

A night scene with a dark blue sky filled with stars. A bright, multi-pointed starburst light is positioned in the upper center, with a thick beam of light shining down from it onto a small, illuminated structure on a hill. In the foreground, the silhouettes of a tent and other structures are visible against the dark landscape.

But...
God

But...God

A Word of Distinction

The word “but” is about distinguishing one thing or idea from another. Most often, it’s a word that communicates a *contrast, difference, or exception*.

EXAMPLE: “I enjoy the season of Christmas, but not shopping at the Multiplaza Mall in December!”

But...God

A Word of Distinction

Important Point: No relationship can be complete without distinction or “otherness.”

“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.’” (Genesis 2:18)

‘Suitable’ is the Hebrew word, *Neged*:
“opposite, in front of.”

But...God

A God of Distinction

While sharing certain similarities, God is still fundamentally distinct from humanity and the world:

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isaiah 55:8-9)

But...God

A God of Distinction

We were created in God's image. But when we create God in our image, assuming God is virtually the same as us—we commit idolatry:

*“They exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man...They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.”
(Romans 1:22, 25)*

But...God

A God of Distinction

So...another way to explain God's interaction with the fallen world is through contrast or exception. The fallen world suffers...but God has come to rescue us.

“He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land...But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark.” (Genesis 7:23-24)

But...God

A God of Distinction

So...another way to explain God's interaction with the fallen world is through contrast or exception. The fallen world suffers...but God has come to rescue us.

“Abraham...said in his heart, ‘Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old?...But God said, ‘Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac.’” (Genesis 17:17, 19)

But...God

A God of Distinction

So...another way to explain God's interaction with the fallen world is through contrast or exception. The fallen world suffers...but God has come to rescue us.

*“And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.”
(Genesis 17:17, 19)*

But...God

A God of Distinction

So...another way to explain God's interaction with the fallen world is through contrast or exception. The fallen world suffers...but God has come to rescue us.

“[Joseph said], ‘You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.’”
(Genesis 50:20)

But...God

A God of Distinction

So...another way to explain God's interaction with the fallen world is through contrast or exception. The fallen world suffers...but God has come to rescue us.

“Israel said to Joseph, ‘Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers.’” (Genesis 48:21)

But...God

A God of Distinction

So...another way to explain God's interaction with the fallen world is through contrast or exception. The fallen world suffers...but God has come to rescue us.

“My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

(Psalm 73:26)

But...God

A God of Distinction

So...another way to explain God's interaction with the fallen world is through contrast or exception. The fallen world suffers...but God has come to rescue us.

“You nailed [Jesus] to a cross by the hands of godless men and put him to death. But God raised him up again, putting an end to the agony of death.” (Acts 2:23-24)

But...God

A God of Distinction

So...another way to explain God's interaction with the fallen world is through contrast or exception. The fallen world suffers...but God has come to rescue us.

“One will hardly die for a righteous man...But God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

(Romans 5:6-8)

But...God

A God of Distinction

So...another way to explain God's interaction with the fallen world is through contrast or exception. The fallen world suffers...but God has come to rescue us.

“You were dead in your trespasses and sins...But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ.” (Ephesians 2:1, 5-6)

But...God

A God of Distinction

So...another way to explain God's interaction with the fallen world is through contrast or exception. The fallen world suffers...but God has come to rescue us.

“Consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble.” (1 Corinthians 1:26-29)

But...God

A God of Distinction

So...another way to explain God's interaction with the fallen world is through contrast or exception. The fallen world suffers...but God has come to rescue us.

*“But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong...so that no man may boast before God.
(1 Corinthians 1:26-29)*

But...God

The Great Plot Twist



But...God

The Great Plot Twist

The world was sinking deep in sin, but God came to the world in the most unexpected way imaginable.

In his 'otherness'...God chose to become like us.

But...God

The Great Plot Twist

As a human child born without sin, God became *the ultimate exception to the rule of sin and death.*

- Amidst Mary's judgment of immorality, Jesus was conceived through the Holy Spirit to offer us the chance to begin again with a renewed innocence.

But...God

The Great Plot Twist

As a human child born without sin, God became *the ultimate exception to the rule* of sin and death.

- **Amidst the oppression of Rome exemplified through the Census...God fulfilled a prophecy for our eternal freedom.**

But...God

The Great Plot Twist

As a human child born without sin, God became *the ultimate exception to the rule of sin and death.*

- Amidst the reputation of shepherds as lowly social outcasts, God announced his birth through the glory of an Angelic host.

But...God

The Great Plot Twist

As a human child born without sin, God became *the ultimate exception to the rule* of sin and death.

- Amidst the darkness, discomfort, and filth of a Bethlehem stable, God brought himself into the world to offer us light, comfort and peace.

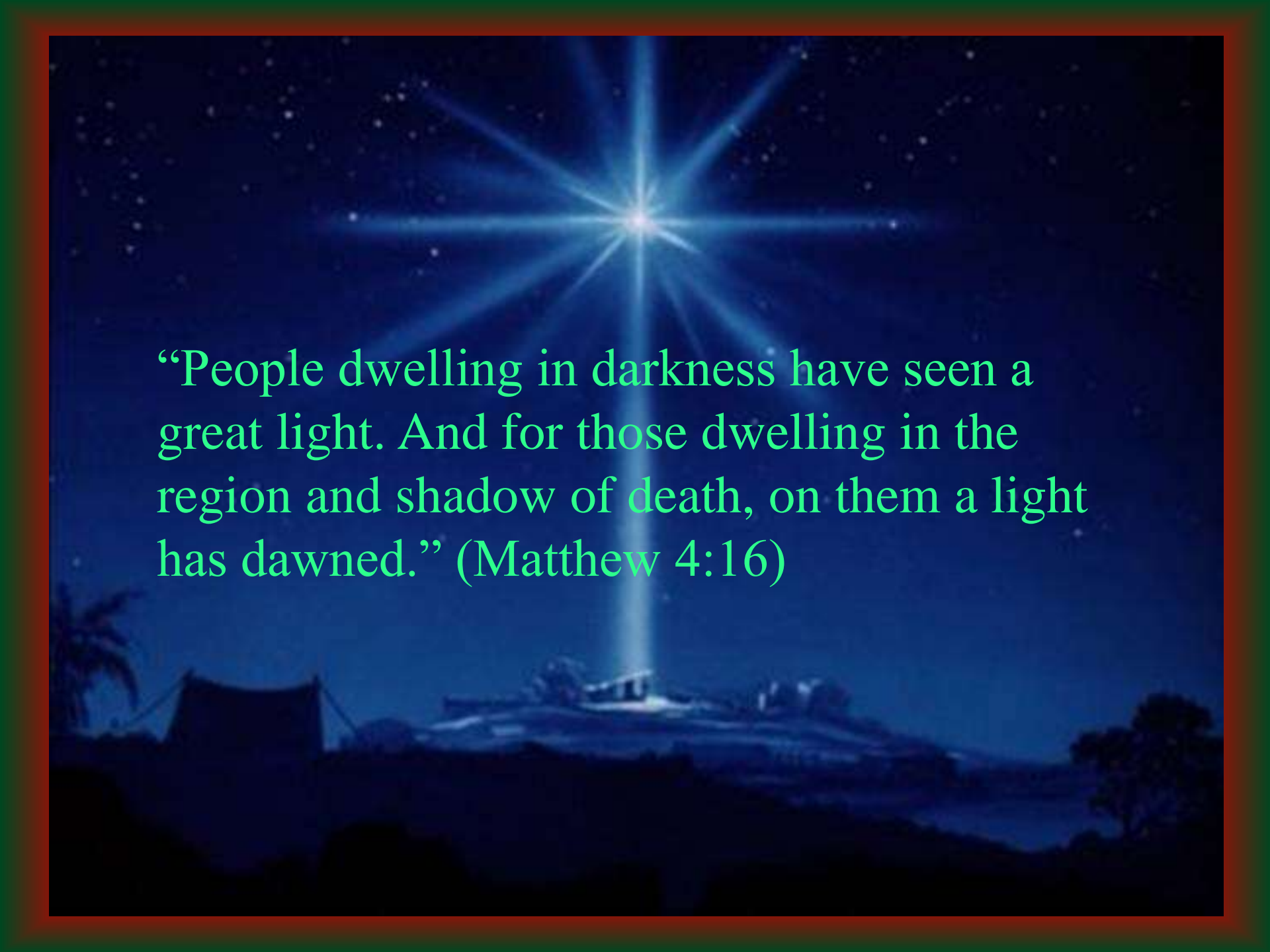
But...God

The Great Plot Twist

As a human child born without sin, God became *the ultimate exception to the rule of sin and death.*

God used the element of surprise to ambush the forces of evil and darkness.

He sent his Son in the most unexpected way to give us a hope that, in our limited wisdom, we weren't even looking for, and could never achieve on our own.

A night scene with a bright starburst in the sky and a tent in the foreground. The starburst is a bright, multi-pointed light source in the upper center of the frame, casting a vertical beam of light down towards the ground. The sky is dark blue with many small stars. In the foreground, there is a dark silhouette of a tent on the left and some trees on the right. The overall scene is dark and atmospheric.

“People dwelling in darkness have seen a great light. And for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.” (Matthew 4:16)