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Editorial:

Let us Adore Him!

*International Overseer
~John A. Wilkins, Jr.~*



Do you live in a section of the country where you can enjoy the four seasons as they come around each year? I was busy back at the first of October, but I did not fail to notice the autumn leaves as they started to let go and move around as they fell to the floor of earth and awaited the snow and the cold. They were so filled with color and caused my heart to say, let's go to the mountains and see the beautiful colors that God has given us to enjoy as we await the beautiful snow and cold weather. So then my wife and I along with Yogi Bear, our dog loaded up the car and headed for the mountains to see the wondrous colors that God had for us. We were privileged to visit some very dear friends along the way and share some wonderful testimonies of God's marvelous grace and healings. We talked, we prayed, we laughed, we cried and we gave God glory for the many things He has done and we just had a real Holy Ghost meeting. If we love God as we should it will show so that others can see the results and feel His goodness as we share in testimony and praise to His dear name!

It is our desire for your home to be filled with the warmth and glow of the Spirit of Jesus Christ as we celebrate His birth and life on earth as a man. It is very important to remember that while He was a man, He was and is our God. He was and is the greatest gift that God could ever send to us. Just think, He created everything and hung the stars by His word. His word is powerful and final and He is our healer and without Him there is no healing at all.

Are we celebrating Him for all that He is or are we celebrating Him as a little baby? He is our all in all and our soon coming King to be praised for ever and honored not just in earth, but also in Heaven for all that He has done and all He will do. Let All of us do this in our homes this year. He will soon be known for His coming back just like He said He would to claim His own and take us to our new home in Heaven. Then we will know about "Victory In Jesus". □

Merry Christmas To All!

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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“The Unclaimed Gift”

John A. Wilkins, Jr.
International Overseer



the gift and invite Him into our heart. He doesn't break in, but only comes in when asked to come in.



He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:11-13

Christ is not someone hiding in secret until He is needed and then springing into action, coming out clothed in His hero robe to conquer and set free those who have been bound, but He is rather a friend that cares about us all the time and He is ever present to help us.

A man that hath friends must

There is an unclaimed gift under the tree this year and it has created a lot of talk and concern as the grand-kids have picked it up, shook it and listened to the inside of the box. It is wrapped so beautiful and it is colored with bright red paper with snow white trimmings and a beautiful white bow, but there is no name on it and it makes no noise as you shake it. What is it? Whose name belongs on it? Who is it from? Somebody knows about this box and tonight we will find out the details when it is picked up and questions regarding it are raised. Why would someone put a gift under the tree with no identification on it? It would be such a shame for such a nice gift, boxed so beautifully to go unidentified at such a wonderful time of the year when everyone is receiving nice gifts and surely none of the grand-kids have tried to open it and see what it is! Did you ever see the children at Christmas trying to sneak around and shaking the boxes trying to figure out what was in the boxes?

The treasurer of each State of the United States has lots of money that remains unclaimed each year, because people leave deposits, rebates, and money left by family members that die without any family to step up and claim their money. All you have to do is contact them to check on deposits and other monies that have not been claimed and they will give it to

you providing you are entitled to it. I have worried every state that I have lived in, but we apparently are always claiming ours when we move. These unclaimed funds are then distributed as each state has a plan for the funds which are never claimed. Now tonight if we cannot find out whose gift this is under the tree we will have someone open it and tell us what is inside the box and whose gift it really is. This will quickly solve the mystery of the box.

I have spent most of my life trying to share the news of this great gift with people in a lot of different places on this earth only to find that they aren't listening, or they don't care about spiritual things. Many are blazing past the things that really matter and taking too much time on the things that matter very little if at all. God looked at His creation with great love and sent us the greatest gift that could ever be sent to us, His son Jesus Christ. We celebrate His birth at Christmas and exchange gifts with each other which must be somewhat repulsive to Him as we seldom even mention His name unless it is in some bad way. He still loves us all and will at a moment of time come into our life that ours will be full and blessed. He is the epitome of God's love for His people even though He is forgotten many times and ignored when He is the only real hope we have. He wants to be our gift from God on this Christmas Day and all of our other days, but we must open

shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Proverbs 18:24

He is a friend that sticks closer than a brother. Until one actually tastes and sees that the Lord is good, there is no way he can enjoy the power of God as it has been provided. God's power is always at full power and we have only to tap into it. The believer must accept the gift of God fully and believe that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him and are ever fully aware of His power. Until a person turns loose and accepts unconditionally the love of God in the personage of Jesus Christ there is no way to comprehend the magnitude and awesomeness of this gift. He is without a doubt the greatest gift of God to us as individuals and He is personal and He is our friend at all times even when we are not worthy. He doesn't run on the battle field when rockets are blasting all around you and bombs are bursting everywhere and it feels as though it will be the end of your life. Why not take Him by the hand today and He will hold on to you no matter what until the end of your life on this earth. I have spent a great deal of time trying to understand why people put God in a box and leave Him there while their lives are so lonely and destitute with no promise of tomorrow. It is needles to do this when He is calling to you in that still small voice to break free and enjoy the boundless love and peace He has for you. Many feel that God doesn't really love them and He would never save them because of the ugliness of their sins. They may feel that they have failed too many times. This very well could be the reason that the military suicide rate is so very high today.

I have listened attentively to many conversations about Christmas and the Spirit of Christmas only to find out that many times there is little truth found in them as they tend to be more about the person and less about Christ Jesus. I have now lived to experience some 77 Christmas's and as of this year I have never heard someone say, "I just want to call attention to Jesus Christ by putting up some money for Jesus to be honored with a gift to publicize His birth and give others something to remember Him by." Christmas.

Did you know that Christ was present in the Creation and He made everything? He even hung the stars in place with His word and His purpose was and is to save YOU from your sins.

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

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19:10

God does not come to you to capture you or to beat you to death for your past sins but He comes to you for the purpose of saving you. He stands always ready to forgive with HIS hand out stretched to you personally saying, "Come unto me ALL ye that labor and I will give you rest..." He knows that sin makes you weak and unable to function correctly and He wants you to have rest and feel love from Him, then you can feel love toward others.

Christ can't be put in a box literally but He is everywhere present so I guess that means He is also in a box

and wants you to open it and receive Him this Christmas, allow Him to live in your life. Your life will never be the same with Jesus Christ living in your heart to direct you and comfort you until the last day of your life on this earth.

He is your gift from God so why not receive Him today by just asking Him to forgive you of all your sins and agree to walk with Him as your friend? This is a gift of life from God, but He must be received just like any other gift. He is a FREE GIFT to all who will receive Him, yet untold thousands still fail to accept Him and He continues to remain in an unclaimed box, but that doesn't change a single thing for us as believers. He is to the believer a God that doesn't change or loose any power due to the small number of believers. He will one day come for us and those who have died while believing in Jesus will come forth from the grave.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

You talk about power, just look at this space flight because nothing is mentioned here about a rocket ship or firing the engines, Jesus own words will be all we need if we have accepted the gift that God is for all who receive Him. Those who did not receive their gift will not be among this number. The dead ones without the LORD will not hear His call and those who are

living will not be bothered with it either as this takes place.

The Gift of God has come and we are too busy to receive Him! Turn loose and let Jesus become your best friend today. He will lead you to a much better way and give you the best promotion you have ever had. If you will not hear me or you refuse to hear your pastor then during the spiritual celebration spoken of above, you will be attempting to find out what has happened to your family and other friends that have disappeared off this earth and no one knows their whereabouts. If you have never accepted the gift you've missed it! This is a serious matter with no redemption after this event happens.

**WILL YOU
CLAIM GOD'S
GIFT TO YOU
TODAY? □**



CHURCH OF PROPHECY MARKER ASSOCIATION



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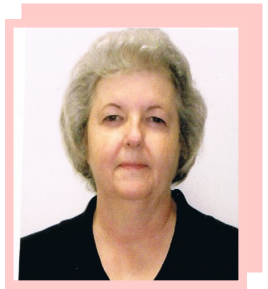
**Thank you for
helping your Church be 100%
in 2020.**

***Merry Christmas
and...
Happy New Year!***



The Wise Still Seek Him

Cathy Elder
Hartselle, AL



Matthew 2:1-2 *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.

As we approach the season when the birth of Christ, the **only** savior of the world, is celebrated, we go to the scriptures pertaining to that time as the one cited above. The wise in heart have sought Him in the past and we have many examples to look to in the Bible. But before we go there, just what does it mean to be wise or to obtain wisdom? To be wise, according to the dictionary, is having the power of discerning and judging properly as to what is true or right; possessing discernment, judgment, or discretion. It comes from learning and knowledge and applying it to life's situations. There are two kinds of wisdom described in the Bible – lower or higher – in other words, worldly or spiritual. There is nothing wrong with worldly wisdom, but it must not be used in **spiritual** matters. The principal is the same, but the difference is the source of the wisdom. What is the source of higher or spiritual wisdom? Of course, the answer to that is that it comes from above! The book of James gives us information about this kind of wisdom. In James 1:5 *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.* In other words, the kind of wisdom that is most needed today is the kind that comes from God! He will give it without scolding or mocking. It is a gift of God! The first part of verse 17 of that same chapter states that *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above...* We cannot solve problems of the church with worldly wisdom. The Church of God cannot be run by those who only possess worldly wisdom. These things can only be done in a God pleasing way by the wise in heart who seek **Him** for direction. Sometimes what we see with our natural eyes and logical thinking does in no way correspond with what

God wants us to see with our spiritual eyes and spiritual thinking!

Amen! “... *for the Lord seeth not as man seeth;*” I Samuel 16:7b.

God sees the past and present and so do we, but God also sees the future, which we cannot fully see now; only what He allows us to, so much can be overlooked without seeking Him for wisdom.

One example given in the Bible is that concerning King Solomon. I Kings 3: 3 *And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father; only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places.* 4. *And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.* 5. *In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.* 6. *And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou has given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.* 7. *And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.* 8. *And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.* 9. *Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?* 10. *And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.* 11. *And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; (in other words wisdom)* 12. *Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.* 13. *And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.*

There is so much to be learned from this account. First of all, Solomon loved the Lord. We are instructed by Christ's first commandment to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength. The second commandment is to love our neighbor as ourselves. Solomon was the chosen leader of a chosen people. The Bible says that he loved the Lord. Apparently he loved others more than himself by the request he made of the Lord. He could have had anything he asked for, but he realized what a great responsibility was upon him as he faced the task ahead. He prepared himself in seeking the Lord by making many sacrifices upon the altar. The last days church has a great responsibility upon her to maintain the doctrines of Jesus Christ and teach all nations. She must remain prepared at all times as she does His work by loving the Lord God with all her heart, soul, mind and strength and loving others more than herself and by presenting her body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is her reasonable service. That means each and every part of the body, whatever the function may be. Whether it be the Overseer of a country with many church members or the pastor of a local congregation with 5 members. Jesus said where two or three are gathered together in His name, that He would be there in the midst. Some of the greatest services I have been in was on a Wednesday night where three or four were gathered together to seek the Lord and pray one for another. When Solomon had ended the great sacrificing that night, God was pleased and appeared to him in a dream. He was in a position that God asked what He could do for him! When we get to the place where pleasing God means more to us than anything else in the world and seeing His work prosper is first and foremost in our lives, as well as seeking His wisdom, we will see the scripture come to pass in Jeremiah 33: 3 ***Call unto me, and I will shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.*** Revelations from God! When we think we have it all figured out, we actually do not. God's ways are higher than ours and we need His wisdom! Another thing to be noted from this account is the humility that Solomon displayed and the realization that he could not do the work appointed to him without the help of God. He said Lord, I am but a child. I don't know how to go out or how to come in without you. Though he was in the midst of a multitude of people, it does not matter as far as we are concerned today. If we don't have but 2 or 3 in our congregations and our assemblies are not filled with tens of thousands, the few we do have are just as important as the thousands down the

street. We still need a spirit of humility and a realization that the work we have been appointed to do is just as important as if we had tens of millions of people. Because Solomon chose to ask God for wisdom instead of earthly goods, God gave him both. We know that to survive in this world today, we need earthly goods, but Jesus' words to us in Matthew 6: 32-33 are this ***(For after all these things do the gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*** That's wisdom! One who does this is wise in heart. Where some err is getting this principle backwards. They are so concerned with things of the world, which by the way will all pass away one day, that proper time is not spent on seeking His wisdom. Solomon received both so that no king that succeeded him would be like unto him.

Now, let's go back to the book of James for a moment. James talks about the tongue of man. He says in James 3: 8 ***But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*** V 13 ***Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.*** 14. ***But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.*** 15. ***This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.*** 17. ***But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.*** Here we find a clear distinction between earthly wisdom and that which comes from above. Which kind do you want in your life? What kind do you have?

In the opening passage, we read about some wise men who came from the east to Jerusalem to worship the king of the Jews who had been born. They were well acquainted with the prophecies concerning the coming of the long-awaited Messiah. These wise men proclaimed that they had seen His star in the east. Who were these men, where in the east did they come from and what exactly did they see? They were gentiles. In one scripture, Arabia is called the land of the east, and in another place, Arabians were called men of the east. The star they saw was extraordinary. It was extraordinary in the fact that stars are located in the upper regions of the air and this one particular star was seen hovering in the lower regions of the air.

They took that to mean an extraordinary person had been born. Therefore, though the journey was long and the perils were many along the way, they considered not themselves, but rather determined to go seek after the one who had been born king of the Jews. When they enquired in Jerusalem, the word got back to King Herod and he was troubled with all Jerusalem. He then enquired of the wise men about the star and instructed them to find him and bring him word so that he too could come worship Him. You see, the enemy made plans to destroy the child, but God in His wisdom knew how to take care of the situation and instructed men what to do to avoid it. When the wise men left speaking to Herod, the star they had seen in the east directed them to the house where the two year old child was with his mother, Mary. They fell down, worshipped Him, and presented their gifts to Him. But God had warned them in a dream not to obey Herod, so they departed for their country in a different way. That was the wisdom of God at work. They had no cell phones to text messages to one another. No, they

were directed by God. You remember how Herod became very irate because of the wise men and sent forth and killed all the children from 2 years old and under, thinking Jesus would be destroyed that way, but God knew the plan all along! In His infinite wisdom, He instructed Joseph, the earthly Father of Jesus, to flee with Mary and the baby into Egypt until he received further instruction from the Lord. Wasn't that amazing how God's protecting hand was upon them! He will do the same thing for us today! If we will seek Him and His wisdom in everything, there is no telling what God will do for us now.

You can rest assured that our **adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour: 1 Peterr 5:8b** The only thing we can do is to obey the scripture that says resist him steadfast in the faith. The Bible says to **submit yourselves to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you. James 4:7b**

Just as he sought to destroy Jesus, the enemy desires to destroy each one of the followers of the Lord. But I am reminded of the scripture that states **greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. 1 John 4:4b**

Wise Still Seek Him!



I don't know
about you, but I
am inspired to
seek His Wisdom! □



"...GOD SENT FORTH HIS SON..."

He Is the Virgin-Born Immanuel
of Prophecy
Let the Joy of the Lord
Ring Out!



Christmas is a joyful season! And I refer to the joy of the Lord as is known to His children in this world, here and now. If others miss the point and seek another kind of joy in traditional celebrations and revelry, it is not that it need be so, for the *joyful news* has gone out into the greater part of the earth, and many have been privileged to hear and receive who have not done so. When we who know Him consider this, we have all the more reason to *rejoice*, for we know what Christmas is all about; and it is glorious indeed!

This world waited a long time for the Saviour to come to redeem fallen man. But the delay was all in God's perfect design. We may not know why other dispensations were not privileged to receive salvation by the grace of God, but by reading the record of God's plans for other ages, we can understand that they were all necessary in bringing to pass the perfect will of the Father.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, *God sent forth his Son*, made of a woman, made under the law,

"To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

"Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Galatians 4:4-7)

The apostle's words to the church at Galatia were certainly encouraging words, full of great cause for *rejoicing*. And since we are members of the same Church, the body of Christ, the message is for us as well as to them—along with the joy and blessing. The fulness of the time came, and, thank the Lord, it came in our day. If it had

come in another dispensation, the joy would have been theirs. But it was all planned from the foundation of the world, and God sent forth His Son at the proper time. Hallelujah!

The prophets spoke of the promised Saviour as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and the record of their prophecies has been preserved for us by the providences of God. It should have been no secret that this Saviour would come into the world as a babe, for Isaiah had said, "For unto us a *child* is born, unto us a *son* is given . . ." (Isaiah 9:6) Furthermore, he had said, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a *virgin shall conceive*, and bear a *son*, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14)

Surely it was known that *Immanuel* meant *God with us*, but it would seem that it was not fully understood that the Child—the Son—would be the very Son of God by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, as we understand it since He has come. That God should give this world any child empowered to redeem depraved men would have been cause for rejoicing, but O the glory of it all, that God should give *His only begotten Son!* It is wonderful indeed!

All who read this message may firmly believe in the virgin birth of Christ, but, after all these years and generations, there are many who deny this infallible truth; and all the while professing to be "Christians." But if Christ is not the virgin-born Son of God conceived of the Holy Ghost, He is not the Son of God at all. But He is, thank God! For another prophet declared Him to be "the Sun of righteousness . . . with healing in His wings." (Malachi 4:2) Since the Source of all righteousness is God the Father,

the Sun of righteousness could be none other than the Son of God. Furthermore, we believe in the recorded events at the time of Jesus' birth. This message is a *message of joy* only to those who believe. The benefits are received by faith, and only upon this simple exercise of faith does the joy and glory begin to roll! Hallelujah!

Oh, we can sing it from the depths of our hearts, "*Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King!*" We take up the shouts of praise from those who were earlier on the stage in this great drama of the ages. Even the birth of the forerunner, John the Baptist, was an occasion for joy:

"... Thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

"And thou shalt have *joy and gladness*; and many shall *rejoice* at his birth.

"For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord . . . and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb." (Luke 1:13-15)

Later, Elisabeth rejoiced when Mary visited her, and saluted her:

"And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

"And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, 'Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

"And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:41-43)

Next, Mary took up the praise: "And Mary said, *My soul doth magnify the Lord*.

"And my spirit hath *rejoiced* in God my Saviour.

(Please turn page)

"GOD SENT FORTH HIS SON . . ."

Continued...

"For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all nations shall call me blessed.

"For he that is mighty hath done great things; and holy is his name." (Luke 1:46-49)

Then, when the fulness of the time had come, and the Blessed Son of God had been "made of a woman" and was born and laid in Bethlehem's manger, the Father dispatched His angel to the Judaeen hillside to make the announcement to the humble shepherds. And the angel came with joy and praise. Read it:

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you *good tidings of great joy*, which shall be to all people."

And the joy didn't end there. Read on:

"And 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.*"

Oh yes, there was some fear around that shepherds' campfire, but it was the fear of Almighty God. And the message was a joyful message, and the praise of the angel band was a joyful sound! Oh, after celebrating so many Christmases as children of this Heavenly King, every review of the story overwhelms us and catches us up in a holy ecstasy of praise! Seems that we can almost hear the angels' voices as they have just come from that celestial realm where all is praise!

Oh, it fills us with a longing for the fulness of our redemption, and to be in that blessed place where the Apostle John was privileged to hear the rolling of the glories in heaven! I do not see why it would not be in order to look in upon the scene with John as a part of our Christmas celebration. Read:

"And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, *Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:*

"For true and righteous are his judgments . . .

"And again they said, *Alleluia . . .*

"And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; *Alleluia.*

"And a voice came out of the throne, saying, *Praise our God*, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

"And I heard as it were the voice

of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, *Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*" (Revelation 19:1-6)

While it seems that John was in the Spirit and was permitted to see and hear many things pertaining to a much later time, the Bible gives evidence that praise and glory are perpetual in heaven. A part of verse 8, chapter 4 says, "And the four beasts . . . rest not day and night, saying, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*" Then, in verse 10, the elders fall down and worship Him, saying:

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

It was from this atmosphere of holy praise that the Saviour came "when the fulness of the time was come." As the old song says, "*Out of the ivory palaces, into a world of woe; only His great eternal love, made my Saviour go.*" But we are so glad He came! We are glad the angels ushered Him into this earth with joy and praise. And we are glad to read that the shepherds, after searching and finding Him in the manger, ". . . returned, *glorifying and praising God* for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

It is encouraging to note that the Wise Men from the East "*rejoiced with exceeding great joy*" when they neared the house, led by the star. Their joy seems to have been spontaneous, for they were evidently happy to have found Him whom they had sought.

We want to weep for joy as we read of the "just and devout" Simeon, who was so moved by the Holy Ghost when Mary and Joseph took the Child Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem to offer the sacrifice of "A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."

"Then he took 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,

"Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

"A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

Then, we are touched by the adoration of the aged prophetess Anna, who, ". . . coming in at that instant *gave thanks* likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem."

The Christmas joy of the children of

God cannot be limited to the manger, nor to His first presentation in the temple, nor to the house where the Wise Men found Him. We know why He came. We know the story of His earthly sojourn. We know the history of His ministry—the complete fulfillment of His mission among men. There were some who believed in Him and gave Him praise. Some praised Him only for temporal blessings—healings and the loaves and fishes. Others believed and were sure that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Some turned away when His sayings became "hard," in their estimation. But His chosen ones knew there was nowhere else to go. They were sad when He spoke of going away—of going back to the Father. But He comforted them, saying, "Let not your heart be troubled—In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you."

Then, after His resurrection, ". . . He led them out as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them." And, although this is where He left them, being parted from them and carried up into heaven, they were no longer sad, for the Bible says, "And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with *great joy*: And were continually in the temple *praising and blessing God.*" (Luke 24:51, 52)

It seems that the joy had increased greatly fifty days later, for we are well aware of the happenings in the Upper Room and in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. As time went on, persecutions and imprisonments and scourgings could not quench the joy. On one occasion, after the apostles had been beaten for preaching in the name of the Lord Jesus whom they loved so dearly, we read:

"And they departed from the presence of the council, *rejoicing* that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." (Acts 5:41)

I tell you, there is joy and glory and victory in knowing and serving the Christ of Christmas, who was also the Christ of Calvary, and of the glorious resurrection! Hallelujah! The greatest joy is not a superficial joy. Real joy comes with the thing of great value that is sought after. Jesus illustrated this through the story of the man who found the treasure hid in a field. The Scripture says that *for joy* the man went and sold all that he had and bought that field. The joy came with the field, for the treasure was there.

Again, He told of the merchant man who was seeking goodly pearls. When he had found one pearl of great price, he sold all that he had and bought

WHITE WING MESSENGER

that pearl. This same Jesus said:

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

To us who know Him and love Him, He is "the pearl of great price." His great salvation is our greatest treasure. We do not lament over trivial sacrifices which must be faced in this life. We have Him who was ushered into earth by a *praising heavenly host*! We know Him whose special star led the seeking sages of His day to bring Him their gifts of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, while those who should have received Him gladly were framing plans for His destruction.

We rejoice not only at the manger scene, but because we know of a certainty that unto us the Saviour has been born, and has bled and died, and has risen for our justification. We praise Him for establishing His Church, then purchasing it with His own blood; and for His promise to return for it when it has reached the perfect mark.

As far as the Church of God is concerned, Christmas is a perpetual celebration. *The joy of the Lord is our strength* every day and every hour. Thank God, it is no longer necessary for bands of angels to be dispatched to earth to shout His praises. Surely the Church must glorify His name far and wide. We dare not fall into the same category with those who tried to silence the praising crowd when Jesus rode the donkey into Jerusalem. Jesus said *the stones would have cried out in praise* if the voices of the worshippers had been silenced.

No, there is not much place for silence from now until the redemption of the purchased possession at the great resurrection of the dead in Christ and the rapture of the Church. The needs of this world cry out to us. Multitudes stagger in darkness, drunk on sinful pleasures and the cares of this life. They are a seeking crowd. They may not be searching for Him "that is born King of the Jews," or for the "light to lighten the Gentiles." But they are searching for happiness and peace of heart and mind. We must tell and show them that the happiness comes with the "hid treasure" and "the pearl of great price." If we have sold everything else in order that we may have Him, *our lives and lips will show forth His praises* as an inevitable result.

Now that we have "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," let us be channels of the peace and good will of which the angels sang. Hallelujah!

DECEMBER 13, 1975



GOD'S GIFT OF LOVE

God gave to us a gift of love,
His only Son from heaven above,
That we from sin might be made free,
For He would die upon a tree.

God saw the world was filled with sin.
He said, "I'll send my Son. If they'll let Him in,
He will save and make them free,
That they may live in heaven with Me."

To find room in the inn they were not able,
So He was born in a lowly stable.
That night the shepherds saw His star;
Then the Wise Men journeyed from afar.

While He lived on earth He was so kind;
He healed the sick, the lame, and blind.
He multiplied the fish and bread;
He even raised some from the dead.

But some with Him weren't satisfied;
They wanted Him to be crucified!
They spit on Him, they slapped His face;

They wanted a murderer to take His place.

They put on Him a thorny crown
That pierced His brow, and the blood flowed down;
They led Him up Golgotha's hill,
Where He the Scripture would fulfill.

He was willing to give up His life,
And with His blood He paid the price
Upon the cross our souls to win;
So won't you please now let Him in?

Will you give to God a gift, my friend—
Your soul, your heart—and on Him depend?
Will you trust that, if you serve Him well,
He will save your poor lost soul from hell?

If on that last great judgment day,
My child, well done," we hear Him say,
We'll be glad we gave ourselves to Him,
And lived our lives apart from sin.
—By Bessie Bryant, Smithfield, N. C.

DECEMBER 13, 1969

"IMMANUEL... GOD WITH US"

**"Lo, I Come
To Do Thy Will,
O God!"**

**LET EARTH
RECEIVE
HER KING!**



Christians the world around, and the so-called Christian nations, for several hundred years have been observing one day each year as "Christmas." The majority accept December 25 as the date for the observance, which commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ. Since it is admitted that there is nothing sure about the exact date of His birth, the day of celebration is more or less a custom convenient to world-wide observance.

The true worshipper of the Lord is less concerned about the day than the event. If the word "Christmas" has come to mean the recognition of the Saviour's birth, every child of God observes the occasion every day he lives. For a great event it was! Christ's coming into this world is referred to in the Scriptures in many places—by the prophets, by the angel of the Lord, by the angelic host on His natal night, by Christ Himself, and by the apostles. Dozens of these wonderful verses have been sought out and used to magnify the importance of "the Christmas season." But possibly no other words summarize the event with more meaning and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." . . . God with us."

The prophecy reads: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isa. 7:14)

Matthew declares that the events surrounding the angel's announcement to Mary, her conception by the Holy Ghost, and the angel's appearance to Joseph in a dream, was all done in fulfillment of the prophecy: "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." (Matt. 1:22, 23)

GOD WITH US! God with man! Think of it! It is utterly beyond our understanding, yet it is true! For more than 1900 years men of God have tried to explain it, and the agnostics have tried as hard to deny and disprove it. But we who have received Him entertain no doubts. We know God is with us in the person of Jesus Christ. Suppose it can't be explained; what does it matter? He dwells in our hearts by faith, and His presence there is witnessed by the Holy Ghost.

But at the time of Jesus' birth of the Virgin Mary, it was literally true that God was with man. For the next thirty-three years He remained with man as the Son of man and as the Son of God. God incarnate. God in the flesh. God in babyhood, childhood, youth, and manhood. The birth of Christ means so much more than a fascinating story to thrill the imagination. It is so much more than an enrapturing account of angels visiting men, angel choruses singing to lowly shepherds, then finding Him in little Bethlehem's manger. It is so much more than an awesome story of wise or kingly men making a far journey in search of an infant born to be the king of the Jews. It is all of this, but so much more!

It means that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." In other

IMMANUEL . . .

Continued...

words, God had sent the patriarchs, the prophets, many of them, to plead with sinful men. He had offered many plans to woo man back to Him. Everything had seemingly failed, but God's ultimate plan had been held in reserve. Man could not be redeemed with anything less than the supreme sacrifice; a sacrifice totally outside of man's ability to offer for himself. So God would make it for him.

To make sure that the purpose of God should not be misunderstood, His Son would take on the flesh of man, would enter this world as a tiny babe so that no part of the sacrifice could be discounted because of any individual's age bracket. His birthplace would be of the lowliest possible sort, so that later on none could claim any disadvantage because of poverty. His maternal heritage would come through a poor young woman from the despised Nazareth, so that none could plead social discrimination as an excuse for rejecting salvation. He would be reared under the tutorship of a poor carpenter, so that none would ever be able to say that "he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth." His religious training would come through a village synagogue instead of the great temple at Jerusalem, so none could say He had a better start in life. There is nothing to indicate that He had any advantages in His youth which might have made Him "looked up to."

Yet, He was Immanuel—GOD WITH US! Hallelujah! Unworthy as we are, yet "God with us"! Paul says it so wonderfully—

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

"To redeem them that are under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

"Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Gal. 4:4-7)

Look at the condition of the world into which Jesus was born almost 2000 years ago. A great power struggle was on. The great Roman Empire had extended itself to where its feeling of self-sufficiency was appalling. Its emperor was looked to as their god. But it was a cold, hostile world toward the true and living God. The alarming thing, however, was the effect these things had had on the people of God. Though angry at Roman domination, very few hearts were conditioned to recognize and hail their promised Messiah. Fretted by excessive taxation and the imposed Roman occupation, they thought only of their deliverer in terms of a great militarist, whom they hoped would overthrow the imperial system and set them free to go on with their traditions and doctrines of men.

And so—Rome's coldness was a "cold indifference," while the Jews' coldness was a "cold hostility" toward the despised Nazarene—the meek and lowly Galilean "carpenter's son." Truly, a reconciliation was needed between God and man, but man was prone to dictate the terms. But "the fulness of the time was come," and God refused to turn away. Instead, He would draw closer to man. He would span the expanse between heaven and earth. He would take on a body of flesh,

be born among men, and feel the infirmities and the afflictions of men.

How did He do it? Paul says, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." (2 Cor. 5:19)

But God was not cruel in sending His Son into a cold, unfriendly world. It was not necessary for the Father to compel the Son to become Immanuel. Look at the record, as the prophet speaks in the Spirit of Christ, and as the New Testament writer shows us the fulfillment:

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

"In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

"Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." (Heb. 10:5-7)

We do not, then, see Jesus coming to us regretfully, but willingly and voluntarily. In our imagination we might hear Him saying, "Father, from the beginning of man's sin I have seen the yearning in your loving face to bring him back to Thee. I have seen the system of sacrifices and offerings for sin abused by man until Thou hast no more pleasure in them. I have been awaiting 'the fulness of Your time.' I know it is written in the volume of Thy Word—in all the law and the prophets—that I would go down to man, as Your Person in a body of flesh, and make the great and last sacrifice. Lo, Father, here am I. I am ready—yea, I delight to do Thy will!"

O Hallelujah! Christmas! The Nativity! O Holy Night! Call it whatever we will, yet the half has never been told! We grow limp in spirit at the amazement of it all! The verses of an old hymn come to me now like a carol—

No friend like Him is so high and holy,

No, not one! No, not one!

And yet, no friend is so meek and lowly,

No, not one! No, not one!

Was e'er a gift like the Saviour given?

No, not one! No, not one!

Will He refuse us a home in heaven?

No, not one! No, not one!

Celebrate it whenever we will, yet we can never quite do justice to the occasion. This is why the people of God should sing "Joy to the world, the Lord is come!" all the year round. And it is all the more reason why we should give Him special glory at this season when others are staging such vain festivities under the pretext of commemorating the Saviour's birth.

Angels once sang the story. Let men sing it today! The little town of Bethlehem once cradled the King, unknowingly. Let the hearts of men be thrown open wide today, knowingly! With Phillips Brooks we say—

O holy Child of Bethlehem,

Descend to us we pray;

Cast out our sin and enter in;

Be born in us today!

We hear the Christmas angels

The great glad tidings tell;

O come to us! Abide with us!


Our Lord EMMANUEL!



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There is nothing more wonderful than knowing Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and to share His Love with His people all around the World.

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From International Headquarters Staff!

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