

# Welcome to Calvary Church, Brighton



"Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you:  
he is Christ the Lord" - Luke 2:11

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This morning's speaker is Philip Wells - Minister

This evening 6:30 Carols by Candlelight

Christmas Day 10.30 am

[www.calvary-brighton.org.uk](http://www.calvary-brighton.org.uk)

*Sermons and talks - [calvary-brighton.sermon.net](http://calvary-brighton.sermon.net)*





# "Jesus - the embarrassment" - Matthew 1:18-25

The thing about Christmas is that ... what with

*Christmas trees*

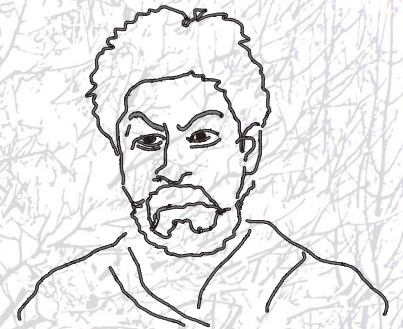
*Christmas songs - Rudolph*

*Christmas concerts*

*Christmas cooking - turkey*

*Christmas presents - Amazon, delivery times, cost*

*Family get together - finding room*



... the whole "Jesus" thing is just rather an embarrassment

- where can he fit
- can we be comfortable when he's in the picture?
- Do you find that at all?

BUT it's not the first time!

- Joseph in the Bible story faced exactly the same problem





# "Jesus - the embarrassment" - Matthew 1:18-25

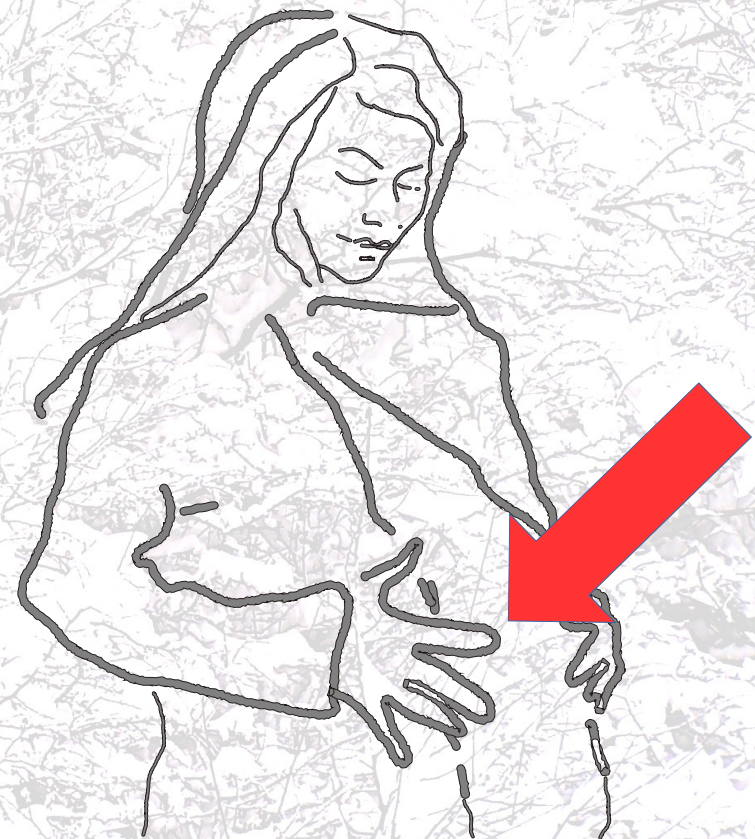
Let's look at the story and see  
what took Jesus from being an  
embarrassment ...  
to being the point of the whole  
thing





## "Jesus - the embarrassment" - Matthew 1:18-25

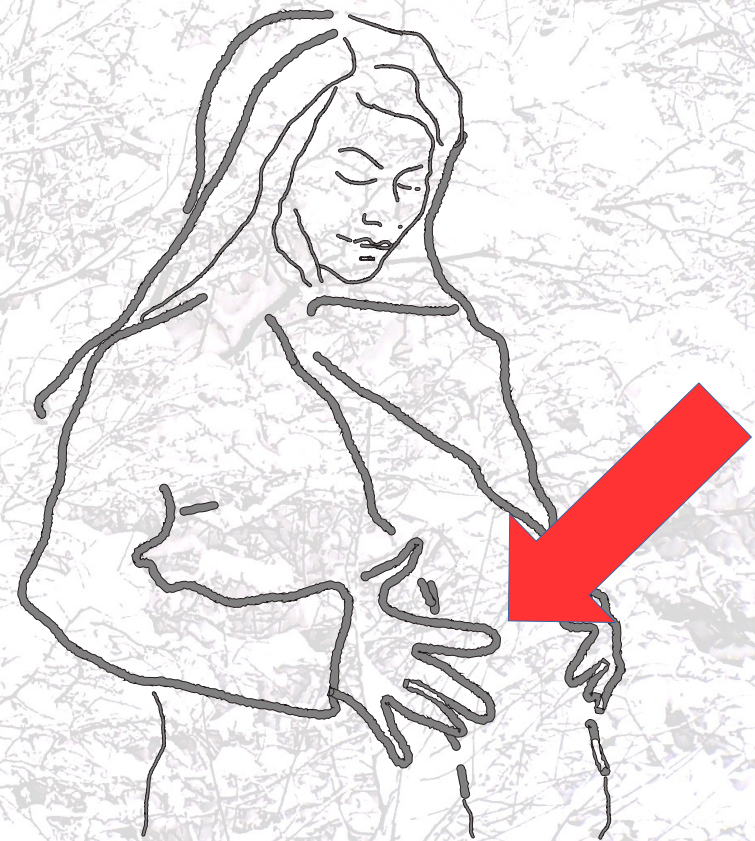
- Some background ....
- Culture - strong tradition of betrothal → marriage
  - N.B. no word for "husband" "wife"
  - But "take as his woman" (v.24), "her man" (v.19)
  - No sexual union until married
- Note modesty of reproductive language
  - "betrothed"
  - Before they "came together" v.18
  - Found to be "in the belly" v.18
  - Did not "know her" v.25
- First century rural Judaism - laws of Moses - God, laws, words, prophecies
  - "public disgrace" v.19, "fear" v.20
  - PROBLEM: "found to be with child" v.18





## "Jesus - the embarrassment" - Matthew 1:18-25

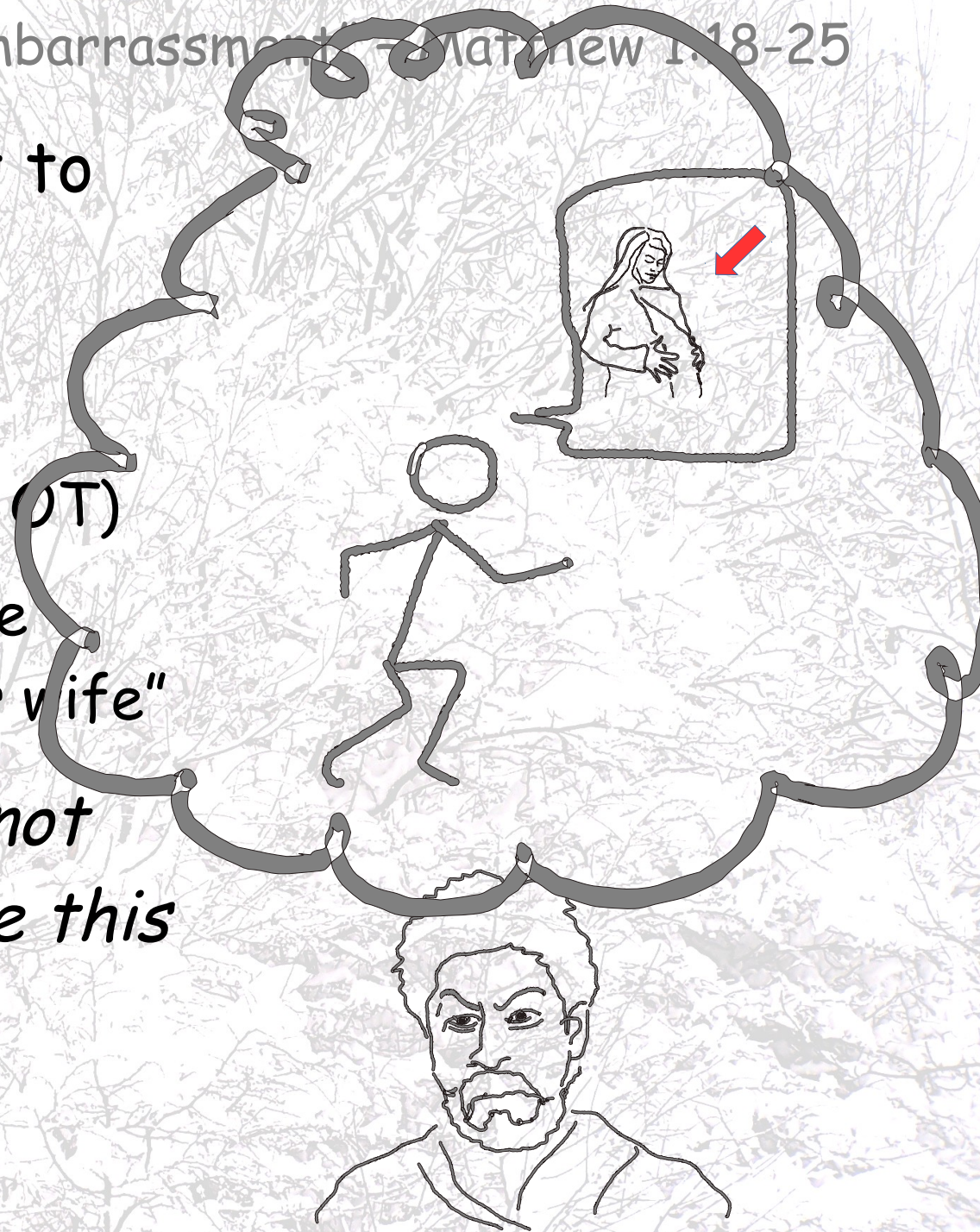
- "He considered this" v.20
- = he inner-hotnessed (clunky)
- "a righteous man"
  - *Has she been a victim?*
  - *Has she cheated and lied?*
  - *He knows it's not him*
  - *Public-disgrace? NO*
  - *Let her go "in secret"*
  - *Still sad ... until ...*





## "Jesus - the embarrassment" - Matthew 1:18-25

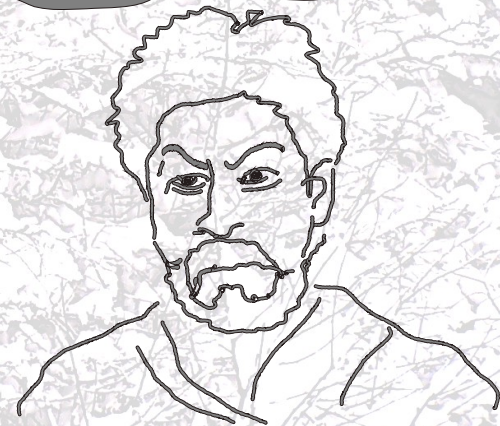
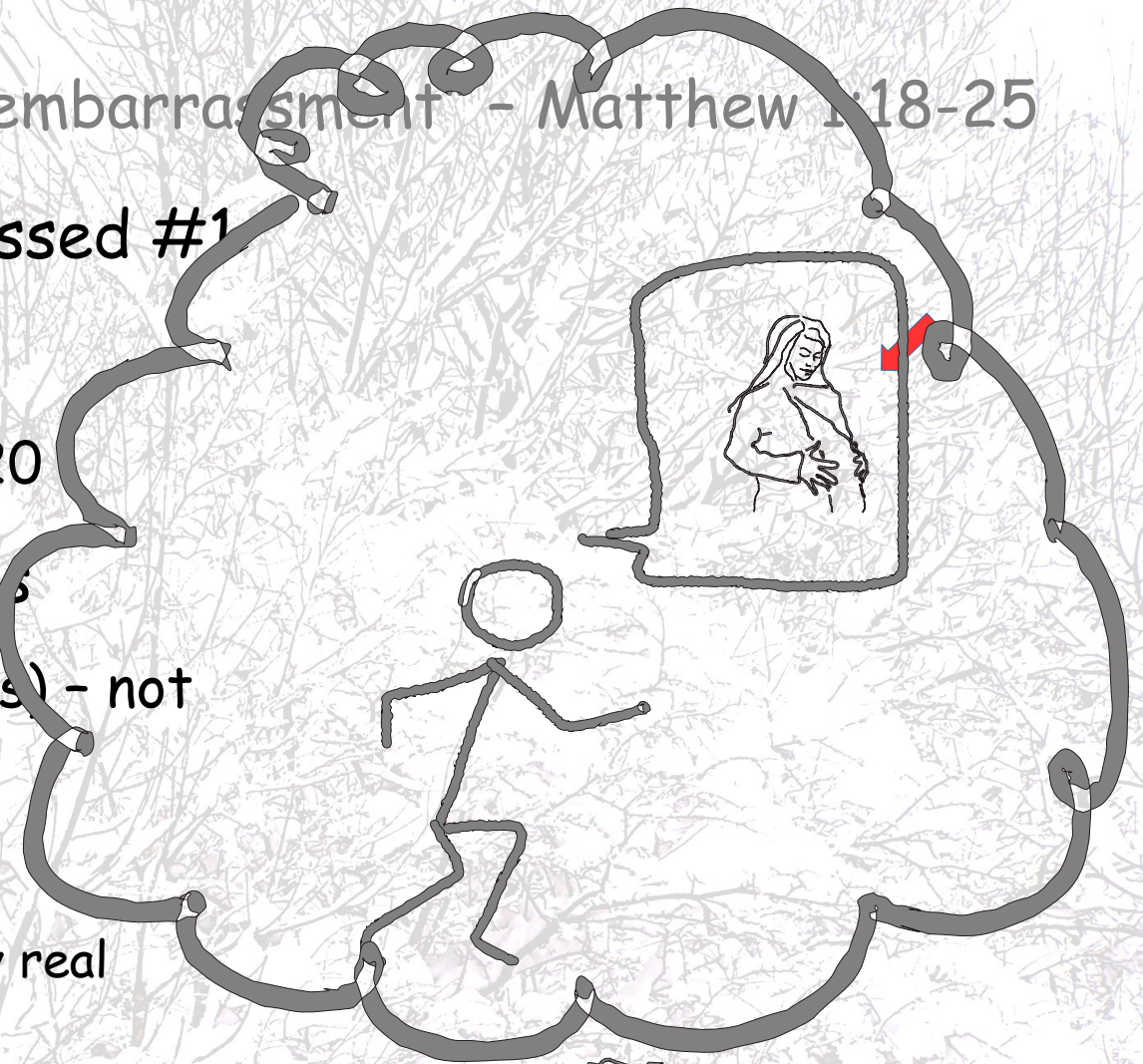
- [God] gives reasons not to be embarrassed
- Via an angel in a dream
  - Angel of Lord (= God of OT)
  - "do not be afraid to take [pregnant] Mary as your wife"
- ==> *reasons for us too not be embarrassed to take this [unborn] child into our future lives*





## "Jesus - the embarrassment" - Matthew 1:18-25

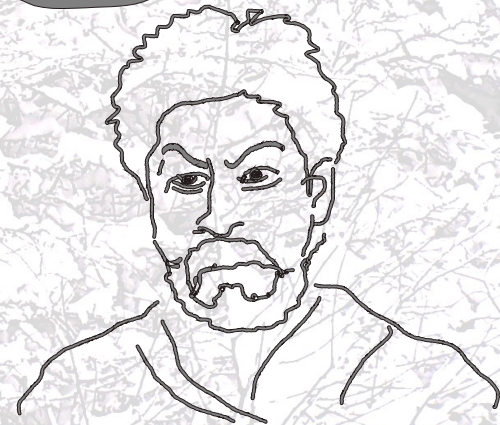
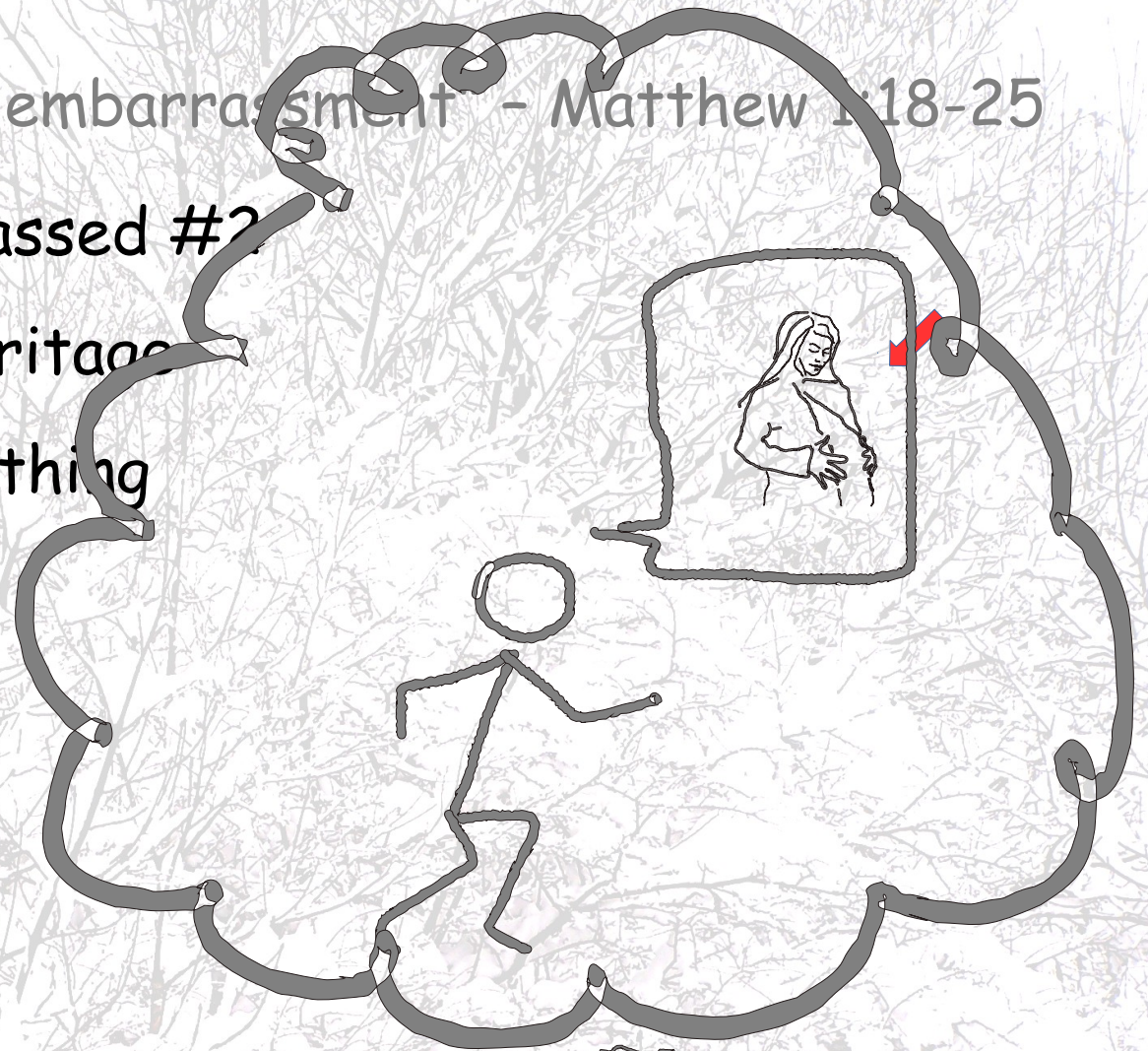
- Reasons not to be embarrassed #1
- His supernatural origin
  - "from the Holy Spirit" v.18,20
- Look at the person of Jesus
  - Mighty works, signs (miracles) - not challenged!
  - Quality of his personality
    - Words and responses - totally real
  - His own self-awareness
    - "my Father" ... Son knows the Father
- He is human, but he is much more than that. He is ... worshipped





## "Jesus - the embarrassment" - Matthew 1:18-25

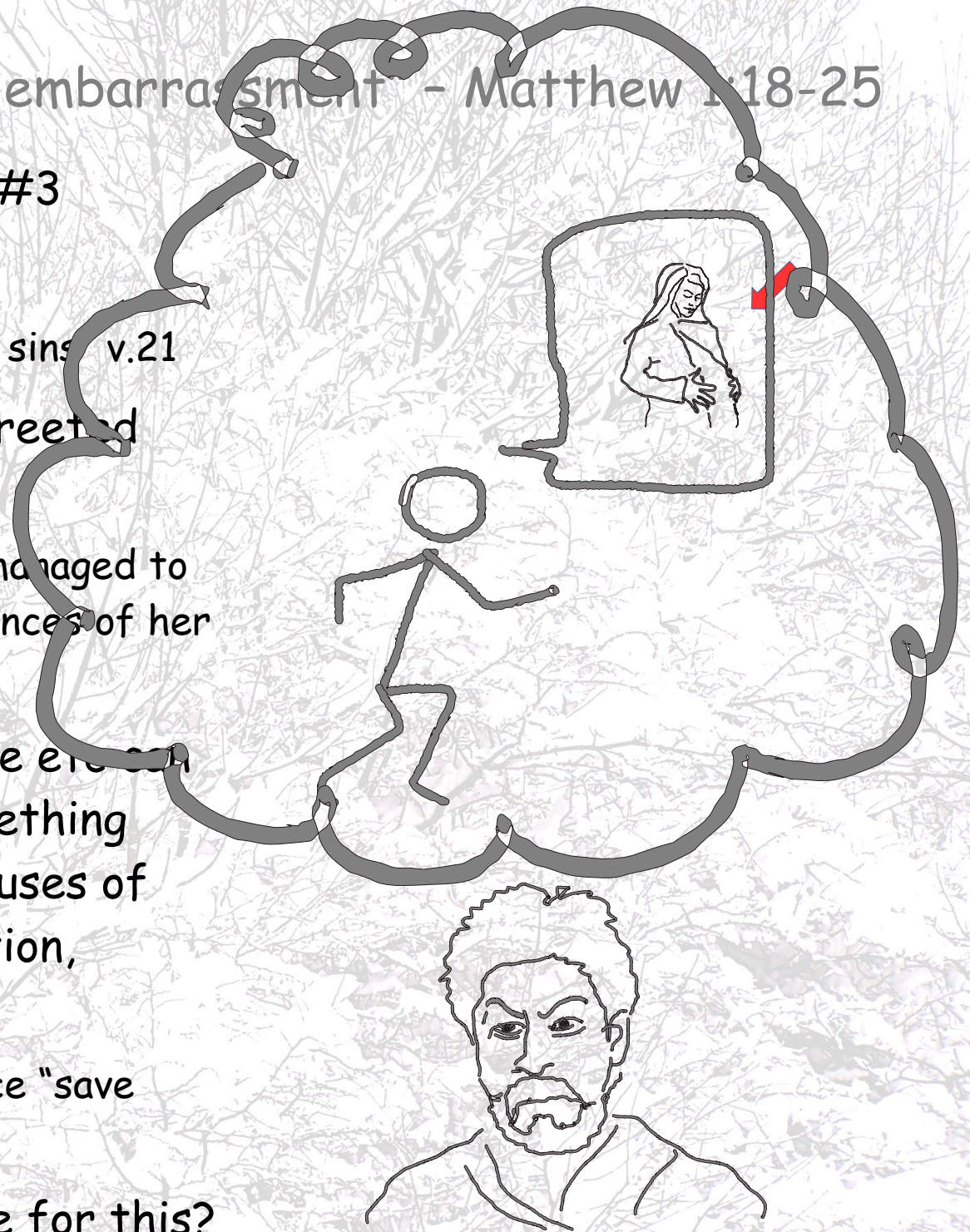
- Reasons not to be embarrassed #2
- Rich connections of his heritage
- N.B. heritage is a strange thing ("noble", "working class")
  - 1:1-17 "X begat Y"
  - Family tree
  - Heroes, Kings, wise men
  - outcasts, exiles, cheats
  - Foreigners, irregulars
- ==> he knows, he's been there
- ==> wouldn't we be pleased to have such a man on board?





## "Jesus - the embarrassment" - Matthew 1:18-25

- Reasons not to be embarrassed #3
- His stated agenda
  - "he will save his people from their sins" v.21
- N.B. in his own context, words greeted with a huge sigh of relief!
  - Israel had sinned, but had never managed to escape the presence and consequences of her sin (even under Rome)
- Today - psychology social science etc can analyse and pin-point guilt, "something wrong inside", "crime and the causes of crime" ... poverty, lack of education, deprivation ...
  - But cannot in theory nor in practice "save people from their sins"
- ==> isn't Jesus uniquely desirable for this?





## "Jesus - the embarrassment" - Matthew 1:18-25

- He was convinced by the 3 reasons not to be embarrassed
  - Jesus' origin: as God
  - Jesus' rich heritage: as one of us
  - Jesus' agenda: as Saviour
- N.B. The story seems to be about Joseph, but it's actually about Jesus!
- Joseph was convinced and "took Mary home as his wife" - baby and all
- Does God then persuade each of us
  - Not simply to embrace Jesus now in song and celebration at Christmas
  - But to take him home to be in our lives for ever
  - NOT as embarrassment, but as be-all and end-all

