


GLAD TIDINGS

“I will make you fishers of men”



There, in that lowly shed, Jesus the Saviour was born and laid in a manger. In that rude cradle lay the Son of the Highest—He whose presence had filled the courts of Heaven with glory. Before He came to the earth, Jesus was the Commander of the angel hosts. The brightest and most exalted of the sons of the morning heralded His glory at the creation. They veiled their faces before Him as He sat upon His throne. They cast their crowns at His feet, and sang His triumphs as they beheld His greatness. Yet this glorious Being loved the poor sinner; and took upon Him the form of a servant, that He might suffer and die for us.

Jesus might have remained at the Father's side, wearing the kingly crown and the royal robe; but for our sake He chose to exchange the riches of Heaven for the poverty of earth.

He chose to leave His station of high command, to leave the angels who loved Him. The adoration of the heavenly throng He chose to exchange for mockery and abuse by wicked men. From love to us, He accepted a life of hardship and a death of shame.

Chapter One The Birth of Jesus

In the little town of Nazareth, nestled among the hills of Galilee, was the home of Joseph and Mary, who were afterward known as the earthly parents of Jesus. Now Joseph was of the lineage, or family, of David; and so, when a decree was sent out for the people to be taxed, he had to go to Bethlehem, the city of David, to have his name enrolled. This was a toilsome journey, as people traveled in those times. Mary, who went with her husband, was very weary as she climbed the hill on which Bethlehem stands.

How she longed for a comfortable place in which to rest! But the inns were already full. The rich and proud were well cared for, while these humble travelers had to find rest in a rude building where cattle were sheltered.

Joseph and Mary possessed little of earth's riches, but they had the love of God, and this made them rich in contentment and peace. They were children of the heavenly King, who was about to give them a wonderful honor.

Angels had been watching them while they were on their journey, and when night came on, and they went to rest, they were not left alone. Angels were still with them.



All this Christ did to show how much God loves us. He lived on earth to show how we may honor God by obedience to His will. He did this so that by following His

Chapter Three The Visit of the Wisemen



example we may at last dwell with Him in His heavenly home.

The priests and rulers among the Jews were not ready to welcome Jesus. They knew that the Saviour was soon to come, but they expected Him to be a mighty king who would make them rich and great. They were too proud to think of the Messiah as being a helpless child.

So when Christ was born, God did not reveal it to them. He sent the glad news to some shepherds who kept their flocks on the hills around Bethlehem.

These were good men, and as they watched their sheep by night, they talked together about the promised Saviour, and prayed so earnestly for His coming that God sent bright messengers from His own throne of light to teach them.

“And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

“And the angel said unto them, 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 Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

“And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

“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.

“And 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. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

“And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.” Luke 2:9-19. ...

God wanted the people to know about the coming of Christ to the earth. The priests should have taught the people to look for the Saviour; but they themselves did not know of His coming. So God sent angels to tell the shepherds that Christ was born, and where they might find Him. So, too, when Jesus was presented at the temple, there were those who received Him as the Saviour. God had preserved the lives of Simeon and Anna, and they had the joyful privilege of testifying that Jesus was the promised Messiah. God meant for others, as well as the Jews, to know that Christ had come. In a country far to the east were wise men who had studied the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and who believed that His coming was near. The Jews called these men heathen; but they were not idolaters. They were honest men, who wanted to know the truth, and to do the will of God.

God looks upon the heart, and He knew that these men could be trusted. They were in a better condition to receive light from Heaven than were the Jewish priests, who were so full of selfishness and pride.

These wise men were philosophers. They had studied the handiwork of God in nature, and had learned to love Him there. They had studied the stars, and knew their movements.



They loved to watch the heavenly bodies in their nightly march. If a new star should be seen, they would welcome its appearance as a great event.

On that night when the angels came to the shepherds of Bethlehem, the wise men had noticed a strange light in the sky. It was the glory which surrounded the angel host.

When this light faded away, they had seen in the heavens what looked like a new star. At once they thought of the prophecy which says, “There shall come a

(See *Birth of Jesus* page 7)

Christmas Gifts for Christ

Once again the holiday season is upon us and so too is the end of another year. The Lord has showered

Our national conference at Columbia Union College this summer was well received. Several visitors and guests commented about new insights into the gospel, of a new love for Jesus Christ, and how excited they were to be going home with a new and deeper joy in the Lord.

Plans for this coming year include helping to send 200,000 copies of *What is Patriotism In the United States*, by A. T. Jones to congressmen, attorneys and judges throughout the United States. Printing and mailing costs are estimated to be \$70,000.00 for this project. We also hope to support an effort to have a “Religious Liberty in Light of the Gospel” forum in Washington D.C. during the fall of 2007 or 2008. Many of our thought leaders of America will be invited to attend.

Because of our stronger emphasis this year on evangelism, more requests than ever before have been received, desiring materials for outreach. Tens of thousands of dollars worth of free books, CDs, DVDs, and publications have been shipped all over the world—a work for which we thank the Lord and each and every one of you. This part of our ministry has grown by leaps and bounds.

I would like to share an article written in *Signs of the Times*, December 8, 1887, titled *Christmas Gifts for Christ*:

The great and testing truths which God has committed to us are to be given to all nations, tongues, and peoples. We invite all, men, women, and children, at the coming Christmas to do all that they possibly can do to aid in the accomplishment of this work. ... Let us excuse the members of our household from making presents to us. Our time, our money, belongs to God. Every hour, every moment, is precious. Dollars, dimes, and even pennies should be treasured up to aid in bringing souls to Christ and the truth. Shall not every needless ornament, every extravagance, every selfish indulgence, be given up, ...

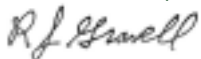
In giving to us his Son, God has poured out to us all Heaven in one gift. Let us with an overflowing heart, with gratitude and joy because of Christ's matchless love, bring him our offerings. ... Let us be constantly seeking to make God and his cause first in our thoughts and plans.

EGW

Your gifts alone make it possible for us to continue sending this “**most precious message**” around the world. As you give your end-of-the-year financial gifts to the Lord, remembering first your local church and conference, will you also help us with an extra sacrificial gift? As usual, we come to the end of this year with still more that we would like to do but are short of funds to fulfill all of the requests and some of the projects still ahead. ***Will you, once again, help us?***

Please put your tax-deductible gift in the enclosed envelope. We *always* need your prayers and general donations to operate this ministry and tend to immediate needs. If you have a special project you wish to support, please indicate that on your check and or envelope.

In His service,



R. J. Gravell, General Manager

The reconciliation of man to God could be accomplished only through a mediator who was equal with God, possessed of attributes that would dignify, and declare him worthy to treat with the infinite God in man's behalf, and also represent God to a fallen world. Man's substitute and surety must have man's nature, a connection with the human family whom he was to represent, and, as God's ambassador, he must partake of the divine nature, have a connection with the Infinite, in order to manifest God to the world, and be a mediator between God and man.

These qualifications were found alone in Christ. Clothing His divinity with humanity, He came to earth to be called the Son of man and the Son of God. He was the surety for man, the ambassador for God—the surety for man to satisfy by His righteousness in man's behalf the demands of the law, and the representative of God to make manifest His character to a fallen race.

The world's Redeemer possessed the power to draw men to Himself, to quiet their fears, to dispel their gloom, to inspire them with hope and courage, to enable them to believe in the willingness of God to receive them through the merits of the divine Substitute. As subjects of the love of God we ever should be grateful that we have a mediator, an advocate, an intercessor in the heavenly courts, ...

In earthly courts, when a king would make his greatest pledge to assure men of his truth, he gives his child as a hostage, to be redeemed on the fulfillment of his promise; and behold what a pledge of the Father's faithfulness; for when He would assure men of the immutability of His council, He gave His only-begotten Son to come to earth, to take the nature of man, not only for the brief years of life, but to retain his nature in the heavenly courts, an everlasting pledge of the faithfulness of God. ... "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3:1).

Through faith in Christ we become members of the royal family, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. In Christ we are one. As we come in sight of Calvary, and view the royal Sufferer who in man's nature bore the curse of the law in his behalf, all national distinctions, all sectarian differences are obliterated; all honor of rank, all pride of caste is lost.

The light shining from the throne of God upon the cross of Calvary forever puts an end to man-made separations between class and race. Men of every class become members of one family, children of the heavenly King, not through earthly power, but through the love of God who gave Jesus to a life of poverty, affliction, and humiliation, to a death of shame and agony, that He might bring many sons and daughters unto glory. ...

It is the spiritual and moral character that is of value in the sight of Heaven, and that will survive the grave and be made glorious with immortality for the endless ages of eternity. ... Riches, honor, the wisdom of men that have served the purposes of the enemy, can bring to their possessors no inheritance, no honor, no position of trust in the world which is to come. Only those who have appreciated the grace of Christ, which has made them heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus, will rise from the grave bearing the image of their Redeemer.

All who are found worthy to be counted as the members of the family of God in heaven, will recognize one another as sons and daughters of God. They will realize that they all receive their strength and pardon from the same source, even from Jesus Christ who was crucified for their sins. They know that they are to wash their robes of character in His blood, to find acceptance with the Father in His name, if they would be in the bright assembly of the saints, clothed in the white robes of righteousness.

*From the Man
to*

*For unto us a child is born,
unto us a son is given: and the
government shall be upon his shoulder:
and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,
The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9:6*

One in Christ

Then as the children of God are one in Christ, how does Jesus look upon caste, upon society distinctions, upon the division of man from his fellow man, because of color, race, position, wealth, birth, or attainments? The secret of unity is found in the equality of believers in Christ. The reason for all division, discord, and difference is found in separation from Christ. Christ is the center to which all should be attracted; for the nearer we approach the center, the closer we shall come together in feeling, in sympathy, in love, growing into the character and image of Jesus. With God there is no respect of persons.

Jesus knew the worthlessness of earthly pomp, and He gave no attention to its display. ... Although the prophet describes Him as “despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isa. 53:3), He might have been esteemed as the highest among the noble of the earth. The best circles of human society would have courted Him, had He condescended to accept their favor, but He desired not the applause of men, but moved independent of all human influence. Wealth, position, worldly rank in all its varieties and distinctions of human greatness, were all but so many degrees of littleness to Him ...

The lowly, those bound with poverty, pressed with care, burdened with toil, could find no reason in His life and example which would lead them to think that Jesus was not acquainted with their trials, knew not the pressure of their circumstances, and could not sympathize with them in their want and sorrow. The lowliness of His humble, daily life was in harmony with His lowly birth and circumstances. The Son of the infinite God, the Lord of life and glory, descended in humiliation to the life of the lowliest, that no one might feel himself excluded from His presence. He made Himself accessible to all. ...

Christ came to give to the world an example of what perfect humanity might be when united with divinity. He presented to the world a new phase of greatness in His exhibition of mercy, compassion, and love. He gave to men a new interpretation of God. As head of humanity, He taught men lessons in the science of divine government, whereby He revealed the righteousness of the reconciliation of mercy and justice. The reconciliation of mercy and justice did not involve any compromise with sin, or ignore

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Cross

could be exercised in the punishment of sinful, impenitent man without destroying its clemency or forfeiting its compassionate character, and justice could be exercised forgiving the repenting transgressor without violating its integrity. All this could be, because Christ laid hold of the nature of man, and partook of the divine attributes, and planted His cross between humanity and divinity, bridging the gulf that separated the sinner from God. “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 behoved 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. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted” (Heb. 2:16-18). “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15). ... Jesus came to bring moral power to combine with human effort, and in no case are His followers to allow themselves to lose sight of Christ, who is their example in all things. ... Jesus presents the truth before His children that they may look upon it, and by beholding it, may become changed, being transformed by His grace from transgression to obedience, from impurity to purity, from sin to heart-holiness and righteousness of life.

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Review And Herald, Dec. 22, 1891

*In the Teacher sent from God,
heaven gave to men its best and greatest.
He who had stood in the councils of the Most High,
who had dwelt in the innermost sanctuary of the Eternal,
was the One chosen to reveal in person to humanity the knowledge of God.
Education, p. 73*

the truth *Rose of Sharon*

THE WAY LORD THE LIFE

YAHWEH *Light of the World*

The First and Last SAVIOUR

KING OF KINGS I AM

COUNSELLOR

*Bread
of Life*

*The
Door*

*For God so loved the
world that He gave ...*

HOLY
ONE

JESUS

LORD OF LORDS

EMMANUEL **Christ**

Morning Star ✨

PRINCE OF PEACE

Jehovah Lamb

Messiah of God

The
Word

ALPHA & OMEGA

Advocate

Good Shepherd

Birth of Jesus (Continued from page 2)

Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." Numbers 24:17. Was this star a sign that the Messiah had come? They determined to follow it, and see where it would lead them. It led them into Judea. But when they came near to Jerusalem, the star grew so dim that they could not follow it.

Supposing that the Jews could at once guide them to the Saviour, the wise men went into Jerusalem, and said, "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.

"When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet." Matthew 2:2-5.

Herod did not like to hear of a king who might some day take his throne. So he took the wise men by themselves, and asked when they first saw the star. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying: "Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found

Him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him also."

When the wise men heard this, they started again on their journey. "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 were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshiped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." Matthew 2:6-11.

The most precious things they had, the wise men brought to the Saviour. In this they set an example for us. Many give presents to their earthly friends, but have none for the heavenly Friend who has given them every blessing. We should not do this. To Christ we should bring the best of all we have—of our time, money, and our love.

We may give to Him by giving to comfort the poor, and to teach people about the Saviour. So we can help to save those for whom He died. Such gifts Jesus blesses.

—Excerpted from *Christ Our Saviour*, by Ellen G. White



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