



# One Small Child

Our desire to see God's presence incarnate in our world may not match our awareness when God shows up. This Christmastide hymn explores the seemingly unimpressive way God showed up as a baby. A litany of Christmas pageants has acquainted us with the meager entrance of the Son of God. His family was forced to seek lodging in a manger.

God entered our earth through a manger.

In the first stanza we are reminded that this was one small child "in a land of a thousand." The everyday ordinary nature of this child was part of what thwarted Herod's plans to eliminate him. Herod was forced to institute mass killings of Hebrew boys, because there was no elite family attached to his birth. When we look for God do we make the mistake of thinking the Divine will manifest in a spectacular manner?

God came to earth as one small child.

Yet this "small child" drew rulers, and wise astrologers across nations to pay him homage. This second stanza contrasts this small child with the rulers who seek him. We are presented with the traditional three wise men or kings. They have all the trappings of power, prestige and wealth that we would expect to see in someone impressive. "One king ruling an army of might." However, we see "one king kneeling" contrasted to the "one King bringing us life." The other rulers brought with them their advanced education, riches and might. The One they have come to see has brought something far more precious. This one small child brings us life.

This one small child shows us all what is false or failing in our faith. We long for a fantastic Christmas miracle or pine after greater wealth to purchase even bigger gifts. The miracle of God takes his first breath in a manger smelling of dung. God's gift comes wrapped in meager swaddling cloths.

The incarnation gives us a glimpse into the paradoxical way of God. This inauspicious arrival in an inconsequential town should train us to look for God in the small tasks, the common conversations, and in those it is easy to overlook. We desire to see God in our lives. May God give us eyes to see this one small child wherever he shows up.

©2012 Christopher Mack