

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole Counsel of GOD

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Blessed Hope

*This is the hope that sustains us
This is our lamp in the night
This is the beacon we follow,
Waiting till faith becomes sight.*

*This is our pillow at nighttime,
The promise in each golden dawn
This is the spur for the sluggard,
"Occupy while I am gone.*

*This is our heart's choicest treasure,
Balm for our sorrow and pain,
Words that are precious as rubies,
"Christ is coming again!"*

Table Of Contents

| <i>Article</i> | <i>Author</i> | <i>Page</i> |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Definite Sign Posts of the End..... | Gene Hawkins..... | 3 |
| The Birth Of A King..... | A.S. Copley..... | 10 |
| The Gift..... | Roy Clark..... | 15 |
| The Lord's Prayer..... | Dr. Vicky Moots..... | 20 |
| In A Manger..... | Mary M. Bodie..... | 22 |
| Child Of Destiny..... | Paul N. Smith..... | 26 |
| The Reason For The Season..... | Margaret Clark..... | 22 |



**"And she brought forth her firstborn son,
and laid him in a manger;" Lu 2:7**

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Editor: Gene Hawkins



By Gene Hawkins

“...and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” Rev. 12:4-6

“And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.” Lk. 2:7

This world has reached another season wherein the above text from Luke announcing the birth of Jesus as a Man is celebrated. There are also a great many in the religious world who continue to publish the idea that the “...man child...” of Rev. 12 is the Same Person. If men are to understand the order of end time prophecy, it is vitally important for them to know that Jesus cannot be the “...man child...” brought forth by the woman and caught up to heaven very near the middle of the tribulation period as is described in the opening text.

3

Christians have long gloried in the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy that “...a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” Isa 7:14 Matthew clearly declares the fulfillment of this prophecy with this account. “But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son,... Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel,...Then Joseph ...did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.” Matt. 1:20-25

Luke traces the early life of that Child, first describing

Him as "...babe lying in a manger." Lk. 2:16 He next records the order of His Jewish heritage, announcing that, "...when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb." Lk. 2:21 Matthew likewise references Him as a Child when Joseph fled from Herod and "...took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:" Matt. 2:21

Only Luke records the fact that Jesus "...the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit,...Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast." Lk. 2:40-42 There is no further record of this God – Man until He came to John who was baptizing in the River Jordan, and "...it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age,..." Lk. 3:21-23 Jesus is no longer a Child, and never again will be. Paul also declares both His Deity and Humanity as a very effective Mediator even at this present hour. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;" I Tim. 2:5

4

The order of end time events is precise and exact, as one event follows another in direct succession. The scriptural fact is that by the time the "...man child..." is transported to glory, Jesus, The Man, will have been on the throne of God for more than 1260 days. The reason those days are not exact is because no man knows exactly when Jesus will be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords as seen in Rev. 4. God's Word is very clear, however, that the Philadelphia Church will be transported to that coronation before the tribulation begins because Jesus specifically and emphatically promised that "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from (out of) the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. 3:10 This means that Jesus must take His throne BEFORE the tribulation even starts, and from the beginning of that era to the middle of the week is exactly 1260 days. The point here is that Jesus cannot be the one "...

caught up unto God, and to his throne,” as is said of the man child, because He is the One already on His throne! Such presumption is actually insulting because it robs King Jesus of the sovereignty which He will have already exacted by the very time in which the man child is escorted to glory. He is rather seen here, around the midst of the week, as being a full grown Warrior, for John “... saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.” Rev. 19:11

The question then remains, “If Jesus is not the man child then who is?” Understanding God’s order of end time prophecy will reveal this mystery. There are many who declare that the letter to the Church at Philadelphia includes the entire Church and would therefore demand that every member of the Body of Christ be guaranteed passage into heaven before the tribulation begins. If that be true, the letter to the Laodiceans must also apply to the whole Church. That is impossible; because these letters are directly contradictory to one another if they both apply to the same group. There is not one point of criticism found in Jesus’ message to Philadelphia. Contrariwise, the Church at Laodicea is assailed with multiple indictments and told emphatically “... because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” Rev. 3:16 Those statements surely does not indicate acceptance into the promise of preservation which was imparted to the Church at Philadelphia. The Laodiceans are further admonished to “... be zealous therefore, and repent.” Rev. 3:19 The message to Philadelphia contains language nowhere close to those very scathing rebukes by the Judge. 5

Thus, while Philadelphia believers enter the throne room through the open door in Rev. 4 to behold Jesus as He “...sat on the throne,” the bulk of the Church is not seen in heaven until Rev. 7, where John beheld “...a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes,...” Rev. 7:9

John was then asked, “...What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Rev. 7:13-14 There is a

stark difference between these two companies. The first is seen in heaven BEFORE the hour of temptation. The second "... came out..." of that same devastating time after it was already in progress. Scripture is silent as to when this innumerable company will be transported to glory, but John also saw another group of believers who are said to be exclusively of Israel. "And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." Rev. 7:4 The term "...sealed..." literally means "to stamp for security or preservation." Paul uses the term repeatedly to describe those who are filled with the Holy Ghost. "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." II Cor. 1:22 "...in whom also after that ye believed, (after you were saved) ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise," Eph. 1:13 "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph 4:30 The sealing of the 144,000 follows this same pattern, but though they are sealed in Rev. 7, they are not seen in heaven until Ch. 14, where they are declared to be "...the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth." Rev. 14:3 The question is, "When did they arrive?" The only group arriving in heaven from the earth since the innumerable company appeared there, is that of "...the man child..." in Rev. 12, and consider the similarity between them. Both are said to be exclusively of Israel for the man child is born "...of the woman,..." Israel. Both are seen in heaven around the midst of the week.

Jesus also portrays this company in Matt. 25 in the parable of the ten virgins. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom." Matt. 25:1 The Master then declares that five of those virgins were wise and five were foolish. Many of our day indicate that the five wise were saved and the five foolish went to hell, but that is not the teaching of this parable. First, the scripture never defines a sinner as being of virgin character, and these are all said to be virgins. Second, this parable reveals that all ten of them "...went forth to meet the bridegroom." None were hiding as would a sinner. Third "...they all took their lamps..." meaning that all of them had some light. Four "...they all slumbered and slept..." Five "...they all trimmed their lamps," meaning all of them put

forth every effort to make their light shine.

The only point of difference is found in V. 3. "They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:" They were in fact NOT sealed with the Holy Spirit as were the 144,000 of Rev. 7. Thus, the conclusion must be that the five wise virgins, the 144,000, and the man child, are indeed one and the same company. The time of their arrival in heaven is also synonymous. "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." Matt. 25:6 Midnight signifies the middle of the week. Scripture is very clear that Satan will be cast out of heaven at about the same time in which the antichrist officially comes to power, for his first order of business will be to release the man of sin from the bottomless pit. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star (Satan) fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace;..." Rev. 9:1-2 The smoke here is none other than the horde of wicked spirits which will be loosed when Satan is cast out of heaven into the earth. The antichrist will be chief among that horde, for "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition:..." Rev. 17:8 The point here is that the official reign of antichrist begins when he is released from the bottomless pit and, according to Daniel, will continue "...for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." Dan. 12:7 John defines this same period, affirming that "...there was given unto him (the man of sin) a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." Rev. 13:5 "...time, times, and an half..." translates to 42 months or 1260 days according to God's Calendar. It is no accident or coincidence that the woman in the wilderness, after having given birth to the man child, will likewise flee "... into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." Thus, scripture is very clear that the man child will be caught up to glory in what is defined as the midnight watch, when Satan falls from heaven and the reign of antichrist begins.

The timing here is imperative, for it means that the entire Church, including the 144,000 will be in heaven by the middle

of the tribulation week. Today, at this present hour, all who are steadfastly looking into the heavens for Jesus' eminent return have great cause for rejoicing because the long chain of events tabulated above has not yet been triggered. Jesus has not taken His throne in glory, for there is absolutely no evidence that the elite believers of the Philadelphia Church, who must witness His coronation, have been translated to glory!

8 This brings us to the fact that the same attitude which prevailed at Jesus' first advent when He came as the Babe in Bethlehem, still mightily prevails in this day when He will come again as The Sovereign Of The Universe. Isaiah and a number of other prophets announced the birth of Jesus, even pinpointing the exact location wherein it would occur. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Mic 5:2 Such prophecies, however, had no effect on the majority of that day. When a virgin did conceive, she was ridiculed and disdained as an harlot guilty of fornication. When it was ascertained that He should be born in Bethlehem rather than Jerusalem, Jesus was still not accepted as the Messiah. Only individuals such as Simeon and Anna recognized Him for Who He was, and the reason is because they were looking for Him. "And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; ...just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel:... And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ....and when the parents brought in the child Jesus,...Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation," Lk. 2:25-30 Anna also, "...coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." Lk. 2:38

The overall problem, even among believers in our day, is that men are not actively **LOOKING** for Jesus. Scripture plainly proclaims that "...as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:37 These pages have repeatedly pointed to the horrendous, violent, and despicable conditions and wicked actions of men manifested in the days of Noah, but believers especially must not overlook the fact that

Noah himself lived in those same days and sets forth a striking positive example of faith for all those who are looking for God's purposes to be fulfilled in this earth. Both Simeon and Anna were actively looking for Jesus, and God's Word is very clear that, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Heb. 11:7 Noah heeded God's warning to look for "...things not seen as yet,..." which was a reference to rain which had never fallen on the earth at that time. He was undoubtedly ridiculed for such a preposterous idea, but faith prevailed, and he built the ark with wood only found in the wilderness rather than by some seashore. Bring both of these examples down to our day. Noah had never seen it rain. He had only the promise of God's Word that it was coming. Simeon and Anna had never seen a virgin conceive and deliver a child, yet they believed the Word which had proclaimed that miracle for centuries. Those of today have never actually seen or known a person who has been translated even throughout the long days of this Church Age. However, present day believers are specifically challenged, even as was Noah, to believe and act on "...things not seen as yet..." 9

Though there are those in these closing days of the Church Age who still deny that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of the virgin Mary, and though men refuse to accept God's witness of Himself through the very creation which they clearly see before them, believers must, at all costs, literally center their lives around this glorious promise of God's Word. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; (His first advent) and unto them that look for him (as did Noah, Simeon, & Anna) shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (final deliverance from this world) Heb. 9:28 Paul likewise leaves us with this final and glorious lesson taught only by Divine Grace. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" Tit. 2:11-13

The Birth Of A King

A.S. Copley

“**A**nd Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary,
of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.”

Matt. 1:16.

Some folk condemn us for writing on this subject, especially because we emphasize the birth of Jesus at this season of the year. No one knows the exact date of that event; but the fact is so great and it is attended by so many striking happenings, that it demands our most studious attention. It commands our profoundest respect. Were the many Scripture references to the birth of our Lord recorded simply to be ignored, or passed over lightly? Nay, they have been written for our closest consideration and deepest appreciation. Study with me the following appealing facts.

First. Prophecies Concerning Christ. Three of these cluster about His first advent and are very captivating.

1. His birth foretold. Isaiah 7:14 declares, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel." These very words were quoted at His birth and thus fulfilled. The same prophet gives another significant prophecy which includes both the first and second advents of Jesus Christ. He says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder,..." Isa. 9:6. Then the minor prophet Micah gives a major prophetic word, beautiful and far reaching. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." Mic. 5:2 In these words, the Deity of the Babe of destiny is declared in beautiful and majestic language, the birth of our glorious Lord was foretold; and they were all fulfilled. Again and again Matthew says, "That it might be fulfilled as it is written."

2. Prophecy of His power. To Joseph an angel said, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS; for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. Were such potent words ever written of any other child? What other man, either before Him, or since, has been able to deliver men from sin? Many philosophers have arisen and flaunted enticing theories on the public, proposing to make their fellows better by

their religions; but which one ever changed man's sinful heart? Who has ever given any man a new heart? or taken away his stony heart of rebellion and unbelief? Nay! nay! Not one; but it is still true --- "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12 For 1900 unchanging years, men have demonstrated the ample sufficiency of Jesus Christ to save all that come unto God by Him. We have learned also that multitudes of people, looking forward through the telescope of faith unto the Promised One, were blessedly saved from their sins; for "He is mighty to save and strong to deliver." And we are expecting that in a short time, He will save the Jewish nation as such; for it is written, "A nation shall be born at once." Then after that, He will save the nations.

3. Prophecies of Christ's Dominion. These are many. "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom to order it." Isa. 9:7 "He shall reign forever; His dominion shall be from sea to sea; He shall reign in righteousness." These are frequent and common expressions throughout the Scriptures. Hear Daniel's thrilling words, "I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven;...and there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom that all people, nations and languages should serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and His kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed." Dan.7:13,14. Praise God! We shall be associated with Jesus in His glorious reign. "And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." Dan. 7:27

Second: The first Advent of Christ was entirely supernatural, an unheard of thing in history. Even this was prophesied. Therefore, we read, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When, as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." Matt.1:18 He was begotten of the Father, "the only begotten Son of God." John 1:14 and 3:18 Hence, He was termed "...that holy thing, ... the Son of God." Lk. 1:35 "...holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens;" Heb. 7:26. "...and in Him is no sin." therefore, He

was able "...to take away our sins." I John 3:5. We read of many men of noble character and lofty principles, even praiseworthy saints of high Christian standing; but which of them begat a sinless child? John the Baptist was announced to "...be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb," (Luke 1:15) but he felt deeply the need of being baptized by the Lord. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," said Jesus years afterward. He became "the Lord from heaven, spiritual and heavenly." Never man spoke like this man, exclaimed HIS hearers, because never before was such a man born as was He. He was not born as others are born, simply of flesh.

12 **Third. Satan sought His life at His birth.** Joseph was warned in a dream that king Herod would "...seek the young child to destroy Him." Matt. 2:13. What did Herod know about the future of the child? The wise men had only asked him, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" The devil knew something of that Child of destiny, and he put envy in the breast of Herod, who had all the youths under two years slain in Bethlehem. He watched Him all His days on earth. He tempted Him before His public ministry began, to hinder Him if possible. While asleep on a ship, a storm arose and was about to drown Him and His disciples; but He awoke and rebuked the winds, stirred up by the devil. Another time, His enemies seized Him and tried to hurl Him down a precipice. His life was in constant danger; but His Father's constant protection always attended Him.

It was foretold that the seed of the serpent should bruise the heel of the Seed of the woman. Consequently, Satan has sought to overthrow and destroy the people of God throughout the ages. The Gentile nations were always a menace to Israel, and would have demolished them many times if God had not interfered and delivered them. To this very day, we are in jeopardy every hour. The devil will hinder us from being translated, as he tried with Elijah, if possible. He will stir up men to take our crown. Satan uses sickness, auto accidents and other providences to hinder the saints and rob them of God's best. But, He who protected His only begotten Son Jesus, will also keep those who put full trust in Him and His faithfulness.

Fourth. The Titles given to the Baby Christ are no small item. Before His birth, He was announced to be "the Son

of the Highest, the Son of God and Emmanuel," which latter was also prophesied of Him. He was called "Jesus," or Savior. He was expected as "King of the Jews" and "Governor" over Israel, and "Prophet of the Highest and a Horn of Salvation." Immediately after His birth, He was pronounced "Jesus, the Consolation of Israel, the Lord's Anointed, a Light to lighten the Gentiles, the Glory of Israel." Seven hundred years prior, Isaiah announced Him to be "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace." What other child was ever born with so many sparkling necklaces enwrapping him? We read of "high born folk." Who was born higher than our beloved Lord Jesus? Who, ever Inherited such adorning names, or brilliant titles? And think of the mystery of it all ---the Dignitary of sublimest destiny came to us by way of a cow-barn, cradled in a manger, having been repulsed from the hotel of honor and wealth. They did not know that the Creator of the universe Himself had arrived in swaddling clothes. O the condescension of Jehovah! O what hidden sublimity! O how can humanity look lightly upon such a scene? How can intelligent men view such an event and not fall down and worship the only Holy Man that ever lived?

13

Fifth. The Magi were expecting His birth. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the day of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem saying, where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the East and are come to worship Him!" Matt. 1:1-2 We are informed that they were originally one of the six tribes into which the nation of the Medes were divided. Like the Levites under the Mosaic institutions, they were instructed with the care of religion (that is, they were priests). Their office was held in the highest honor; given the greatest influence. In some way, God revealed HIS purpose to them in a measure and made them to watch for a star in the heavens, a sign of His advent. Balaam was compelled to say, "There shall come a Star out of Jacob and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel." Num. 24:17 Accordingly, Jesus Christ is called "The bright and morning Star," which shall arise in the hearts of the Jews when He shall be revealed to them. Did any wise men ever watch for the sign of the advent of any other personage? Who else ever followed a star hundreds of miles to see a new born king? Marvel of marvels --- God's ways are past finding out.

Sixth. Shepherds in the country were startled in the night. They were keeping watch over their flocks by night. Even so God was keeping watch over them. "The glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid," "Fear not," said the angel; "for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." The Father made the angels so deeply interested in the miracle Child, that "...suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." Lk. 2:9-14. Whose birth other than Christ's ever demanded such excitement and glorious welcome? What other birth stirred the inhabitants of heaven and charmed the dwellers on earth?

14 There were none other personages that dwelt on the earth which came on the stage of action enveloped with such honors and attention as was true of our adorable Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, the characters and ministries and renown of any others was dependent by anticipation upon the holy character, tested efficiency, and His superlative conquest in death and resurrection. The destiny of Israel and of the Church was wrapped up in that helpless bunch of innocence. No marvel that Simeon held Him in his glad arms and exclaimed in praise to God, "...mine eyes have seen Thy salvation," Lk. 2:30 God manifest in human flesh appeared in the temple that day, the destined Redeemer and Savior of men, the destined Head of the Church, our destined Bridegroom and the destined King of kings and Lord of lords, King over Israel.

(Reprint 1957)

Isa. 7:14 "...Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

Ga 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

*They were all looking for a king
To come and lift them high
Thou cam'st a little baby thing
That made a woman cry.*

Geo. Macdonald

THE GIFT

Roy Clark

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Jas. 1:17.

At this season, when people are pre-occupied with gifts and gift-giving, this verse proclaims that God is the real giver of good gifts and perfect gifts, and that He never takes back the gifts He gives. In that verse, the first use of the word "gift" means "the act of giving," while the second means "the gift which is given." So the Lord is the author of gift giving as well as being the giver of perfect gifts --- gifts that are complete. This word "perfect" means "complete" and comes from a root word that meaning, "the conclusion of an act or state, the limit or goal being reached, the purpose being accomplished, the result being realized." That word is also the root of several other related words, such as "finished" as used in John 17:4 and John 19:30. In John 17:4 Jesus tells His Father, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," and in John 19:30 He proclaims from the cross, "It is finished." That is how complete God's gifts are. And God doesn't change His mind about His gifts since there is no "...variableness..." or "changeableness."

15

John 3: 16 records the greatest gift of all: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Isaiah prophesied about this gift hundreds of years before: "... the LORD Himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His Name Emmanuel." Isa. 7:14 That sign was THE GIFT of all gifts. And we read all about it in Matthew 1:18-25: "Now the birth of Jesus was on this wise: When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in

her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS; for He shall save His people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS." We can read about this beautiful, miraculous conception in Luke 1:26-38. Indeed, Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us.

In listing the Son of God's seven steps downward, the apostle Paul says He "took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:" Phil. 2:7 He uses the term, "...manifest in the flesh..." in 1 Tim. 3: 16 when he talks about how "...great is the mystery of godliness:..." And in John 1 we read that the Son of God is the Word of God and that "...the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us ... full of grace and truth."

16 John 1:14 He was full of grace and truth, so that grace and truth came to us, also, in the gift of Jesus, even as John 1:17 declares, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by [was given by] Jesus Christ."

After Jesus had begun His ministry, when He was talking with a woman of Samaria by a well, He said to her, "If thou knewest the gift of God and who it is that saith to thee give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." John 4:10 He was pointing to Himself as the "gift of God" and promising to give "...living water." That living water is life eternal through faith in Jesus, the Gift of gifts. Life eternal, or salvation, whichever we choose to call it, is indeed a gift, not something we can earn. Romans 6:23 loudly proclaims "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Eph. 2:8-9 declares, "By grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast." And Eph. 4:7 says to all who believe, "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." See how

much grace and faith are tied up in that gift! "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." II Cor. 9:15 "Unspeakable" means it cannot be fully expounded; it is indescribable. This gift brings "...joy, unspeakable" and full of glory:" I Pet. 1:8.

There are many other gifts brought to us by, and in, and through, and with, this great gift. Besides the gifts of life and grace and faith, are the gifts to the church of different ministries and offices for the benefit of all, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, Who, in turn, gives gifts. All of this is too much to go into here, but God's gifts are never ending and never taken back, just as Paul says, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." [reversal, or retraction; literally are irrevocable] Rom. 11:29 As some have said, "the Gift of Jesus keeps on giving."

Because Jesus is the greatest gift of all, the wise men who sought Him out gave gifts to Him. They followed a star to Bethlehem and came to the house where He was. "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." Matt. 2:11. Gold is the most valuable and precious of metals and speaks of His Deity; frankincense has a wonderful odor, fragrant and sweet, and speaks of Christ our sweet smelling sacrifice. Myrrh is a bitter herb that tells of Christ's suffering on our behalf, and we, too, can give Him gifts! We can present our bodies, our very lives, to Him, "...a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is [our] reasonable service." Rom. 12:1

17

(Reprint Point Of Reference)

* Christ came hither to deliver this world from the detested sway of the powers of darkness. What a shout that will be when men and angels shall unite to cry "Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!" Now on whose side are you?

*Though Christ a thousand times
In Bethlehem be born:
If He's not born in thee,
Thy soul is still forlorn.*

REFLECTIONS

...From the Editor

18

“...seek, and ye shall find;...” cried Jesus in Matt. 7:7 and the fruit of that exhortation is beautifully demonstrated by the lowly shepherds as they obeyed the voice of the angel who promised that “...Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.” Lk. 2:12 The key here is that if men are to “find” Jesus, they must act on the knowledge which has been given to them. The shepherds surely did that, for “... it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us **now go** even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.” Lk. 2:15-16 The wise men likewise both “sought and found” Him. “Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.” Matt. 2:1-2 Though they lost sight of “...his star,...” apparently bowing to natural reasoning and assuming that a king would be born in Jerusalem, these men were undaunted in their quest to find Jesus. They learned from the priests and scribes that, “...Christ should be born....In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,” Matt. 2:4-5 These men surely proved a glorious example for all of those today who would “seek and...find” Him, because when they heard the instruction of God’s Word, they acted on it and “...departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Matt.2:9-11 The shepherds came to the stable and found Him as promised by the angel, and it is significant that “...they came with haste,...”

indicating their zeal and interest in finding Him. The wise men followed the star and found Him in "...the house,..." and according to Matthew's account, Jesus could have been as much as 2 years old by that time, for "...Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men,...sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, **according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.**" Matt. 2:16 The quest of the wise men indicates that they were both patient and persistent, on a journey of as much as two years in order that they too might "find Him." All these characteristics, exemplified by both the shepherds and the wise men, must be manifest in the lives of God's people today who would also heed the admonition "...seek and ye shall find." The passivity and utter disregard of God's Word and the promise of Jesus' coming again is appalling in our world today. The masses absolutely ignore the multiplied signs before them today just as those of yesteryear ignored the Word of God and the signs present at Jesus' first advent. Peter vehemently warns of the dangers facing us in these last days, shouting "...that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming?..." II Pet. 3:3-4 His advice for us is found in this urgent exhortation: "Looking for and **hasting** unto the coming of the day of God,..." II Pet. 3:12 If men in this present day are going to enjoy the same result as that of the shepherds and the wise men, then they, too, must at all cost pursue the same path of diligence and haste. There is no time to lose, for Jesus is even at the door!

19

GH

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Streaming expanded! Sunday School 10 A.M. Worship Services 11 A.M. Wed. Eve. Prayer Meeting 7 P.M. (All CST)

The Bible School Classes are also being streamed. They may be found at both gracegod.com and gracegod.org. The order of these classes is as follows:

Mon. 7 P.M. Doctrine
Tue. 7 P.M. Exposition
Thurs. 7 P.M. Synthesis
Fri. 7 P.M. Prophecy

All these may be found at gracegod.com Just click on the center button of the home page.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

A Pattern Prayer (Part 4)

Dr. Vicky Moots

“**A**fter this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen” Matt. 6:9-13

20 Verse 13b: “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen”. In the last part of this prayer we are acknowledging three things that belong to God, our Father: The kingdom, the power and the glory. We must not try to take these things from Him and claim them for ourselves. They belong only to God. First of all, we recognize Him as king, not just our Father, and we are to worship, serve and honor Him as king of His Kingdom. Today He has a spiritual kingdom in us as believers, so our hearts become His throne. We are His possession since the Kingdom belongs to Him. If His Kingdom is in us, then we need to stop trying to be the ruler and to let Him be in control. As King, He has power and authority over all things, and we are to bow the knee to Him and yield our lives as His kingdom. We are to show Him reverential fear and respect as King and say, “Thine is the power.” We have no power in ourselves to please God or to obey Him, for “there is none that doeth good.” The power and ability to do this comes from Him. We must acknowledge our weakness and our need of Him. He wants us to not only “lean on his everlasting arms” but to tap into Him as our source of power. So, how much power does He have? First of all, He had the power to create this universe and everything in it. How much of that power is available to us as Christians? The answer is in Eph. 1:19-20: “And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead...”. This is resurrection power, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. We were dead in trespasses and sins but He raised us up and gave us a new life. The life that we now live, after we are born again, is all through His power, the resurrected life

of Christ in us. He also promised power to us through the Holy Spirit which was poured out on the Day of Pentecost, and that power is available to all who are willing to receive it. His supernatural power enables us to witness and to understand His Word. Paul tells us in Phil. 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." God has given us His power through Christ. That means that any good works that we do through His power will bring glory to His name instead of ours. God did not choose mighty men to do His mighty works. He chose weaker vessels, such as David, a young shepherd boy, to kill Goliath, so that he would receive the glory. "No flesh should glory in his presence... He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." I Cor. 1:29, 31 We give all the glory to Him when we pray. "Thine is the glory". None of it belongs to us so we should never try to claim it. Both the power and the glory belong to Him. That leaves no room for us to brag or boast! Without Him we can do nothing, but through Christ we can do all things, whatever God calls us to do.

In summary, we are acknowledging that God, our Heavenly Father, is also a King, who has the power, as King and the desire, as our Father, to take care of us, to answer our prayers, guide us, provide for us, forgive our sins, and that all the glory and honor belong to Him. Our job is to yield our lives to Him as His kingdom and to believe and receive what He has provided for us on a daily basis, our daily bread. For how long? Forever! For He is eternal, from everlasting to everlasting. Through His Son's sacrifice on the Cross, God has given to us eternal life so that we may praise Him forever and dwell in His Presence forever, starting right now, for the rest of our lives and for eternity. Amen. 21

BE STILL

He who rushes into the Presence of God and hurriedly whispers a few petitions and rushes out again never perhaps, SEES God there at all. He can no more get a vision than a disquieted lake can mirror the stars. We must stay long enough to become calm, for it is only the peaceful soul in which eternal things are reflected as in a placid water.

Arthur T. Pierson

IN A MANGER.

Mary M. Bodie

“**A**nd she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.” Lk. 2:7

Here is recorded an astounding fact and it is the inspired report of the Spirit of God. There was no ROOM in the inn for the Holy Son of God when He came to dwell in an earthen vessel in which He was to die. We read in a previous verse that his foster-father, Joseph, was of the house and lineage of David, the ruling tribe of Judah. He was of the royal line — yet there was no room for Him in the inn.

22 Methinks that innkeeper did not want to accommodate that royal couple because they looked shabby and he did not know who they were. They were disguised as it were and did not look the part of Princes. If he had known that Joseph was of the royal seed of David he might have made room for his family. That phrase, "...no room... in the inn,..." has a double meaning. It not only gives us the fact of the scarcity of room in that hotel in that little town of Bethlehem, but it is telling the lack of room for Jesus in the hearts of men for whom He came to die. Do you hear the solemn and sad refrain? --- "...no room... in the inn." "He came unto His own people, the Jews, but His own received Him not." There was no place in their hearts nor in the world for Him. Worldly things — for gain, for honor and fame, crowd out the desire for the Savior of men, or may be in some cases, the cares of the world absorbed their interests.

The Joy of heaven, the Light of this world, the bright and shining Orb of day, the Gold of Ophir, the fairest Jewel of all time, found no favor in this cold world, no house to shelter His little head, when He was born, nothing except a rude and barren stable. It is almost unbelievable! Who could ever have imagined such a thing? The Lord of Life and Glory was laid in a manger. He first opened His eyes on the drab and dreary exterior of a barn, He saw the world at its worst even in infancy. It was a little symbol of the earth as sin had made it, fleshly and corrupt, into which He had come. No silver cradle, lined with soft downy white cushions, was waiting for Him., O mystery divine, what surging emotions stir in our hearts as we think upon these things! What memories

sweep over us of the condescension of the Creator in His humbling stoop! The angels sang at His birth, all heaven was interested as the heavenly choristers made the welkin ring — but the subject of it all, the Babe in the manger heard only the lowing of the cattle or the bleating of the sheep,

"No room... in the inn..." for the royal Seed of David! Can we imagine such a contingency! The royal couple, Joseph and Mary, must have looked poor and friendless and the innkeeper turned them away. He did not recognize royalty. We wonder if he ever learned what he had missed. We saw a picture recently, supposedly the scene of Christ's birth and of Joseph and Mary, by a renowned artist. The setting was perfect and beautiful. The master-painter had caught the beauty and mellow glow of the sunset — but he never caught the real message of the Babe in the manger. It was adorned, as also the stable. These were not bare and uninviting. No ugliness was visible. The "holy family," as it was labeled, were all clothed as the rich and the great. Nothing betokened poverty or need. Joseph was portrayed as a prince (which he was) instead of the poverty-stricken peasant, husband of Mary the virgin. The artist missed the mark entirely. The Son of God left the riches of heaven, the glory of the Father, and identified Himself with woe and poverty. What could the riches of earth add to Him who had the wealth of heaven at His command? All of earth's greatness was cheap and tawdry to Him. He poured contempt on all the pride of man. He needed no raiment or ornament to adorn or glorify Him. The earth was adorned with His presence. He was the glory of that rude stable. He stooped to earth. He disdained its wealth. What had vain man to offer Him Whose Hands had created all these things? He had called worlds into being. Man's very best was only as tinsel compared to the glory of that which He had left — but the poor innkeeper never knew. Like the mass of humanity, he looked upon the outward man, and did not know that God had come to visit him. He let Joseph and Mary pass on and the Child was born elsewhere. It was too late to take Him into his home. Too late! How sad — No room for Jesus.



The Child Jesus

“**A**nd the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” Lk. 1:30-33

This is the greatest message ever carried from heaven to earth. It is the message of the angel Gabriel to Mary, the virgin of Nazareth. The first part has been fulfilled. The promised One was born to Mary. His Name was Jesus. He was great and was called the Son of God. But what about the latter part of the angelic announcement? Has the Lord God failed of doing What was promised? Why is He not reigning over the house of Jacob now ? Why is He not sitting on the throne of David? He has not received the Kingdom.

24

The first part of the prophecy was fulfilled at Christ's birth: the latter part will be fulfilled at His second advent. It would have immediately come to pass; but He was rejected. The prophets had foretold this. He received a cross instead of a throne. The house of Jacob did not want this Man to reign over them. They put Him into the hands of the Gentiles. When Pilate reminded them of His King-ship, they answered, "We have no king, but Caersar." Then they demanded the release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of the Son of David their King. The awful choice with its terrible loss was made. After that the mockery, the plaited crown, the purple robe, the frail reed, the marred face and form! Then we see Him on the tree; but on it is written these words in three different languages --- "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." No hand could remove this inscription. Pilate in-sisted that it remain.

David's throne has been empty ever since; for He, who alone can fill it, was rejected. The King is no more wanted today at the end of the age than He was at the beginning. The world does not want David's Son to reign. He is a Jew.

And yet He is the world's hope. While the throne of David

is empty, the world will groan. All the misery, disorder, sorrow and suffering; all evil has its source in the fact that the Son of the woman, God's Son also, is rejected. Wars will continue; unrighteousness will rule; no permanent peace; no better world will be enjoyed until He is enthroned.

But who will put Him on the throne? "The Lord God will give unto Him the throne of His Father David. He will set Him upon His holy hill of Zion." He will give Him the nations for His inheritance. The world waits that glad day when all pain and sorrow will be gone; tears will be wiped away, death will be held in abeyance. Happiness and peace will be manifested in the morning of joy that is just ahead. "Come Lord Jesus, Come."

Anon

(Reprint 1937)

Because God Cared

Because God cared, a star shone bright
And brought the wise men thru the night,
While lonely shepherds heard a song
That lingered in their hearts for long,
And gave to them both hope and light.

Because God cared a Babe was born
Within a stable, bleak and worn.
The King of Jews in manger bared
Was laid to sleep, because God cared—
In Bethlehem at break of morn.

Because God cared, His robes of white
Were changed to drabness and to night.
He came to live, and love men too—
The kingly One and royal Jew.
In Him we have the Christmas light.

Mary M. Bodie

Child Of Destiny

Paul N. Smith

“**A**nd there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.” Lu 2:36-38

There was only one Person, whose life was predestined from birth to death, and that was Jesus. Before the foundation of the world, the Triune God held a council meeting and decided that the Son of God, the Second Person of the Godhead, should become a Man. He was destined to be the head of a creation that would be holy even as God. The entire history of mankind, from the creation of Adam and Eve to the present time, has revealed this eternal purpose. God desired to have creatures who would reflect His image and glory. This was not possible with the angelic creatures, because of their nature.

26

When Adam and Eve failed in the Garden of Eden, God was not taken by surprise. He knew that they possessed a human righteousness only, and that this could not survive the test of Satan. As He pronounced judgment first on the serpent --- the instrument of Satan --- then on man and the earth, He also announced redemption. He said, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; it (or, He) shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." Gen. 3:15 When He spoke to the serpent, He was directing His statements to Satan who had spoken through the serpent earlier. God thus announced His intentions of bringing about the destruction of the devil through the Seed of the woman. This was fulfilled at Calvary.

In the Scriptures above, we see the beginning of the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15. The Seed of the woman was Jesus. Though this Seed was born of a woman, He was nevertheless Divine. God chose a virgin who was already engaged to be married to a godly man, Joseph. We are told explicitly in the Gospels, that Joseph and Mary had no marital relations until after the birth of Jesus. His birth was supernatural and holy. We read,

"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" - Luke 1:35.

This was a definite must in the life of the Son of God. It was necessary for Him to become flesh and blood, in order to redeem humanity. We read in Hebrews 2:14-17 - "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

We also read the Apostle's quotation from the fortieth Psalm, where the Psalmist through the inspiration of God declared, "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me." Heb. 10:5 This body was given to the Son of God for one purpose only, and that was to offer it upon the Cross. He dwelt in this body for thirty-three years; and, during the last three years or so, He was the Anointed of God. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil. He proved Himself to be the Redeemer, through the many miracles and wonders He performed. He never came to make a Name for Himself, nor did He desire to build an empire, nor establish a Church on this earth. By His ministry He proved that He was capable of becoming the Holy Sacrifice on Golgotha's hill. There He became the Lamb of God.

Just as His birth was no accident, so His entire life was controlled by His Heavenly Father. He was to be born in Bethlehem, according to the Scriptures - Micah 5:2. Joseph and Mary were residing in Nazareth up to the time of His birth. God used an edict by an ungodly ruler, Caesar Augustus, to bring this couple to Bethle-hem. Since Joseph was of the lineage of David, he had to go to Bethlehem to be registered. While there, Jesus was born, just as God had planned and predicted. When God declares that something will take place, we can depend upon it, although all heaven and earth pass away. Because Jesus was destined to reign

upon the throne of David, it was necessary that both Joseph and Mary should be of that chosen line. Jesus had identity first with God, and then with the line of David. He was God and also Man. The Divine One took hold of the nature of humanity, that humanity might become Divine.

The works which Jesus did, were the works of His Father, even as He declared. "I can of Mine Own Self do nothing" -John 5:30. The miracles and wonders were His credentials as the Son of God. This Man of destiny had to go in the path of that Divine Decree. He went on toward that fateful day when He gave His life a ransom for humanity. He stopped on the way at Gethsemane. There He bowed all His human will to the will of His Father. He reserved nothing for Himself. He laid Himself upon the altar of sacrifice, and gave permission to ungodly men to put Him there. His life was not taken from Him; He gave Himself willingly. The wrath and envy of mankind in no way hindered the will of God. They were instruments in God's hands. They wagged their silly heads, and spewed forth words of hatred. They did not know that, though they were tools of Satan, they were also fulfilling

28 Scripture. God is never defeated.

The Lamb of God was put on the Cross. He did not need to die for any wrongdoing on His part. He was innocent, and found not guilty by Pilate. He was not put there because of the hatred of the Jews. He hung there as our Substitute. He bore the sins of humanity. He silenced the demands of the Ten Commandments forever. All men have sinned, but One Man bore all the sins of humanity in Himself on the Cross. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" - II Cor. 5:21. He was the only One who could become the Propitiation for our sins. He was "foreordained before the foundation of the world," and every part of this plan fell into its proper place. There were no accidents. God's will was done. He died on the exact day, in God's purpose; and He arose from the grave according to plan.

As individuals, we are not so destined. First of all, we were not from Heaven. We were not Divine. We are earth creatures - born of the will of man, and born in sin. We are born with a will to choose right from wrong. We have the ability to obey or reject God's will. Adam and Eve chose to disobey. We are given the responsibility to choose whether we accept this Man Christ Jesus

as our Savior. God's grace has provided the way for us. He has done all He can to make it easy for us to believe. It is our own fault if we neglect or reject God's Salvation. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. After we become the children of God, our future is planned for us. Our Heavenly Home is assured us. Our place in the great Body of Christ is ready for us.

This Child of destiny, this Baby of Bethlehem, this Lamb of Calvary, has another appointment. He is to be "King of kings, and Lord of lords." He is to reign as the Sovereign of all things, both in Heaven and on earth. God has given Him a Name which was announced before His birth. That Name is Jesus. At the announcement of this Name Jesus - "Every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2:10,11.

Everyone today who denies the existence of this Savior, or who rejects His atoning work on the Cross, will be forced to acknowledge that they were wrong. They will be crushed with the weight of eternal judgment, but they will bow their knees and utter that Name. Mankind is getting farther and farther away from the Cross of Jesus Christ; but soon they will be brought face to face with the Lamb of God who hung on that Cross. Their remorse will do them not good. Their agony will not touch the once tender compassionate heart of Jesus.

How fortunate we are to be able to bow our knees today and ask for His mercy. How wonderful to bow our hearts in adoration and praise for this One who was born so many years ago. In the midst of unbelief, we can praise Him who died for us. We can commune with Him who sits at God's right hand. We can worship Him whom we love. In turn, we feel His love for us. We know that He lives within our hearts. Don't ask me, "How" or "Why?" I cannot tell you. I can only tell you that. He does.

As at every season of the year, so at this time, we can worship our Lord and Savior. We don't need the tinsel and the greenery to remind us. We need no laughing jolly man to make us happy. We know Jesus. He dwells with us and in us. December twenty-fifth is no more holy to us than June twenty-fifth. He is precious to us always.

WHEN ANNA MET JESUS

“**A**nd there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.” Lk. 2:36-38

Anna is not one of the prominent figures of the Bible, but she had an experience that most people could envy. She was one of the first to see the Savior, and one of the first to announce His coming. We cannot know the joy that filled her whole being at the sight of Jesus in the arms of Simeon. Whatever else had happened that day, or that week, or even that past year, must have faded into nothing. Here was the miracle Child; and she, no doubt, had the privilege of holding Him in her arms also.

30 Anna's name means "grace" or "gracious," and is the Greek form 'of the Hebrew "Hannah." There is somewhat of a parallel between the Anna of Luke and Hannah the mother of Samuel. Hannah had no children, and she suffered reproach and loneliness as a result. When she cried to the Lord, He heard her cry and opened her womb. She received a son, whom she named Samuel, "asked of God." He was a child of promise, and one dedicated to the Lord.

We do not read that Anna had any children. She had been married for seven years, and had been widowed for eighty-four years. If she cried to God because of her barrenness, and later on because of her widowhood, we do not read of it. We do learn that she "departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day."

She was one of the few who looked for the Redeemer to come in her time. She was quite elderly, and she was not willing to die until the promised Son should be born. Like Simeon, she could also say after seeing Jesus, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word: for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation." Simeon knew that He would be privileged to see the Savior before he died, because God had told him so.

Anna had no child to cradle in her arms. She had never known the joy of nursing her own child. She must have felt the

emptiness of her embrace, and the loneliness of her heart. God answered Hannah's prayer in a short time, but Anna had to wait. Although she did not bear this Child, yet she could claim Him as her own. Her heart rejoiced that the Messiah had come! What did it matter all the years of frustration and desire now? Her prayers were answered.

Her father's name, Phanuel, means "face of God." Her tribe, Asher, means "happy." This expresses her experience through the years. She was in communion with the Lord for those many years. By faith, she had seen the face of God and was made happy. God did not answer her cry for a child, if there was a cry; but she learned to be happy with seeing the face of God. She was faithful to Him.

At last one day, as she came into the temple as she had done so many hundreds of times before, she saw a couple and Simeon with a Baby in his arms. She heard Simeon utter these wonderful words about the Child - "For mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." Lk. 2:30-32. Her heart leaped with joy, and she couldn't wait until she had told others that the Redeemer was here! Oh! Wonder of wonders! Her days of fastings and prayers were over. The Redeemer had come! No more weeping and pleading for God to send the Savior. Here He was! As she looked upon that face, we wonder what she saw there. Could her faith reach beyond those babyish features, and lay hold of the fact that here was indeed the Savior? Ah, yes, because she immediately searched out all those who were looking for the Redeemer and told them to look no further. He was here! 31

We don't know how much longer she lived after this, but her joy was now complete. Her reward was enough for all the long years of longing and suffering. The many years slipped away, and she was once again the young maiden skipping thru the streets proclaiming the glad news - "The Son of Promise has come! The One we have been asking for is here!" Oh, wonderful redemption story!

* Christ marks His sheep in the ear and the foot. "My sheep hear my voice...and the follow me." John 10:27

THE REASON FOR THE SEASON

Margaret Clark

'Tis the season to be jolly --- deck the halls with boughs of holly --- shop 'til you drop, --- eat 'til you pop,... etc.

Unfortunately, this is the way many people do Christmas today, except they don't even call it Christmas. They refer to it as the holiday season, winter break, etc., or they replace Christ with an X.

So what exactly is Christmas? It is "Christ-mass" or the celebration of Christ.

32 As Christians, followers of Christ, we know that Christ is not celebrated this season only, but we have cause to celebrate Him every day of our lives. In fact, this celebration of Christ began before the worlds were even formed, as we are told in I Pet. 1:20 "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." That manifestation was seen in the Person of a tiny Babe born in a manger in Bethlehem. Angels announced His birth to the lowly shepherds, who were keeping watch over their flocks, saying, "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." The shepherds came with haste to Bethlehem and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger." Lk. 2:9-16 This was God's Gift, His Perfect Gift, His Ultimate Gift, as we are told. In II Cor. 9:15 We are to be thankful to God for His "...unspeakable gift,..." a gift that is simply too marvelous for words, presented to the world on that night of wonder over 2000 years ago.

That was only the beginning of the wonderful gifts that are ours through Christ Jesus.

We have first and foremost the gift of salvation, which gives to us Eternal Life. Rom.6:23 We have the gift of the Holy Ghost as Peter announced on the Day of Pentecost. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38 This Grand Personage is also our Comforter, Guide, Teacher, and so much more. We have

the gift of grace, (Rom. 5; 15) along with the gift of righteousness. Rom. 5:17 We are told in Eph. 2:8 that faith is the gift of God. The list goes on and on. In fact, James 1:17 proclaims that every good gift and every perfect gift comes from God.

However, we are not to just sit back and take these precious gifts without giving something in return. Matthew 10:8 declares "Freely you have received, freely give." What can we give? What could we possibly have that God would want? He wants our bodies, as a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service. This means our whole body from crown of our heads to the soles of our feet. We are told in Rom. 12:1 to present our bodies to God, as living sacrifices, which is our reasonable service. This covers the mind, the heart, the innermost parts of our being. It includes the way we think, the way we walk, the way we talk, the way we behave in every situation. He wants us to be wholly HIS. We also are to give God the fruit of our lips, offered up to Him as a "... sacrifice of praise..." Heb. 13: 15

How can we possibly think of giving God less than our whole being when He has presented us with His most precious possession, His only begotten Son? **33**

So, regardless of what the world thinks and does, let us celebrate Christ wholeheartedly, not just during this season, but every day of our lives.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

"What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee."

This is God's message at Christmas,

This is His balm for our tears,—

"Child, who art war-torn and weary,

Give Me thy grief and thy fears;

Is not My grace all-sufficient?

Trust Me, My arm can sustain.

Courage,—the morning is breaking,

Christ Jesus is coming again!"

Martha Snell Nicholson

The Colors Of Christmas

Mary Skarie

White symbolizes the virgin birth of Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Ghost. He was and is Holy. When Jesus was born he was pure, innocent and sinless.

Brown speaks of the trunk of the tree (wood) a reminder of Jesus' humanity. "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground:..." Isa 53:2 It also speaks loudly of the tree on which He was crucified...the cross of Calvary.

Blue testifies of the fact that Christ came down from heaven above. He is called the Son of the Highest. His purpose was to save mankind from all of our sins past, present and future. If only man would believe on His name. It is so simple, just "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved." Acts 16:31

Red proclaims redemption. I have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. As Jesus hung upon the cross His Life Blood was poured out from the top of His head to the soles of His feet onto the ground below where all my sins were hidden as far as the
34 East is from the West to be remembered no more.

Green shows forth the new life of resurrection. He arose from the grave on the third day and because he was raised up, I also will be raised up in the last day to be with Him for eternity. Praise The Lord! No matter the multiple colors of Christmas on display in this holiday season, Christ is manifest in each. Five are seen here, as the number of Divine Grace. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the GIFT of God" Eph. 2:8

NOT AN ANGEL

I would not be an angel, though they behold His face.
Angels are God's servants, but I His child by grace.
The great archangel Michael would gladly trade with me
Would leave his harp forgotten, beside the crystal sea.
And walk earth's dusty highways in rags and penury,
With pain for his companion, if he could only be
For one ecstatic moment what I shall be always:
The Child of God my Father, to whom be endless praise.
Yes angels are His servants, but listen to God's Word ---
I am His and He is mine, joint-heir with Christ the Lord.



Our Corn Crib

"Buy The Truth, and Sell It Not"

Tracts

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| A Problem, Solution & Triumph | Freedom | Pauline Sanctification |
| Arrangement & End of Ages | Gifts of the Spirit | Pauls Superlatives |
| Attack against the Truth | Glossolalia | Phoebe |
| A Burning Truth | God- A Triunity | Preaching Another Jesus |
| A Growing Relationship | Gospel Records | Predestination |
| Caught up with Paul | Gospels, Acts & Epistles | Preparation of the Bride |
| Cherubim & Seraphim | Holy Spirit- Baptism & Anointing | Ranks in Resurrection |
| Chaste Virgin | How to Receive Holy Spirit | Resume of What we Teach |
| Comfort in Time of Sorrow | It is Finished | Salvation for the Body |
| Death, Hell & Lake of Fire | Jesus Heals Today | Scriptural Terms Defined |
| Destiny of the Wicked | Judgement Seat of Christ | Words on Eternal Security |
| Diamonds in the Rough | Law or Grace | The Adams Case |
| Dying Daily | Life Everlasting | The Two Adams |
| Earnest but Wrong | Light on the Law | The Sin Offering |
| Eternal Life | Living Ones | The Unforgiven Sin |
| Extra! Extra! | Made Sin for Us | This is That |
| Faith | Man Child- Rev. 12 | Times of the Gentiles |
| Fear of the Lord | Mercy or Judgement | Tithing |
| First Day of the Week | New Birth | Water Baptism |
| Five Much Mores | Not Legislation, Revelation | Wheat and Tares |
| Five Consequences | Oneness of Christ | Why am I Not Healed |

Books of the Bible

| | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Genesis | Esther | Luke | 1, 2 Thessalonians |
| Exodus | Job | John | 1, 2 Timothy |
| Leviticus | Ecclesiastes | The Acts | Philemon |
| Numbers | Song of Solomon-A.S.Copley | Romans | Hebrews, James, Titus |
| Joshua | Paul's Gospel in S.O.S.-A.Mooneyhan | 1, 2 Corinthians | 2nd John |
| Judges | Isaiah | Galatians | Jude |
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It seems to me that since the "Fall"—
Without even thinking it odd ---
That man has had no trouble at all
Believing that he can be God.
How he would do this I can't conceive,
Though he certainly thinks he can---
And yet, he cannot bring himself to believe,
That God became....a MAN.

Johnny Hart