

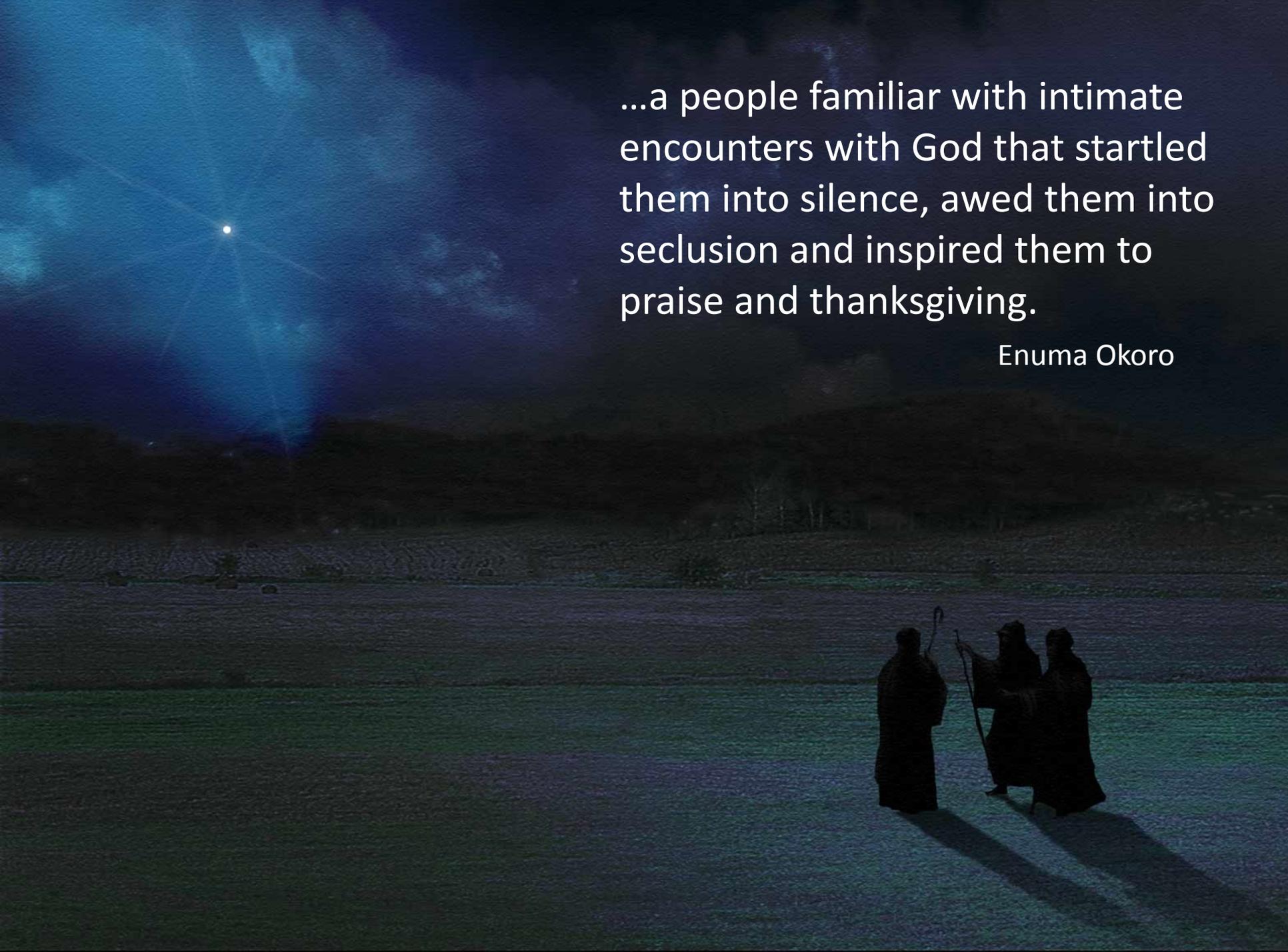
A serene sunset scene over a body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, golden glow that reflects on the water's surface. Silhouetted trees line the background, and three ducks are visible in the foreground, swimming on the water. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

Longing for Christ

Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you;
therefore he will rise up to show you compassion.
For the Lord is a God of justice.
Blessed are all who wait for him
Is 30:18 NIV





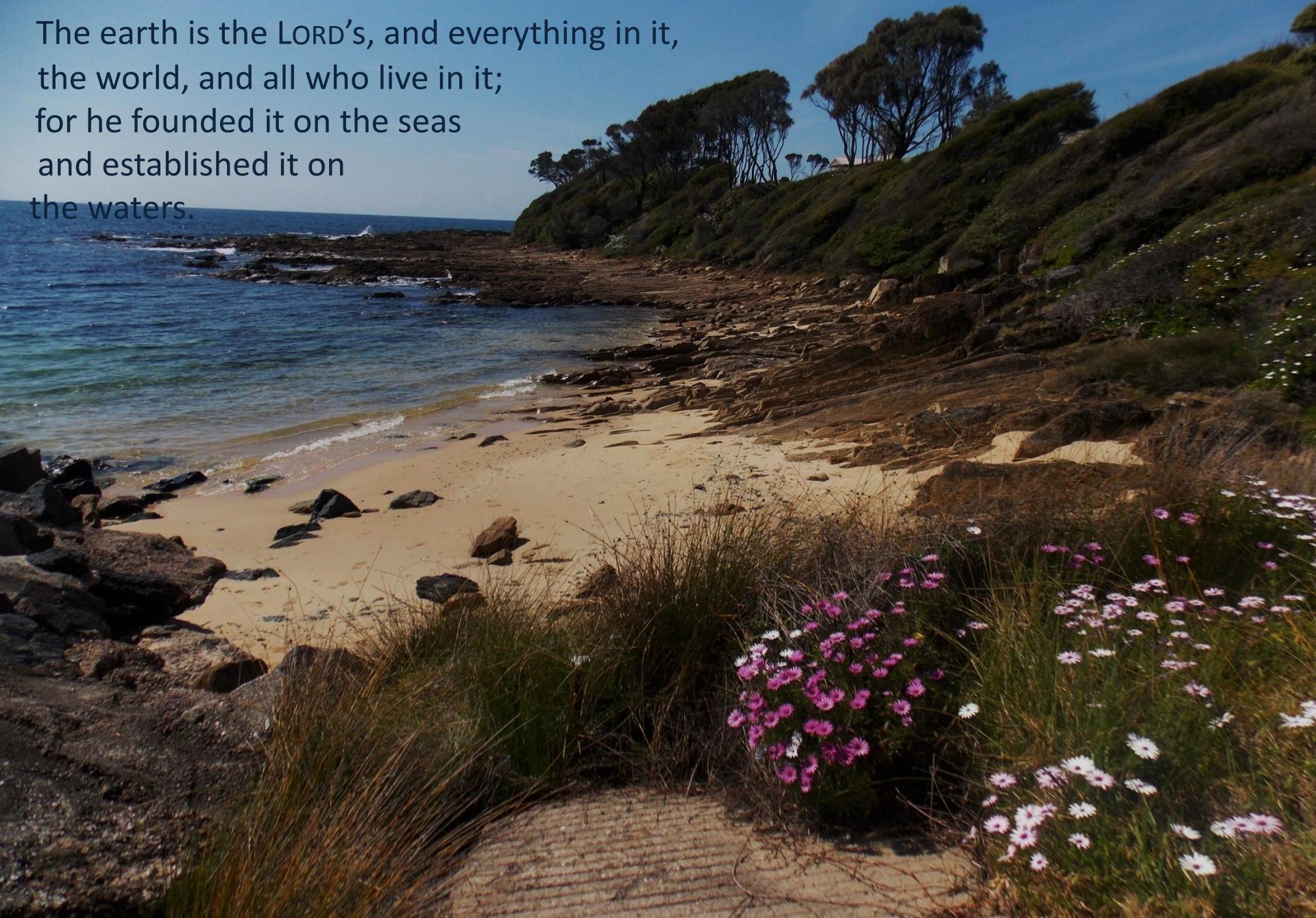
A night scene with a dark, starry sky. A bright star is visible in the upper left quadrant, casting a lens flare. In the foreground, three figures in dark, long robes stand in a field, looking towards the star. The ground is dark, and the overall atmosphere is mysterious and contemplative.

...a people familiar with intimate encounters with God that startled them into silence, awed them into seclusion and inspired them to praise and thanksgiving.

Enuma Okoro

Psalm 24

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it;
for he founded it on the seas
and established it on
the waters.





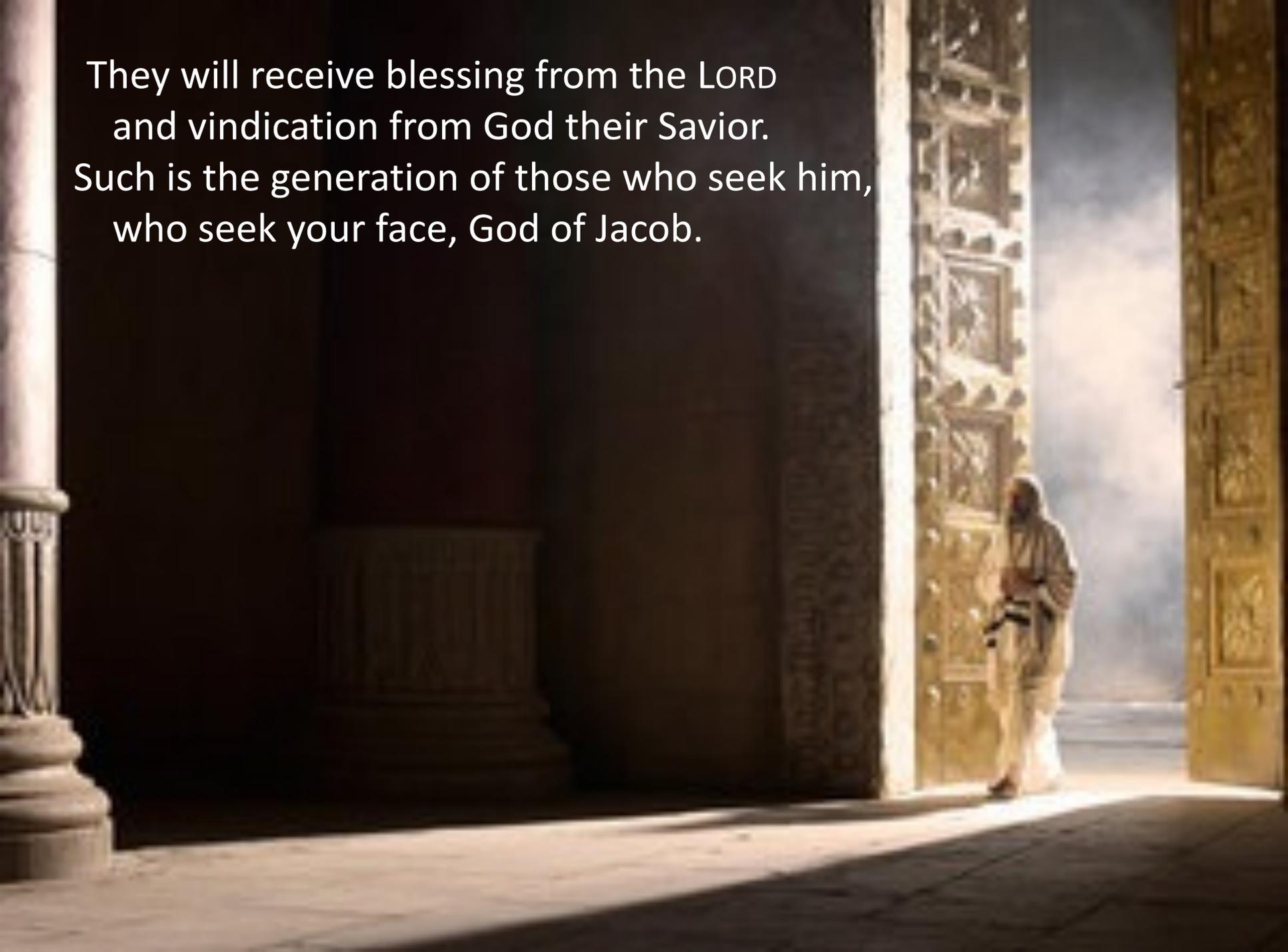
Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD?

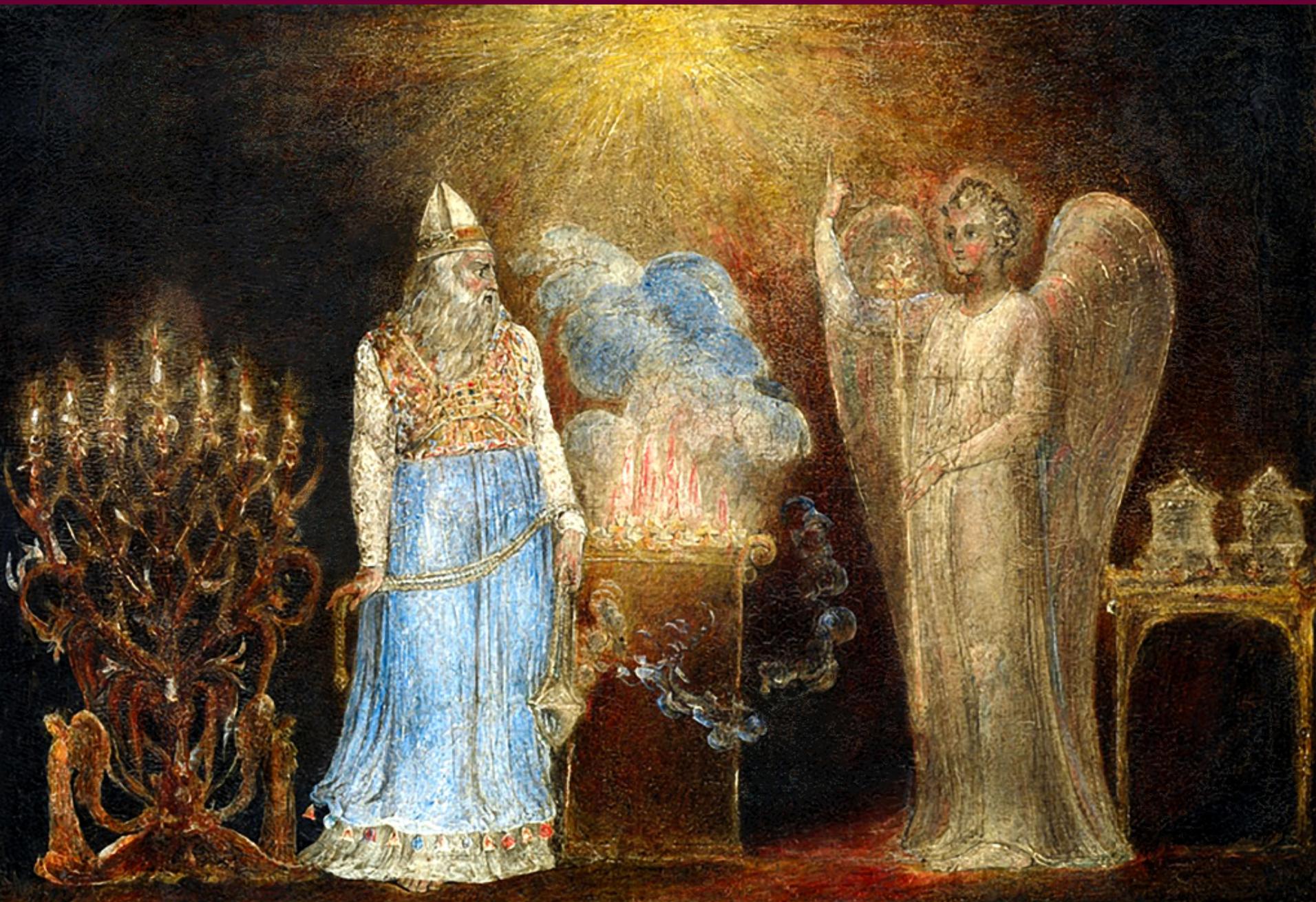
Who may stand in his holy place?

The one who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.



They will receive blessing from the LORD
and vindication from God their Savior.
Such is the generation of those who seek him,
who seek your face, God of Jacob.









***Christmas in Bethlehem
and Lampedusa***

Pedro Casaldáliga

December 5, 2013

*'There is no room
for them' still,
neither in Bethlehem
nor in Lampedusa.*

*Is Christmas an irony?
If your 'Kingdom is not
of this world',
what are you doing here,
subversive party pooper?*



*To be God-with-us,
you must dwell in helplessness,
with the poor of the Earth,
like this, small, like this,
stripped of all glory,
with no power but failure,
no place but death,
but knowing that the Kingdom
is your Father's dream
and our dream too.*

*There is still Christmas,
in the Peace of Hope,
in lives shared,
in struggle and solidarity,
Kingdom within,
Kingdom within!*

**Christmas 2013
New Year's Day 2014
Pedro Casaldáliga**









Waiting...



Lament – an act of faith,
an attempt at
faithful living



To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

O my God, in you I trust;

do not let me be put to shame;

do not let my enemies exult over me.

Make me to know your ways, O LORD;
teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all day long.

Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness' sake, O LORD!

All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear him,
and he makes his covenant known to them.

My eyes are ever toward the LORD,
for he will pluck my feet out of the net.

Turn to me and be gracious to me,
for I am lonely and afflicted.

Relieve the troubles of my heart,
and bring me out of my distress.

Ps 25

Lamentations 3: 21-26

But this I call to mind,

and therefore I have hope:

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases,

his mercies never come to an end;

they are new every morning;

great is your faithfulness.

“The LORD is my portion,” says my soul,

“therefore I will hope in him.”

The LORD is good to those who wait for him,

to the soul that seeks him.

It is good that one should wait quietly

for the salvation of the LORD.

Intercession





Silence



I waited patiently for the LORD;
 he inclined to me and heard my cry.
He drew me up from the desolate pit,
 out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
 making my steps secure.
He put a new song in my mouth,
 a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear,
 and put their trust in the LORD.

But may all who seek you
 rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who love your salvation
 say continually, "Great is the LORD!"
As for me, I am poor and needy,
 but the Lord takes thought for me.
You are my help and my deliverer;
 do not delay, O my God.

Ps 40



*O God this is the people
that longs to see your face...*

Kevin Keil 1993 GIA Publications

All the earth is yours, O God
the world and those who dwell on it
You have founded it upon the sea
And established it upon the river.

Who can ascend your mountain God
Or who may stand in this holy place
Those whose hands are sinless hearts are clean
And desire not the vanity of earth.



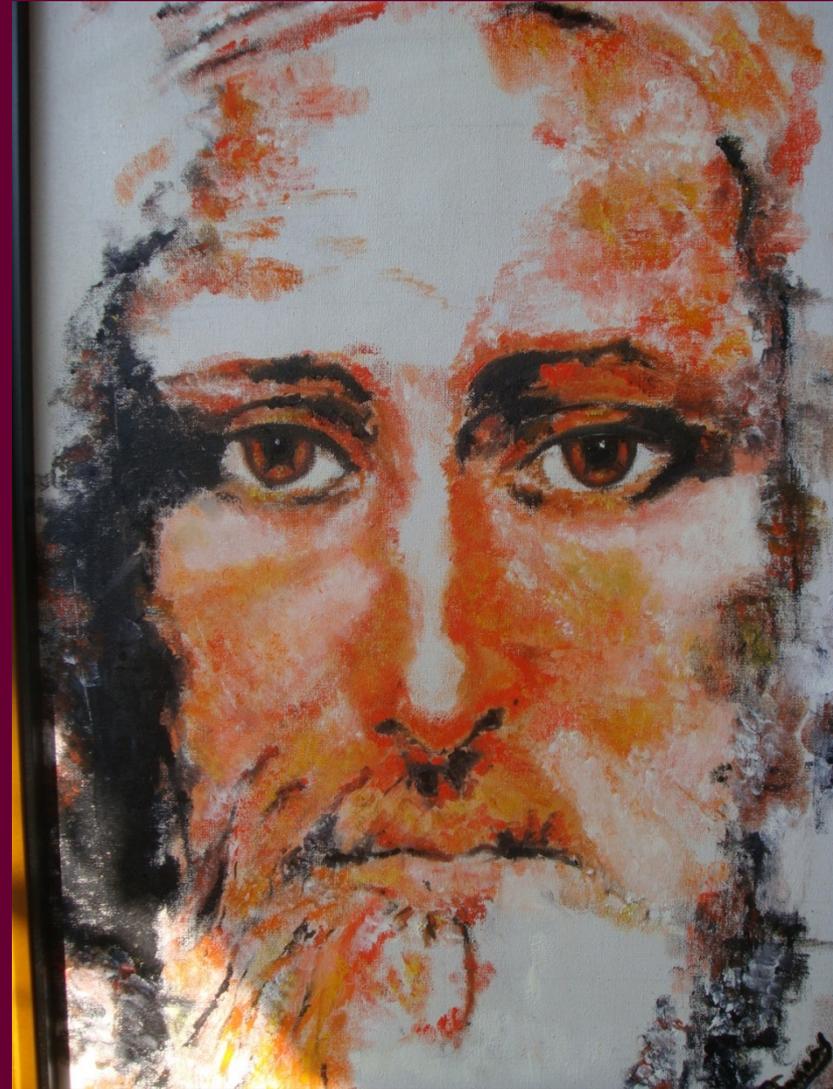
Psalm 24: We Long To See
Your Face

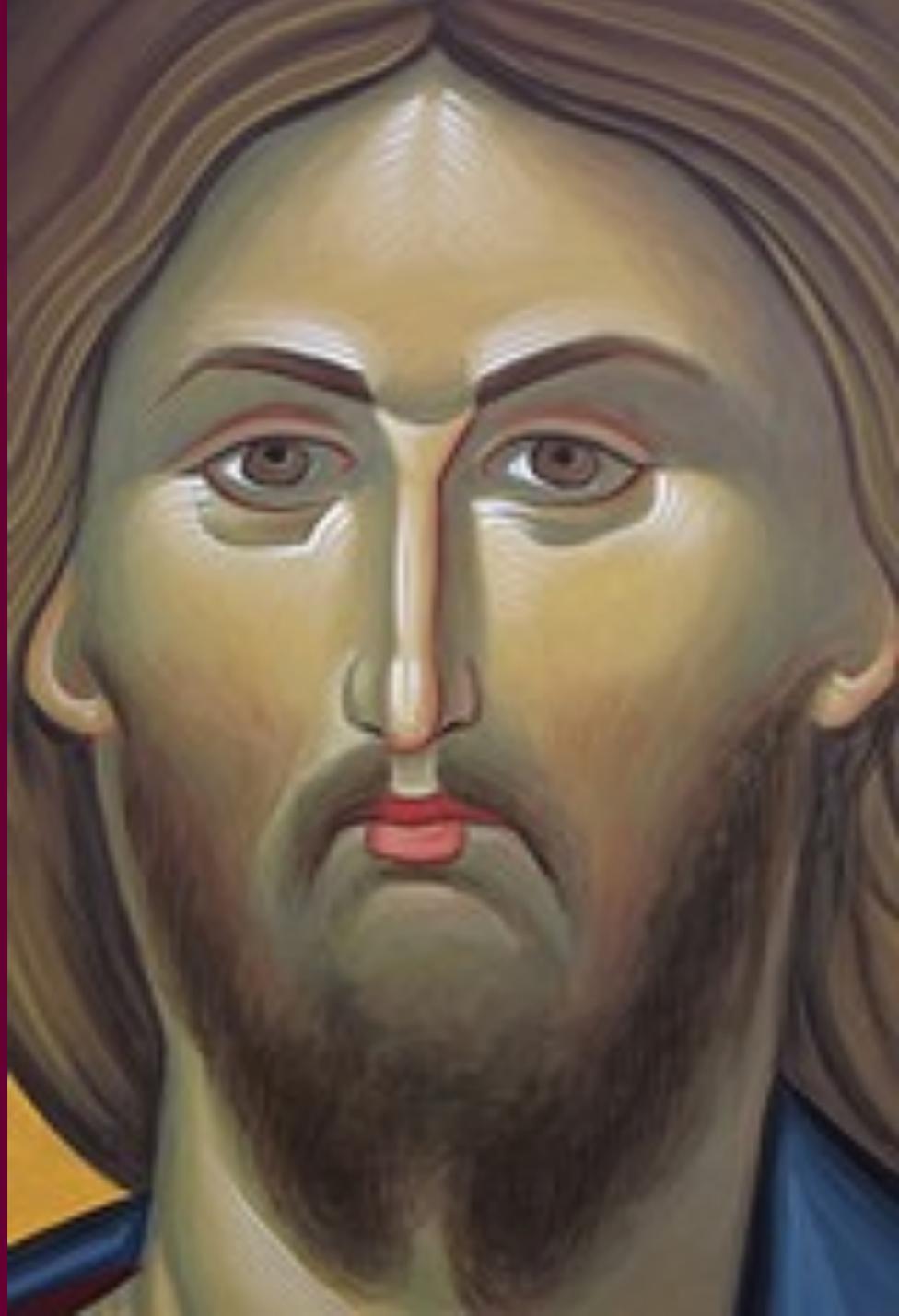
Text: Psalm 24; Kevin Keil
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Music: Kevin Keil
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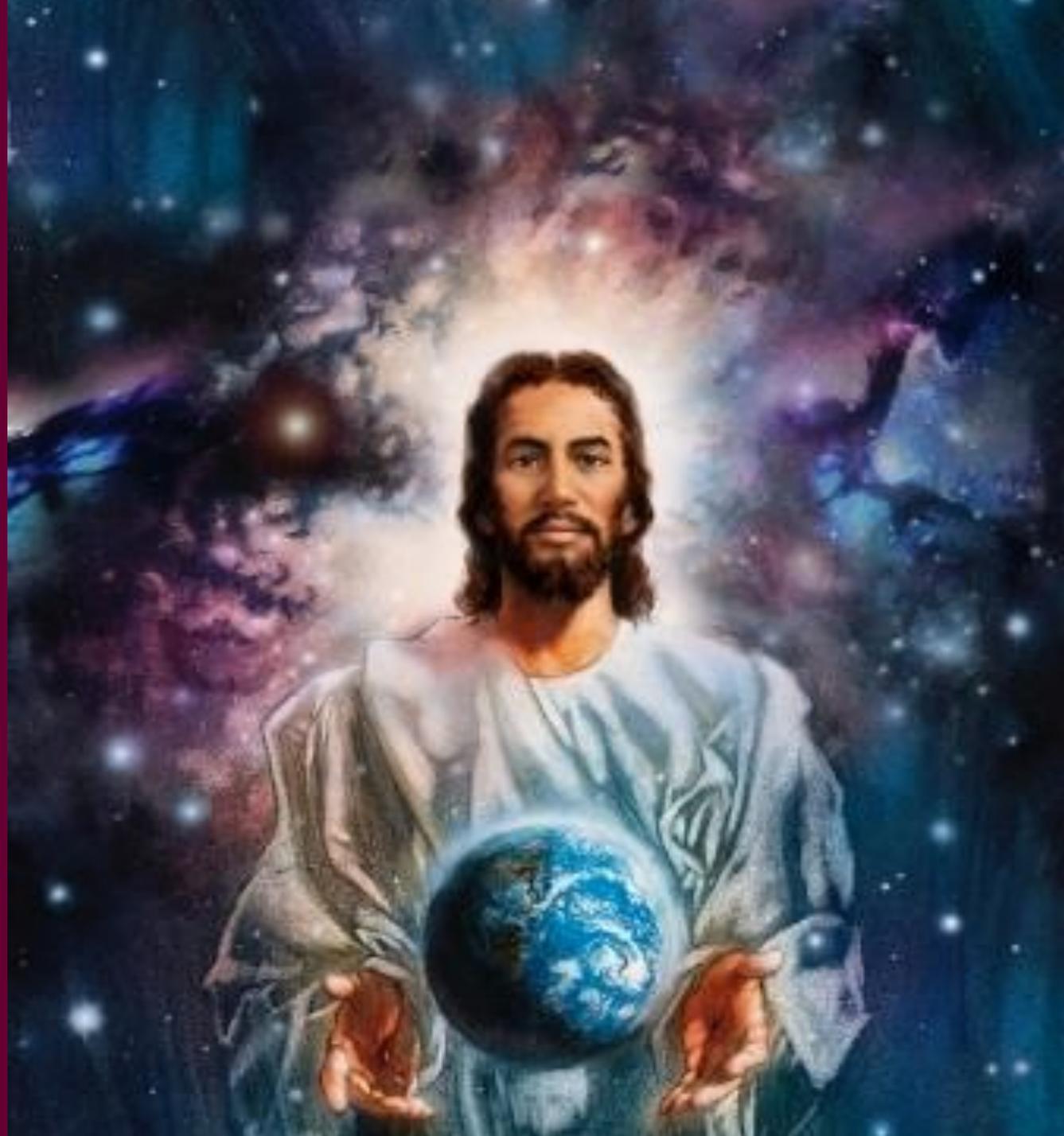
They shall receive a blessing God
Their Savior shall reward them
Such is the faith that speaks for you
That seeks your face O God of Jacob.

*O God this is the people
that longs to see your face...*











⁷ Lift up your heads, you gates;
be lifted up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

⁸ Who is this King of glory?

The LORD strong and mighty,
the LORD mighty in battle.

⁹ Lift up your heads, you gates;
lift them up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

¹⁰ Who is he, this King of glory?

The LORD Almighty—
he is the King of glory.