

Christ is Victor

NOV/DEC 1998

“The Shoemaker and His Guest”

One Christmas an old cobbler sat in his little shop reading of the visit of the wise men to the Infant Jesus, and of the gifts they brought, and he said to himself: “If tomorrow were the first Christmas, and if Jesus were to be born in this town tonight, I know what I would give him!”

He rose and took from a shelf two little shoes of softest snow-white leather, with bright silver buckles: “I would give Him these, my finest work. How pleased His mother would be! But I’m a foolish old man,” he thought smiling. “Master has no need for my poor gifts.”

Replacing the shoes, he blew out the candle, and retired to rest. Hardly had he closed his eyes, it seemed, when he heard a Voice call his name. “Martin!” Intuitively, he felt aware of the identity of the Speaker, “Martin, you have longed to see Me. Tomorrow I shall pass by your window. If you see

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“Christmas - The Birth of Jesus Christ”

We must prepare our hearts for Christmas and tune our hearts for heart worship.

“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” Matthew 1:18. Here we see the introduction to the Christmas story. The first chapter of Matthew focuses attention on Joseph although Mary is mentioned. We see the preparation of Joseph and his rising to great spiritual heights.

Joseph was a godly man whose heart was prepared for a great revelation. I don’t know how long God prepared him. We don’t see in the Bible much of Joseph’s early preparation. But I marvel at this young man. He had a great mental shock when he discovered that his betrothed was expecting a baby.

We see in Joseph a beautiful character. He was in great perplexity. He might have well said to himself: “What shall I do? A great calamity has overtaken me. All right, I’ll break my engagement; I’ll put her away.” But he had the ability to receive God’s revelation.

Today the world is full of suspicion. Men and women even in wedlock are full of suspicion. A heart full of suspicion—this is characteristic of many young people today. They begin with a life of impurity and this leads on to a mind obsessed by suspicion after marriage. They tutor their minds after the movies and its sexual promiscuity. Thus, there is no joy in their married life.

But Joseph had the ability to tune to Heaven. He could hear God. After all, that is religion—listening to God. Some are busy practising in their choirs for Christmas and laughing with their friends that they have no time for God. I don’t say you should not practise. You must praise the Lord in perfect tune and

harmony. If you have a discordant voice ask the Lord to touch your voice. But don’t forget that the first thing which is needful is to listen to God. Many do not have this ability at all. So their Christmas is confined to the lower part of the abdomen—gastronomic delights only. They are not in tune with God.

All of us are going to come across

... “CHRISTMAS” CON’T ON PAGE 2



Me and bid Me enter, I shall be your guest and sit at your table."

He did not sleep that night for joy. Before it was yet dawn he arose and tidied up his little shop. Fresh sand he spread on the floor, and green bows of fir he wreathed along the rafters. On the table he placed a loaf of white bread, a jar of honey, a pitcher of milk, and over the fire he hung a pot of coffee. His simple preparations were complete.

When all was in readiness, he took up his vigil at the window. He was sure he would know the Master. As he watched the driving sleet and rain in the cold, deserted street, he thought of the joy that would be his when he sat down and broke bread with his Guest.

Presently he saw an old street sweeper pass by, blowing upon his thin, gnarled hands to warm them. "Poor fellow! He must be half frozen," thought Martin. Opening the door, he called out to him, "Come in, my friend, and warm, and drink a cup of hot coffee." No further urging was needed, and the man gratefully accepted the invitation.

An hour passed, and Martin next saw a poor, miserably clothed woman carrying a baby. She paused, wearily, to rest in the shelter of his doorway. Quickly he flung open the door, "Come in and warm, while you rest," he said to her. "You are not well?" he asked.

"I am going to the hospital. I hope they will take me in, and my baby," she explained. "My husband is at sea, and I am ill, without a soul to whom I can go."

"Poor child!" cried the old man. "You must eat something while you are warm. No? Let me give a cup of milk to the little one. Ah! What a bright, pretty little fellow he is! Why you have no shoes on him!"

"I have no shoes for him," sighed the mother. "Then he shall have this lovely pair I finished yesterday." And Martin took down the soft, little, snow-white shoes he had looked at the evening before, and slipped them on the child's feet. They fitted perfectly. And shortly the young mother went her way full of gratitude, and Martin went back to his post at the window.

Hour after hour went by, and many needy souls shared the meagre hospitality of the old cobbler, but the expected Guest did not appear.

At last, when night had fallen, Martin retired to his cot with a heavy heart. "It was only a dream," he sighed. "I did hope and believe, but He has not come."

Suddenly, so it seemed to his weary eyes, the room was flooded with a glorious light: and to the cobbler's astonished vision there appeared before him, one by one, the poor street sweeper, the sick mother and her baby, and all the people whom he had aided during the day. Each one smiled at him and said: "Have you not

seen me? Did I not sit at your table?"- and vanished.

Then softly out of the silence he heard again the gentle Voice, repeating the old familiar words: 'Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me. For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in.'

"Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

Dear readers, the Season gives us an opportunity to share with our less fortunate brethren, what God has blessed us with. One need not be rich and flushed with money- but let us try to share with others, what little we have.

— selected

perplexities and difficult situations. Many times I have to look to God for guidance. At times it takes a long time of prayer before I get guidance. But that is not the ideal way. We should be so close to God as to get continual guidance. Then there will not be any wastage in our lives.

If your father is a godly person and if you yourself don't have guidance from God, submit yourself to your father's guidance. Parents should

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This Fellowship is an inter-denominational missionary and prayer group working for revival in churches and amongst students in several countries. We invite every layperson to become God's ally in changing his or her corner of the world. We train people in evangelistic work and to be self-supporting missionaries.

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know that it is a great responsibility to guide their children.

We should remember that very often we misjudge others. Joseph was misjudging God's chosen virgin, Mary. He was evaluating the greatest birth in this world, in purely physical terms.

To conduct your family life, revelation from God is very essential. Otherwise you are at sea and are lost. How close Joseph came to departing from God's great plan! "I won't have anything more to do with her," he said to himself. God said, "Stop. Your fear is unjustified. Don't fear Joseph, to take to yourself your espoused wife."

What is the truth about many of us? We are stubborn as mules. We do not stop but go on fighting against God's will. What is the use of fighting against God's will? God has the highest plan for you.

If you are not prepared to be guided by God, your life will be full of fears. If you are guided by God, there is no fear. We can be very wrong in our decisions. Suspicion springs very often from an evil heart. If you marry a chaste girl and you can't trust her, that means you have lived deceitfully.

What was Joseph's reaction to God's guidance? He went ahead with the marriage and he knew her not until the arrival of the firstborn. Wonderful! Should a character like Joseph be only in the Bible? No, such men must be found in our midst. Has God's revelation to man stopped? No. God wants to speak to you. He wants to guide you into all truth. He wants to deliver you from all your fears and perplexities. He wants to bring peace into your home.

There was no human solution to Joseph's perplexity. No one could have guided him aright. Revelation was needed. Without revelation one is at sixes and sevens. Will you let God speak to you and bring your endless confusion to an end?"

— Joshua

Daniel

“Christmas Evans”

“Born on Christmas Day!!” the peasant father exclaimed. “Ay, we don't have much to give him but a name. And what'll that be?”

Johanna Evans' eyes turned tenderly towards the infant snuggling beside her. “Well, name him Christmas after his birthday,” she said simply.

So in the year 1766 was born the boy later to be known as the apostle of wild Wales.

In his early years Christmas Evans experienced many unpleasant situations and near-tragedies. After his father died he lived with his cruel uncle. Then he farmed himself as servant to whoever would feed him. He was stabbed in a quarrel. He was rescued from drowning. He fell from a high tree with an open knife in his hand. A horse he was riding ran away, dashing at breakneck speed through a low narrow passage.

At eighteen he could not read a word. But he knew that he was a sinner and that for the providence of God he would be in hell. When a spiritual revival flamed up among the youth of Cardiganshire the homeless boy sought refuge in Christ.

“I must read the Bible,” he told the Welsh villagers at the chapel he attended. “That's good, Christmas,” they told him. “But, lad, not one in seven in these parts can even read a letter.”

A few months later Christmas Evans amazed his acquaintances by stumbling through a Scripture passage. Then he set more tongues wagging by announcing, “God has called me to preach.”

He sought out his pastor. “Sir, will you teach me?” he stammered, the light of learning lighting up his craggy features. The minister agreed and taught young Christmas for six

months. Then, his funds running low, the youth decided to journey to England. “I'll work in the harvest, then return for more schooling,” he told his minister.

On the road he was waylaid by a mob. They beat him fiercely leaving him bruised and sightless in one eye. But Christmas Evans did not give up. He came home and studied harder. He mastered Greek, Hebrew and Latin. He threw himself into a wearisome itinerant ministry that carried him by horse and gig along thousands of miles of rugged trails. Under his Spirit-filled ministry thousands of Welshmen found salvation in Christ. He became popularly known as the “John Bunyan of Wales”.

In the fifty-fourth year of his wilderness ministry Christmas Evans lay dying. He repeated a verse from an old Welsh hymn. Then as if he were driving away from a preaching appointment to another over the mountain he shouted, “Good-bye. Drive on! Drive on!” And so the one-eyed apostle of Wales departed for his heavenly home.

— selected

Say What?

**FOR UNTO US A CHILD
IS BORN, UNTO US A SON
IS GIVEN: AND THE GOV-
ERNMENT SHALL BE
UPON HIS SHOULDER:
AND HIS NAME SHALL BE
CALLED WONDERFUL,
COUNSELLOR, THE
MIGHTY GOD, THE EV-
ERLASTING FATHER, THE
PRINCE OF PEACE.**

— ISAIAH 9:6



“The Christmas Journey”

“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.” (Matthew 2: 1& 2)

These men saw a star and they realized that it was an indication showing them that Jesus was born. So they began to travel from East to West. It was not easy. They left their country in search of the Saviour. Many people say that Christianity is a Western religion; we have our own religion. But the wise men were prepared to go to any place in search of the Truth. Every wise man will travel to know the Truth.

All of us know that Jesus is the Saviour. But how many of us have travelled to see Him and seen Him and worshipped Him? Somebody told us and we believed that Jesus is the Saviour. But we never went into His presence. When you go into His presence, you are transformed. These wise men crossed rivers and mountains. They were rich. They could have sat at home in comfort.

Have you ever travelled to see Jesus? I travelled long distances as a young man to attend students' meetings in order to worship Jesus. These wise men started. That means, they left their country and family and spent money also. Some say, “Can't I find Jesus here?” Air is everywhere but we inflate the cycle tube and the football. We must go to a place where there is concentration of spiritual atmosphere.

The wise men travelled on camels. A camel crosses rivers quickly. It climbs the hills, balancing itself care-

fully on the plains. It walks steadily along the path. Mountains stand for pride. Sometimes we think it is unnecessary to pray; it is waste of time. But when we are sick we want God and His people. Even before such a situation comes upon us, we must pray well. Have you started your journey?

Many started their journey but did not find God easily. St. Augustine did not want to become godly too soon. He went on from sin to sin. He lived with a woman for sometime. His mother was praying for him. He left that first woman and found another woman. He used to say, “Not today, but tomorrow I will obey God.” But a day came and he cried, “Not tomorrow Lord, but today, now itself, this very minute I want Thee.”

Have you found Jesus? There are many valleys of despair. Many will discourage you: “Why so much faith—so much piety—so much prayer?” If anyone who wants to find Jesus does not find Him, he will go on seeking Him. Until he is sure that he is with Him and His true children he won't be satisfied. Can you tell when you met Jesus? Can you tell your children that you have met Him? When I sought Him, I found all the riches I need, in Him. I get all the joy in Him, and the health in Him. He forewarns me of my future. He can instruct me. From the time I met Him, He is keeping me. If I slip, I confess it. I find that He is always with me.

When these wise men reached Jerusalem, they enquired about the King. The Jews there were thinking of what to eat and what to put on. So they were surprised at the question of the wise men—“Where is the King?” Herod was a murderer. He killed his mother, wife, his two sons and the priest who was also his relative. Herod was perturbed. From Jerusalem nobody came to see the newborn child. The

Jews knew that a Saviour would be born, yet they did not go with the wise men. So the wise men saw the star again and it led them to Bethlehem.

“We want to worship Him.” That was the cry of these wise men. Your cry must be, ‘I don't want food or rest; I want Jesus only.’ The wise men laboured and found Jesus. They praised Him. Life came into their hearts. It was a new grace.

One wise man brought gold and worshipped Jesus. Gold was not necessary for Mary's adornment or store. But it was needed for them to journey to Egypt. Others brought other gifts. Let us also worship Him.

— Late Mr. N. Daniel

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