“He is the Messiah, the Lord”
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Isaiah 9:2-7 NRSV
2 The people who walked in darkness
     have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
3 You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
    as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
4 For the yoke of their burden,
    and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
5 For all the boots of the trampling warriors
    and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
6 For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
    authority rests upon his shoulders;
    and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
    Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
7 His authority shall grow continually,
    and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
    He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
    from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Luke 2:8-20 NIV
8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.
An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Who is worthy to see the baby Jesus?

The shepherds were invited to go to Bethlehem. God spoke to them through one angel and even had a great company of angels sing to them about the good news born in the town of David. But shepherds were disliked everywhere. Even though King David was a shepherd and
even though the Lord God had the identity of a Shepherd, shepherds were considered low life and were certainly not worthy to see the baby Jesus.

Yet, they were invited.

The Magi, astrologers from the east, were invited to go to Bethlehem. God spoke to them through a star in the sky. But the Magi were distrusted everywhere. They were considered spooky and unusual and weird, certainly not worthy to see the baby Jesus.

Yet, they were invited.

King Herod was invited to go to Bethlehem. God spoke to him through the Magi and then the religious leaders who quoted Micah about the birth of the Messiah. He was not liked by anyone. He was brutal and nasty and demanding, certainly not worthy to see the baby Jesus.

Yet, he was invited – though he did not go.

The other people who also had to be enrolled in Bethlehem were invited to see baby Jesus. They were like Joseph and Mary, forced to uproot their lives and submit to the will of the Roman Empire. They were men and women in all professions: some poor and some rich; some sick and some well; some rough on the edges and some kind. They all probably had heard about a baby born during the enrollment. Maybe the word about the special nature of this birth had reached them, possibly through the lips of Joseph or Mary. We don’t know them personally, but we know this – none of them were worthy.

Yet, they were invited.

In fact, everyone is invited, and no one is worthy.

Nobody is worthy to see baby Jesus. All of us fall short. All of us fail. No one is worthy to receive an invitation from God to see the miracle in the manger.

Yet, all are invited.

It’s because the word “invited” means loved.

We are all invited to see the baby Jesus because God loves us and wants us to see love, born on Christmas morning.

*Love Came Down*
By Robert Bardeen
December, 2018

For us, love came down
Left heaven for a reason
He didn’t lose his crown
But gave himself in season

Love came to be born
And to live, to die, to rise
To teach, to be scorn
A Savior without disguise

Love for you, for me
And love to spread all around
It’s all given free
Because it is so profound

Love in Bethlehem
Won’t you choose to come and see
Though an unworthy gem
The Great I Am invites thee

Let us pray.