manger.

Everyone slowly turns to look at the manger.

Zella exits.

ZELLA

Joseph, go in and meet your son.

Joseph enters.

INT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

66

Mary is laying on her side holding a baby.

MARY

Joseph, here's your son.

Joseph kneels beside Mary and picks up the baby and looks at his peaceful face.

JOSEPH

He is so perfect. Mary, he's so beautiful.

Handing the baby back to Mary he lies beside her and holds them both.

EXT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

67

Zella and Earley are standing side by side. In the far distance, there are lights dancing in the sky. Something's going on, on the other side of the hills.

ZELLA

I wonder what that is over where the Shepherds stay?

EARLEY

Tonight, who can say? Look at the animals.

Not noticing them till now a couple of sheep, a cow, and some chickens all are facing the manger. All are laying down just looking at it.

ZELLA

Now Earley, that's a miracle.

Hanna and Mariah are sitting next to each other on the ground. Hanna has her head on Mariah's shoulder Mariah has her arm around Hannah. They are sleeping.

EARLEY

Could he really be the Prince of Peace?

ZELLA

He seems to be tonight.

They walk over picking up their children then continue walking back to their Inn.

INT. MANGER - MORNING

68

Joseph enters with something in his hands.

JOSEPH

Look Mary. I got up early and made a cradle.

He starts to put bedding in it.

INT. INN - MORNING

69

Earley is coming down the stairs. He looks in the room and sees a big open space. Something is missing.

EARLEY

Zella, Where's my chair?

ZELLA

I think Joseph took it. You said he could have anything he needed.

EARLEY

But my chair. What would he need with my chair?

ZELLA

Who can understand teenagers?

EARLEY

(pouting)

But it rocked.

INT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

70

Joseph puts the baby in the cradle.

JOSEPH

Look Mary, it rocks.

He rocks it back and forth.

MARY

You really are a carpenter!

JOSEPH

I told you so.

You hear a commotion outside.

INT. INN - CONTINUOUS

71

You hear the commotion.

EARLEY

Now what?

They open their door and step out on the porch.

EXT. INN - CONTINUOUS

72

Coming up the road is a large caravan. Three camels with riders are followed by dozens of people and animals. Shepherds and goats.

EARLEY

I am going to need a bigger Inn.

ZELLA

Well, it's a good thing you have a carpenter, living in your manger.

She slaps him on the arm again and walks back into the house.

He hangs his head and sighs.

EARLEY

They are never going to let that go.

EXT. MANGER - CONTINUOUS

73

Joseph comes out of the manger.

JOSEPH

You should see this, Mary.

MARY (O.S.)

I think I am just going to lie here for a moment.

The caravan walks up the road but one of the camel riders stops.

ANDREW

Yoseph?

JOSEPH

Andrew, what are you doing here?

ANDREW

I am on a journey with my fellow wise men to find the King of Kings foretold by a star last night. Did you see it?

JOSEPH

Andrew, everyone saw it and I think you found him.

Now Mary appears.

MARY

Joseph? Who is this?

JOSEPH

Mary, remember all the times I stopped in Jerusalem to do business for my Dad? Well, this is Andrew. He's a trader, a Magi, an astronomer.

ANDREW

I am involved in many enterprises. These are my friends. Steven and Fritz.

Both nod.

JOSEPH

Andrew this is my wife Mary. Wait a minute.

Joseph looks at Mary and she nods yes.

STEVEN

And you had a child last night?

Mary nods as Joseph comes out of the manger carrying his child.

JOSEPH

This is our child.

All the men dismount from their camels and get down on one knee. So do all the people with them.

FRITZ

We have brought you gifts.

ANDREW

But this might not be the best place to give them to you.

STEVEN

Our camp is not far. Can we take you to it?

FRITZ

Maybe you would like a bed and a bath?

MARY

Yes please, but I don't know how far I can walk right now.

STEVEN
You've walked enough.

All the men rise. He snaps his fingers and two men come with a stretcher.

ANDREW
Just lay here and we'll carry you.

JOSEPH
Let me pack up.

ANDREW
We'll take care of that as well.

Men run into the manger and start to gather their belongings.

JOSEPH
Wow, I didn't expect this.

Mary looks at him again with those loving eyes as she lies on the stretcher.

Standing on the side of the road are a few Shepherds. Mary motions for them to come look at the baby.

As they leave they reveal a very young boy with a drum.

Mary motions to him.

Shaking his head, and looking down, he points to himself.

She continues to wave him over and he runs up with his drum.

A baby squeals with laughter.

INT. TENT - DAY

74

Mary opens her eyes. She realizes that she has been asleep and is in the most comfortable bed of her life.

She gets up and looks over at the simple cradle that Joseph built for them.

Rubbing her tummy she realizes.

Jumping out of bed she sees the baby and is relieved.

Hearing voices and lifting the baby up she walks over to the bed and begins feeding and singing to him.

Insert **Mary's Lullaby**. Movie theme.

INT. TENT - LATER

75

Part of the tent opens and Mary exits into the room. Her hair is wet and she is drying it.

Looking at the cradle she smiles. Turning her gaze to the bed she see's two sets of folded clothes. The ones she has been wearing. Now clean and folded and a new set. Royal blue with gold and bright red.

INT. TENT - CONTINUOUS

76

The men are sitting on pillows and telling stories. They are laughing when Mary pulls a flap back and enters. She is wearing the clothes you see on stained glass. There is no doubt she is Mary the mother of Jesus. She is carrying the child.

MARY

Good Afternoon.

ANDREW

Afternoon?

The men laugh.

STEVEN

Mary, you have been sleeping since we brought you here yesterday.

MARY

I slept all day.

JOSEPH

And all night. You got up a couple of times to feed the baby but fell asleep so when he was finished I put him back in the cradle.

MARY

I must have been tired.

STEVEN

Deservedly so.

MARY

So, what have all you men been talking about?

JOSEPH

I had a dream last night.

MARY
 (slowly)
 Did it involve an Angel?

Joseph nods.

ANDREW
 We came to Bethlehem through
 Jerusalem.

FRITZ
 Met with your King Herod. Not a
 nice man.

ANDREW
 I have never trusted him.

STEVEN
 He wanted us to see about your
 child and report back to him.

FRITZ
 None of us trust him. He's up to
 something.

ANDREW
 So we have decided to head south to
 my home in Egypt.

MARY
 Egypt?

ANDREW
 Yes Mary. I have offered Joseph a
 job in one of my businesses.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
 We hoped you would consider coming
 and living for a while. So we can
 find out King Herod's true
 intentions.

JOSEPH
 Mary, they brought us gifts.

ANDREW
 Besides a job, I have gold. Enough
 for you to live on for many years.

STEVEN
 I have brought Myrrh.

FRITZ

I have brought Frankincense. Is there any chance I can hold the baby?

MARY

Of course.

Mary walks over and hands the baby to Fritz.

MARY (CONT'D)

You have been so kind and your offers so generous, but I don't...

ANDREW

It would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than to stop us from helping you and the Messiah.

FRITZ

Hi there, little King. Why you're a stinky little King aren't you?

Mary rushes over and grabs the baby.

MARY

He is not a stinky little, Oh wow, Okay, I can fix that.

She looks around and Andrew points to a changing area.

MARY (CONT'D)

Wow, what did you feed him? Is there a camel missing?

Everyone laughs.

ANDREW

There are no camels missing.

JOSEPH

Anything coming out of him came out of you.

MARY

You know you're going to have to learn how to do this also, Joseph.

The wise men smile at him.

MARY (CONT'D)

I, for one, love the idea of going to Egypt for a while, but I know my parents will want to see their grandson.

STEVEN

That's not a problem. We can send for them at any time.

ANDREW

Have you given any thought to a name yet?

Mary walks the baby over to Fritz again.

MARY

We were asked to name him Yeshua.

ANDREW

Yes, God is with us. That was Emmanuel in Ancient Arabic.

STEVEN

That was also foretold.

Fritz looks at the baby. This is the first time we see the face of the baby. He is blowing bubbles and smiling.

FRITZ

(in baby speak)

In my language, you will be called Jesus.

Andrew and Steven look at each other.

ANDREW

That name will never catch on.

Steven shakes his head "no".

Mary walks over and sits next to Joseph.

Camera pulls out, audio fades as talking continues. Up and up till all you see is the world quietly sitting in space.

Insert track Group: Hillsong Worship, Album: Christmas: The Peace Project, Song title: **Arrival**

Run titles.

Mary got to see Egypt.

Joseph got to see trees.

We never let go of the fact,

The child was born in a manger.

THE END.