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grace

1

Isaiah 2 2-5

In the last days
the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established
as the highest of the mountains;
it will be exalted above the hills,
and all nations will stream to it.

Many peoples will come and say,

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the temple of the God of Jacob.
He will teach us his ways,
so that we may walk in his paths.”
The law will go out from Zion,
the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

He will judge between the nations
and will settle disputes for many peoples.
They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.

Come, descendants of Jacob,
let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Photo: Jonny Baker
Knife amnesty angel, Derby



2

Isaiah 9 1-7

Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress.
In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
but in the future he will honour Galilee of the nations,
by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan:

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy;
they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest,
as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.

For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered
the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor.

Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood
will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Photo: Jonny Baker

Installation 'Our Time' by United Visual Artists, London



3

Isaiah 11 1-9

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—

and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;

but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling[a] together;
and a little child will lead them.

The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.

They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

Photo: Mike Rose
Underpass in Hammersmith, London



4

Isaiah 11 10-16

In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples;
the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.
In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time
to reclaim the surviving remnant of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt,
from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia,
from Hamath and from the islands of the Mediterranean.

He will raise a banner for the nations
and gather the exiles of Israel;
he will assemble the scattered people of Judah
from the four quarters of the earth.

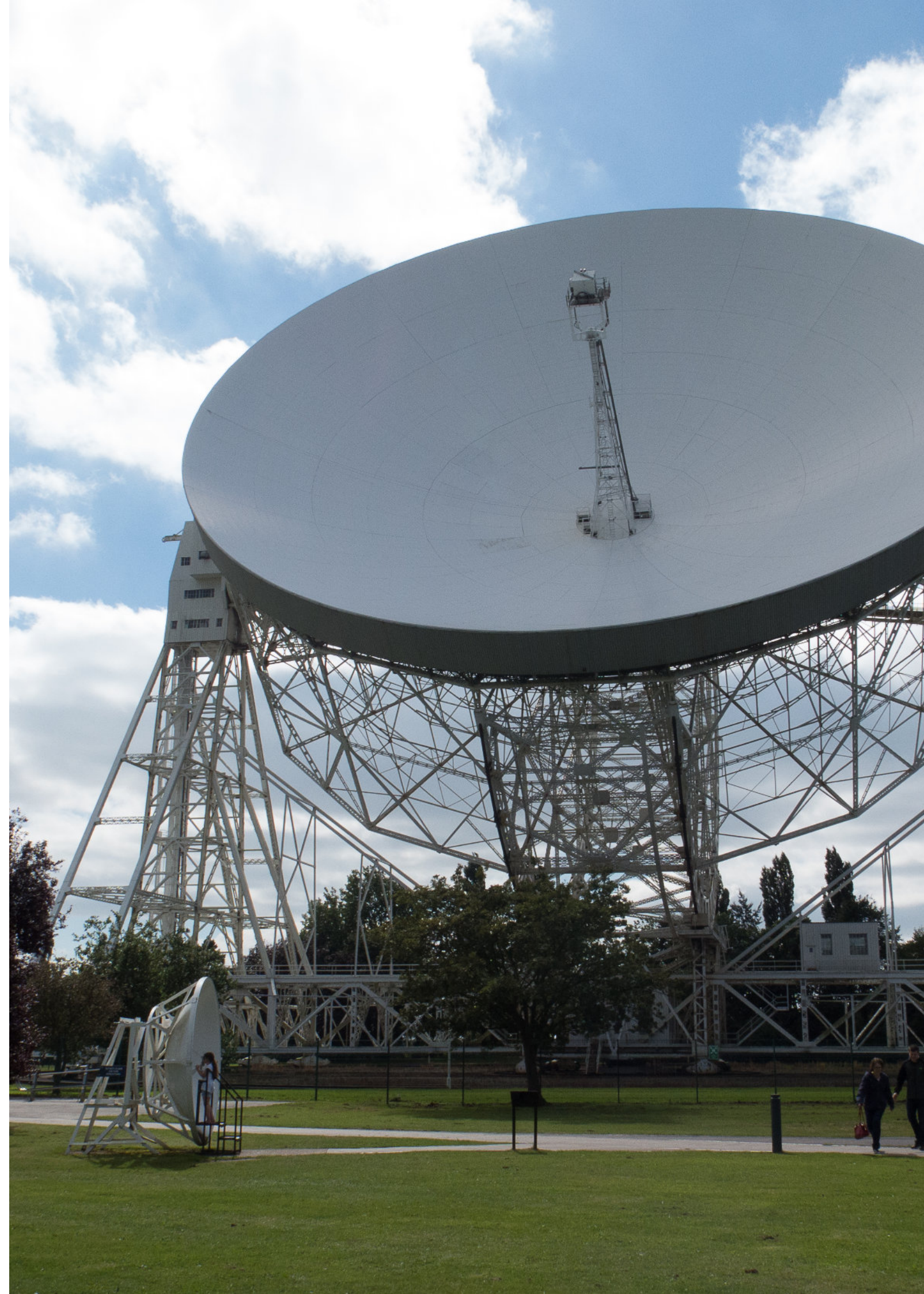
Ephraim's jealousy will vanish,
and Judah's enemies will be destroyed;
Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah,
nor Judah hostile toward Ephraim.

They will swoop down on the slopes of Philistia to the west;
together they will plunder the people to the east.
They will subdue Edom and Moab,
and the Ammonites will be subject to them.

The Lord will dry up
the gulf of the Egyptian sea;
with a scorching wind he will sweep his hand
over the Euphrates River.
He will break it up into seven streams
so that anyone can cross over in sandals.

There will be a highway for the remnant of his people
that is left from Assyria,
as there was for Israel
when they came up from Egypt.

Photo: Richard Baker
Jodrell Bank radio telescope, Cheshire



5

Isaiah 40 1-11

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her
that her hard service has been completed,
that her sin has been paid for,
that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice of one calling:

"In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.

And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?"

"All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.

The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely
the people are grass.

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever."

You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain.
You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout,
lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah,
"Here is your God!"

See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm.
See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.

He tends his flock like a shepherd:
He gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
he gently leads those that have young.

Photo: Jenny Baker

Painting in the Walled Off Hotel, Bethlehem



كhalid حسين
Khalid Hussein
1980
100 x 100 cm

6

Isaiah 52 1-12

Awake, awake, Zion, clothe yourself with strength!
Put on your garments of splendour, Jerusalem, the holy city.
The uncircumcised and defiled will not enter you again.

Shake off your dust; rise up, sit enthroned, Jerusalem.
Free yourself from the chains on your neck, Daughter Zion, now a captive.
For this is what the Lord says:
“You were sold for nothing, and without money you will be redeemed.”

For this is what the Sovereign Lord says:
“At first my people went down to Egypt to live; lately, Assyria has oppressed them.
“And now what do I have here?” declares the Lord.
“For my people have been taken away for nothing, and those who rule them mock,”
declares the Lord. “And all day long my name is constantly blasphemed.

Therefore my people will know my name; therefore in that day they will know
that it is I who foretold it. Yes, it is I.”

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy.
When the Lord returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes.

Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem,
for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

The Lord will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

Depart, depart, go out from there!
Touch no unclean thing!
Come out from it and be pure, you who carry the articles of the Lord’s house.

But you will not leave in haste or go in flight;
for the Lord will go before you, the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

Photo: Jonny Baker

The Good Shepherd Boxing Community, Romford, Essex



7

Isaiah 61 1-4

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,

to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
and provide for those who grieve in Zion—

to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.

They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the Lord
for the display of his splendour.

They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities
that have been devastated for generations.

Photo: Jenny Baker

Sign by Alfredo Jaar, Edinburgh Festival



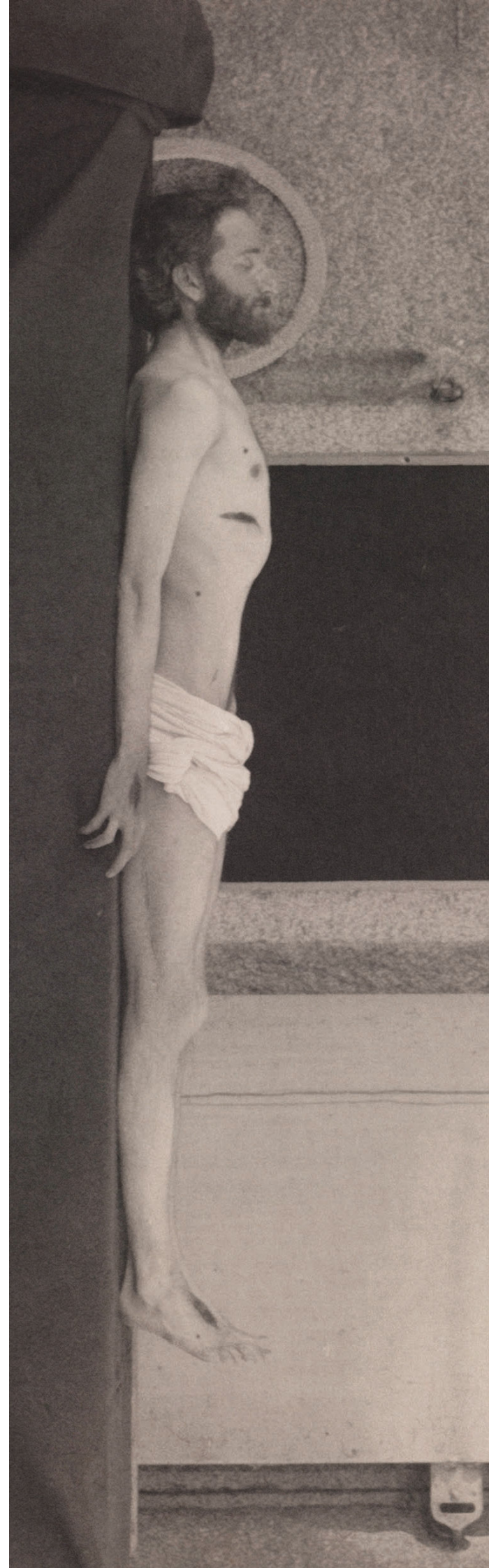
8

Galatians 4 4-6

But when the set time had fully come,
God sent his Son,
born of a woman,
born under the law,
to redeem those under the law,
that we might receive adoption to sonship.

Because you are his sons,
God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts,
the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”

Photo: Sheona Beamont www.shospace.co.uk used by permission
Artwork 'Natal'



9

1 Thessalonians 4 13-18

Brothers and sisters,
we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death,
so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.

For we believe that Jesus died and rose again,
and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus
those who have fallen asleep in him.

According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive,
who are left until the coming of the Lord,
will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command,
with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God,
and the dead in Christ will rise first.

After that, we who are still alive and are left
will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.
And so we will be with the Lord forever.
Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Photo: Steve Collins

19th century gravestone, St. Just, Cornwall



10

1 Thessalonians 5 1-11

Now, brothers and sisters,
about times and dates we do not need to write to you,
for you know very well that the day of the Lord
will come like a thief in the night.

While people are saying, “Peace and safety,”
destruction will come on them suddenly,
as labor pains on a pregnant woman,
and they will not escape.

But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness
so that this day should surprise you like a thief.
You are all children of the light and children of the day.
We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.

So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep,
but let us be awake and sober.
For those who sleep, sleep at night,
and those who get drunk, get drunk at night.
But since we belong to the day, let us be sober,
putting on faith and love as a breastplate,
and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath
but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.
He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep,
we may live together with him.
Therefore encourage one another and build each other up,
just as in fact you are doing.

Photo: Gillian Wilcox
Kigali Convention Centre, Rwanda



11

1 Corinthians 15 20-28

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead,
the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

For since death came through a man,
the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.

For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.
But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits;
then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father
after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.

For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.
The last enemy to be destroyed is death.
For he “has put everything under his feet.”

Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him,
it is clear that this does not include God himself,
who put everything under Christ.

When he has done this,
then the Son himself will be made subject to him
who put everything under him,
so that God may be all in all.

Photo: Gillian Wilcox

Artwork by Antony Gormley, Royal Academy, London



12

Colossians 1 15-20

The Son is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn over all creation.

For in him all things were created:
things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible,
whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities;
all things have been created through him and for him.

He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
And he is the head of the body, the church;
he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead,
so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,
and through him to reconcile to himself all things,
whether things on earth or things in heaven,
by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Photo: Paul Wainwright
Isabella his firstborn



13

2 Peter 3 3-13

Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.

They will say,

“Where is this ‘coming’ he promised?

Ever since our ancestors died,

everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.”

But they deliberately forget that long ago by God’s word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends:

With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness.

Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief.

The heavens will disappear with a roar;

the elements will be destroyed by fire,

and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?

You ought to live holy and godly lives

as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.

That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

But in keeping with his promise

we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth,

where righteousness dwells.

Photo: Kathy Baxter

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, London



14

Mark 14 60-65

Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus,
“Are you not going to answer?
What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?”
But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.

Again the high priest asked him,
“Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”

“I am,” said Jesus.
“And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One
and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

The high priest tore his clothes.
“Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked.
“You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?”

They all condemned him as worthy of death.
Then some began to spit at him;
they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, “Prophecy!”
And the guards took him and beat him.



15

Jeremiah 33 14-17

“‘The days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will fulfil the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah.

“‘In those days and at that time
I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line;
he will do what is just and right in the land.

In those days Judah will be saved
and Jerusalem will live in safety.
This is the name by which it will be called:
The Lord Our Righteous Saviour.’

For this is what the Lord says:
‘David will never fail to have a man to sit on the throne of Israel’

Photo: Dean Ayres
Richmond Park, London



16

Micah 5 2-4

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.”

Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labour bears a son,
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.

He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

Photo: Jenny Baker
Aida refugee camp, Bethlehem



17

Ezekiel 34 11-31

“For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land.

I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land. I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and there they will feed in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign Lord. I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

“As for you, my flock, this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will judge between one sheep and another, and between rams and goats. Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture? Must you also trample the rest of your pasture with your feet? Is it not enough for you to drink clear water? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet? Must my flock feed on what you have trampled and drink what you have muddied with your feet?

“Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says to them: See, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you shove with flank and shoulder, butting all the weak sheep with your horns until you have driven them away, I will save my flock, and they will no longer be plundered. I will judge between one sheep and another. I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the Lord have spoken.

“I will make a covenant of peace with them and rid the land of savage beasts so that they may live in the wilderness and sleep in the forests in safety. I will make them and the places surrounding my hill a blessing. I will send down showers in season; there will be showers of blessing. The trees will yield their fruit and the ground will yield its crops; the people will be secure in their land. They will know that I am the Lord, when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from the hands of those who enslaved them.

They will no longer be plundered by the nations, nor will wild animals devour them. They will live in safety, and no one will make them afraid. I will provide for them a land renowned for its crops, and they will no longer be victims of famine in the land or bear the scorn of the nations. Then they will know that I, the Lord their God, am with them and that they, the Israelites, are my people, declares the Sovereign Lord. You are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, declares the Sovereign Lord.”

Photo: Jenny Baker

Sheep and shepherds, England



18

Zechariah 8 1-8

The word of the Lord Almighty came to me.

This is what the Lord Almighty says:
“I am very jealous for Zion; I am burning with jealousy for her.”

This is what the Lord says:
“I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem.
Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City,
and the mountain of the Lord Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain.”

This is what the Lord Almighty says:
“Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem,
each of them with cane in hand because of their age.
The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there.”

This is what the Lord Almighty says:
“It may seem marvellous to the remnant of this people at that time,
but will it seem marvellous to me?” declares the Lord Almighty.

This is what the Lord Almighty says:
“I will save my people from the countries of the east and the west.
I will bring them back to live in Jerusalem; they will be my people,
and I will be faithful and righteous to them as their God.”

Photo: Jenny Baker
Jerusalem



19

Zephaniah 3 14-17

Sing, Daughter Zion;
shout aloud, Israel!
Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,
Daughter Jerusalem!

The Lord has taken away your punishment,
he has turned back your enemy.
The Lord, the King of Israel, is with you;
never again will you fear any harm.

On that day
they will say to Jerusalem,
“Do not fear, Zion;
do not let your hands hang limp.

The Lord your God is with you,
the Mighty Warrior who saves.
He will take great delight in you;
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,
but will rejoice over you with singing.”

Photo: Dean Ayres

Statue of the emperor Augustus, Naples



20

Isaiah 7 10-17

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz,
“Ask the Lord your God for a sign,
whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.”

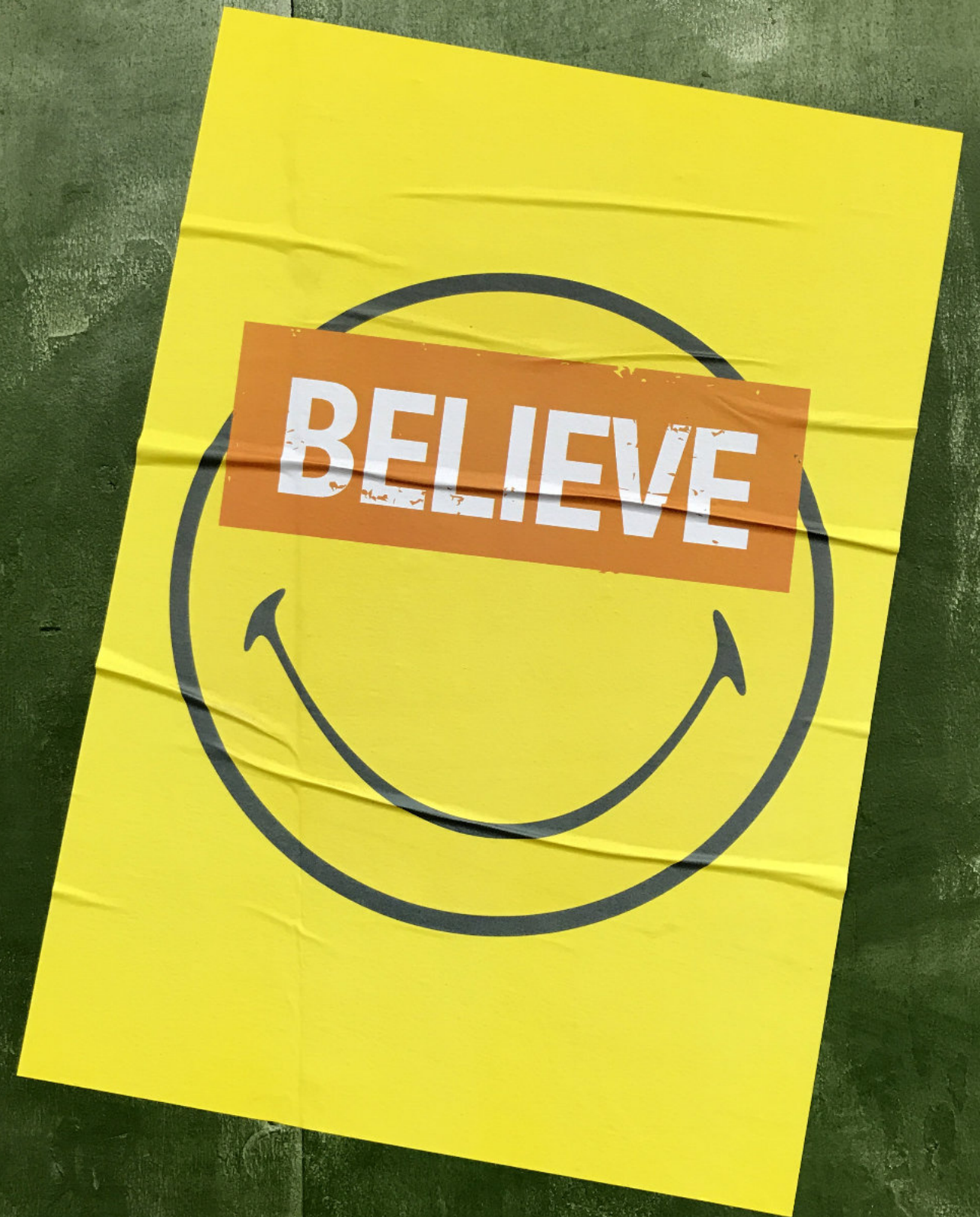
But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test.”

Then Isaiah said,
“Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans?
Will you try the patience of my God also?

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign:
The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong
and choose the right, for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong
and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

The Lord will bring on you and on your people and on the house of your father a time unlike
any since Ephraim broke away from Judah—he will bring the king of Assyria.”



21

Matthew 1 12-17

After the exile to Babylon:

Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel,

Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,

Zerubbabel the father of Abihud,

Abihud the father of Eliakim,

Eliakim the father of Azor,

Azor the father of Zadok,

Zadok the father of Akim,

Akim the father of Elihud,

Elihud the father of Eleazar,

Eleazar the father of Matthan,

Matthan the father of Jacob,

and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary,

and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.

Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David,
fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon,
and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

Photo: Jenny Baker
Generations of women



22

Luke 1 26-38

In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.”

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.”

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.”

Then the angel left her.



23

Luke 1 39-56

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

In a loud voice she exclaimed:

“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!
But why am I so favoured, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?
As soon as the sound of your greeting 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!”

And Mary said:

“My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
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.

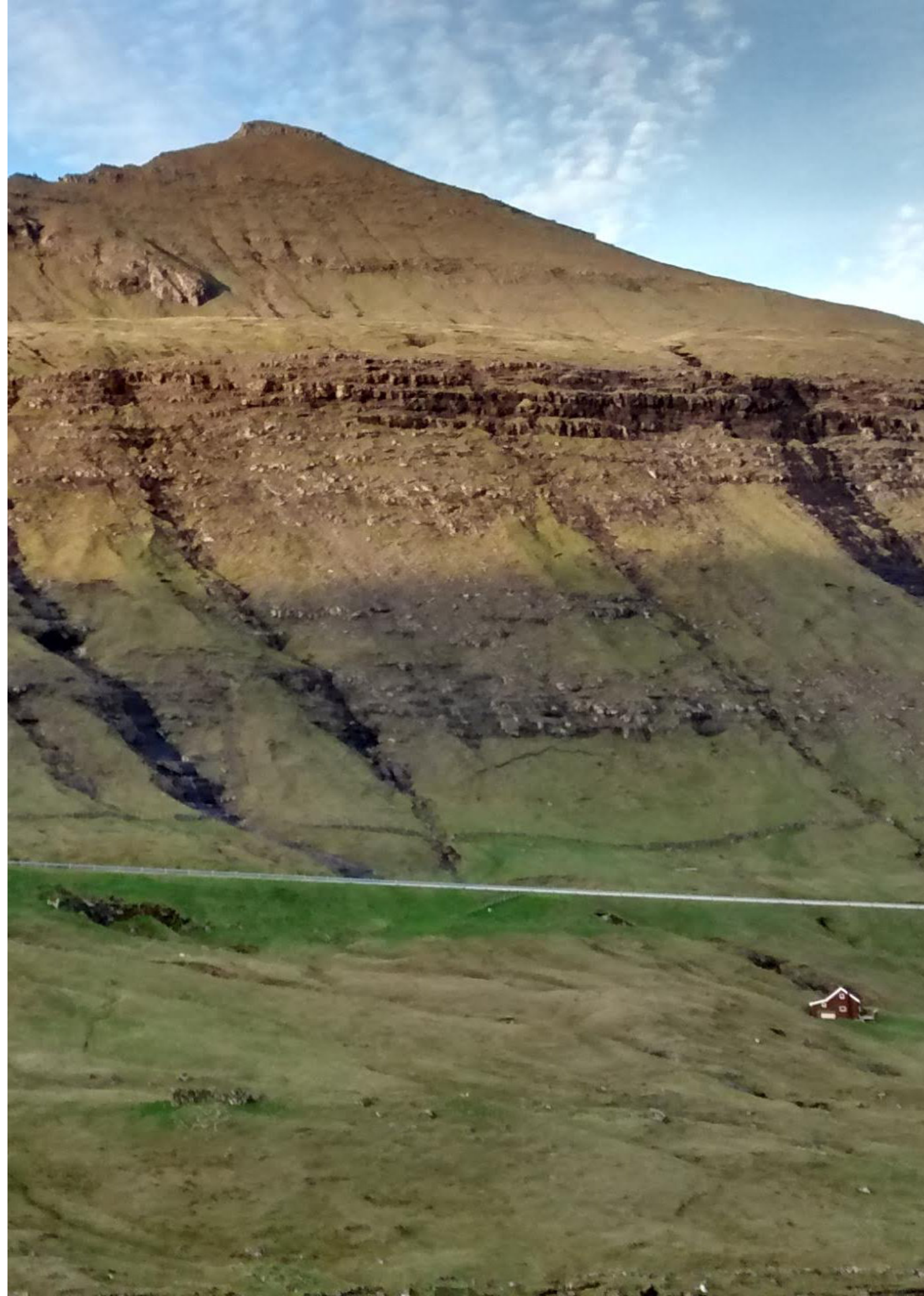
His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.

He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost 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.”

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

Photo: Gillian Wilcox
Isle of Skye, Scotland



24

Matthew 1 18-25

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about:

His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

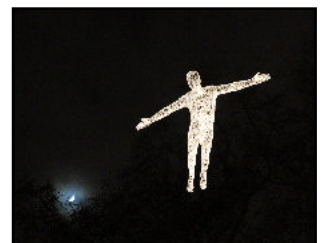
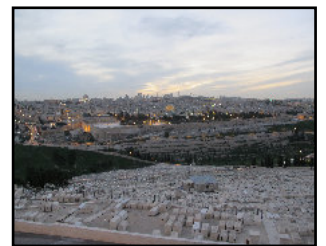
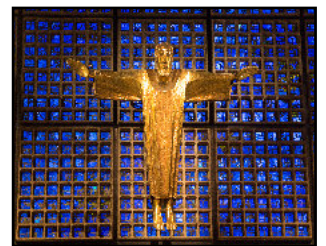
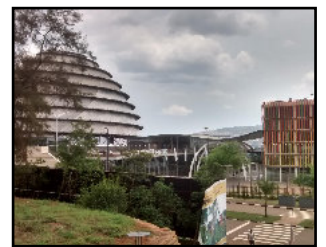
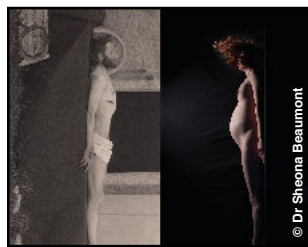
When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Photo: Richard Baker

The Church of the Incarnation, Vélez-Rubio, Andalusia



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