

Signs of the Times

A black and white photograph of three young boys in choir robes, singing from books on a balcony. The boy on the left is looking up and singing, the boy in the middle is looking forward and singing, and the boy on the right is looking up and singing. They are standing behind a decorative metal railing. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an outdoor setting at night.

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Rejoice FOR EVERMORE

THE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS! What single word has greater appeal? Few words, if any, are better able to flood the mind with joyful memories—memories of the home fireside, glad reunions, wholesome happiness, and practical expressions of love and affection.

Christmas! None, except the incurable misanthropist, is able to resist its festive spirit of geniality and exhilarating joy. Even the icy frigidity of a hardened Scrooge can scarce withstand the glowing warmth of the Christmas spirit. There prevails an atmosphere which lightens for a brief season the irksome burdens of heart and mind.

Thank God for Christmas. What does it matter if the Saviour whose birth it commemorates was really born some other time of the year? Any time—and every time—is good to remember Him who came to dispel the power and gloom of sin, and to animate the hearts of men and women with joy and gladness.

The First Christmas

What a joyous occasion that first Christmas was!—at least for a few, and certainly for the heavenly angels who viewed with deepest joy this first vital step in the reconciliation God was so anxious to make with man.

Not all, however, heralded the Saviour's birth with joy. Indeed, first and foremost among the incredulous and disclaimers, were Israel's revered and learned spiritual leaders. The very ones who should have hailed with rejoicing the Saviour's birth, proclaiming far and wide the stupendous fact that Messiah had come, failed dismally in their task. In spite of their profound erudition, spiritual blindness of the blackest hue enshrouded them. Sad indeed is the fact that such blindness is not confined to the spiritual leaders of Christ's day.

Steeped in their own theological ideas and convinced of the truth of their preconceived but erroneous notions, Israel's leaders were in no fit condition to listen to the angels' song which heralded the birth of the Babe. This rapturous thrill God gave to the simple-hearted shepherds who tended their sheep on the Judean hills.

R. D. Vine

The First Noel

Suddenly the darkness of the night was dispelled by a celestial light, and the stillness was gloriously broken by the exquisite harmonies of an angel choir which sang out the gladsome tidings. Surely more beautiful music was never

heard by human ears. The first reaction of the shepherds was one of fear, for "they were sore afraid." Luke 2:9. But the angel hastened to calm them, and the accompanying host burst forth with praise and adoration: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." Luke 2:14.

The great Creator, for love of lost mankind, had clothed Himself with human flesh. Divested now of heaven's matchless majesty, He lay, a humble, helpless baby in one of Bethlehem's manglers, dependent now on a loving mother's care. Here was the first mighty step in God's plan to save mankind from everlasting extinction. The power of Satan was destined thus to be forever broken.

With what fervour, therefore, could those angels sing on that first Christmas morn, in the joyful prospect of retaining humankind among the vast brotherhood of the universe!

The celestial song which those Judean shepherds listened to with awe and rapturous wonder, is symbolic of the joy and gladness every child of God should have.

Genuine Joy

What greater joy can one possess than that of knowing his sins are all forgiven; that Christ has already paid the death penalty for those sins; and that we now have full assurance that heaven will be our home? With such convictions, a man finds the burdens and problems of life assume proportions of infinitely lesser magnitude. Let a man be convinced that his citizenship is in heaven, where there is prepared a home of exquisite beauty and a life of unsullied loveliness—a life which will know no dismal failure or tragic termination—that man faces this present life with a braver heart, and a song of rejoicing animates his soul.

There is no reason why Christmas joys should be—as they so often are—superficial and ephemeral. Even the most abandoned outcast may taste of joys which abide, and grow in depth as these troubled days speed past. Such was

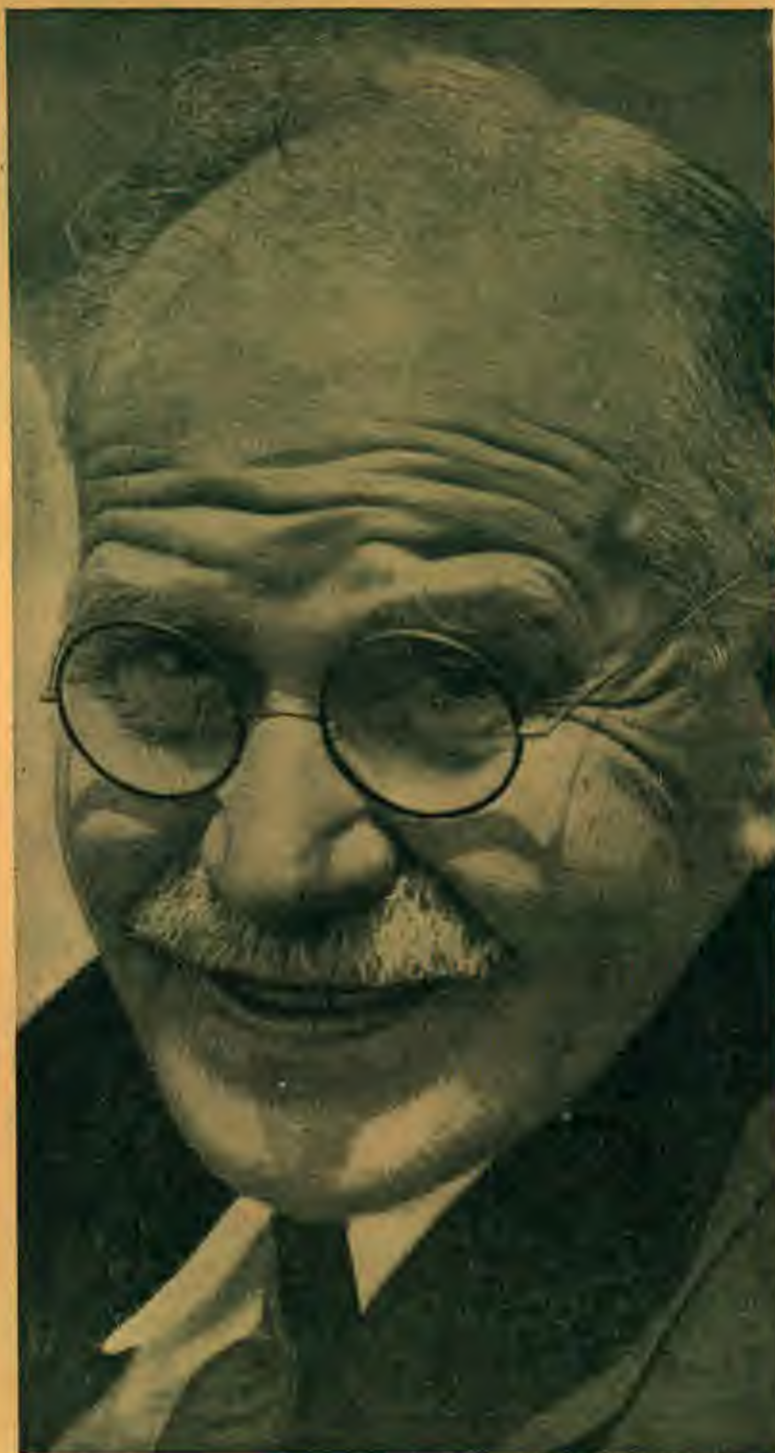


Pastor L. C. Naden

INVITES YOU TO
LISTEN IN THIS
CHRISTMAS FOR
A MESSAGE OF
HOPE AND CHEER
TO THE

Voice of Prophecy
Sunday Sessions

(Radio Log See Page 13)



Christ's purpose in coming to this poor, tragic world; that He might give to men—to you and me—"beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Isa. 61: 3. Have you, friend, put on this "garment of praise"? Have you found freedom from the "spirit of heaviness"? This Christmas should come as a reminder that such freedom is your heritage if you will by faith accept it.

Unquenchable Joy

All the troubles of this distraught world will fail to evaporate the peace and joy in the Christian's heart. Whatever the privations, however terrible the sufferings, he knows that earth's night of sin is almost spent. That soon, very soon, Christ will return to grant him conditions of complete perfection undreamed of by the most ardent idealist.

So David's message is a most appropriate Christmas message: "Let all those that put their trust in Thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because Thou defendest them: let them also that love Thy name be joyful in Thee." Ps. 5: 11.

Why the furrowed brow? Why the feelings of despair and hopelessness? Christ extends to all men everywhere the means of rising clear above the oppressive clouds of disillusionment and sorrow. In the joyful anticipation of a home with Him, we need no longer face life's humdrum and arduous routine with lustreless eyes and gloomy expressions.

Paul, the Persecuted

The Apostle Paul, mindful of the angels' song on that first Christmas day, bids us: "Rejoice evermore." 1 Thess. 5: 16. Prospects of a Saviour's smile, and of an imperishable crown of life in the "day of the Lord" enabled Paul to treat temporal things and physical sufferings with sublime indifference. While spending his last few hours of life in a filthy dungeon, awaiting the fatal fall of the headsman's axe, Paul penned words that were vibrant with triumphant joy and gladness.

Just read them. Remember they are words of a condemned but innocent man who had but a fortnight to live. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." 2 Tim. 4: 7, 8.

Banish the gloom. Shake off the blighting worries and doubts. For yours too this Christmas, and ever after, can be the blessed prospect of God's smile of approbation when Christ returns to reward His saints. Here is an experience for which the faithful do not have long to wait.

Wherefore, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." Phil. 4: 4.

Soon we shall be uniting our voices with those of the angel throng who thrillingly broke the silence of that momentous night two thousand years ago. John himself describes that song of rejoicing which the redeemed shall sing: "And they sing the song . . . of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints." Rev. 15: 3.

Who walks with God has food to spare,
A heavenly feast that all may share!
Who walks with God doth all possess:
Faith, hope, and love, and blissfulness.
Who walks with God the pilgrim's way
The vision finds at close of day!

—E. M. James.

The Star OF BETHLEHEM

★ F. A. SPEARING

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea 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.

Bethlehem, where Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, was buried! Bethlehem, the city of David, Israel's greatest king! Bethlehem, where was born another King, greater than David, called the King of the Jews! Our hearts are thrilled as we read once more that sweet story of old, or listen in to the music of the bells of Bethlehem as they ring out the good tidings of great joy, or think of that wonderful star that shone over Bethlehem's fields, and guided the wise men in their quest for the birthplace of the King.

The Star of Bethlehem! We have often heard little children sing about that star:—

"Little stars that twinkle in the heavens blue,
I have often wondered if you ever knew
How there rose one like you, leading wise
old men,
From the east, through Judah, down to
Bethlehem."

Perhaps there was little to distinguish the star that guided the wise men from the rest of the stars, except that it was more brilliant than they, and that it was ever moving before them, until "it came and stood over where the young child was."

Another song the children sing about the star gives an added thought:—

"A beautiful star there rose one night,
Divinely it shone with purest light;
Its wonderful rays the wise men led
To find the Saviour's lowly bed.

"Tis shining still, . . .
Salvation's star of God's goodwill."

The star of Bethlehem is shining still! That is what the children tell us when they sing this hymn. If that star is still shining, can we see it today? Does it shine where we happen to be? Some stars, like those which make up the Southern Cross, for example, shine only in one hemisphere. Is that true of the Star of Bethlehem? or do its rays reach

to the ends of the earth? Let us see what the Bible has to say about that.

On the fourth day of creation's week, God placed in the heavens lights which were to be for "signs," as well as for "seasons, and for days, and years." These lights are the sun, the moon, and the stars. We shall think of the stars only, just now. Sometimes they are spoken of as signs, or symbols, or illustrations in the Sacred Record in connection with God's great plan of redemption. We read of the "morning stars" singing together at the creation of man (Job 38: 7), of the promise the Lord made to Abraham that his seed should be as the stars of heaven (Gen. 15: 5), of the assurance that the righteous shall shine as the stars throughout the ages of eternity (Dan. 12: 3), and of the falling stars (meteors) which should appear in the last days as a token of the near coming of Christ. (Matt. 24: 29, 30.)

The "Star Out of Jacob"

A remarkable prophecy pointing to the first advent of the world's Redeemer was given more than fourteen centuries before our Lord was born. We read of it in Num. 24: 17: "I shall see Him, but not now: I shall behold Him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and shall destroy all the children of Sheth."

Balaam, who uttered this prediction, was a prophet who turned apostate; yet his words, so far as they apply to the advent of the Messiah, have been fulfilled. In the mention of a Star, we see no reference to heavenly bodies, but to a Person, to Christ Himself. He was the true Star of Bethlehem. Associated with the Star, in the prophecy, is the Sceptre, because the great One who was to come "out of Jacob" was to reign over the hearts of His people. The wise men recognized this truth to some extent, for in their quest they asked: "Where is He that is born king of the Jews?"

Isaiah wrote of the birth of the Son of God in these words: "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. 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, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." Isa. 9: 6, 7.

"Unto us," the Child will be born, says the prophet. "Unto you" the Child



"is born," declared the angel, seven centuries later. This Child, this Son of David, this Prince of Peace, is none other than the Star of Bethlehem of whom Balaam spoke.

Contemporary with Isaiah, the prophet Micah also wrote of the first advent: "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." Micah 5: 2.

This Ruler in Israel—who is He? The holy Child of whom Isaiah speaks; the Son of David; the Son of God; the Star of Bethlehem. The wise men who followed the star in the heavens were doubtless familiar with the writings of Moses, and Isaiah, and Micah. They searched for the One who should wield the sceptre: who should reign as king; the One who should be born in Bethlehem. And when at last they found Him whom they had been seeking, they worshipped Him, and presented to Him gifts appropriate to a royal person, "gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

The Wise Men Saw and Followed

Four times the star is mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew. "We have seen His star!" said the wise men. They had no doubt that the One of whom the prophets had written would come; and they believed that the mysterious light they had seen in the sky was the harbinger of His coming. "We have seen His star!" What did they see? Note the following:—

"The wise men had seen a mysterious light in the heavens upon that night when the glory of God flooded the hills of Bethlehem. As the light faded, a luminous star appeared, and lingered in the sky. It was not a fixed star, nor a planet. . . . That star was a distant company of shining angels, but of this the wise men were ignorant. Yet they were impressed that the star was of special import to them."—"The Desire of Ages," page 60.

"Herod . . . inquired . . . what time the star appeared." He had no particular interest in the star; nor in the wise men; nor in the Child who was to be born. His interest was in himself. But Herod's inquiry is interesting. The star appeared at the right time; through the writings of the prophets God had foretold just when His Son should come.

"The star . . . stood over where the young Child was." It was a true sign; a faithful guide; it did its work; it vanished. "When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." The journey of the wise men was at an end. They had accomplished their mission. They had seen the star, His star;

and best of all, they had seen Him, the King Himself, and had been permitted to worship Him and to present to Him their treasures. The light in the heavens was a symbol of the Light of the world; the star in the sky was a sign of the Star of Bethlehem. (Matt. 2: 2, 7, 9, 10.) What does the Star of Bethlehem mean to us? In the last book of the Bible, and in the last chapter, we have these words: "I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the off-spring of David, and the bright and morning star." Rev. 22: 16.

Christ was the founder of the house of David; and at the same time, the son

of David. Moreover, He was the glorious star of which the prophets had written; the Star of Bethlehem; the bright and Morning Star. To His people when in trouble, Christ says: "I will give him the Morning Star." Rev. 2: 28. He gives Himself to His people in their great need. He invites them to open the heart's door that He might enter and dwell with them.

The Apostle Peter writes on this same theme: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the Day Star arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1: 19.

(Concluded on page 7)

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WE HAVE SEEN

His Star

Merlin L. Neff



DARKNESS had settled down over the Roman Empire, and "hope" was a forgotten word.

It was the twilight of the ancient days. Murmurings, forebodings, and confusion threatened to engulf the world. The ark of God had been lost, and Jewish bigotry had taken the place of Zion's spiritual strength. The chosen people had passed from captivity to captivity. The downfall of Athens had brought the end of the golden age of literature and art. Rome, while resting in peace for a time, was again torn by revolution and the rivalry of its victorious generals. Heathenism and the worship of pagan deities were national institutions.

In the cities of the East was a handful of philosophers who studied the ancient manuscripts. They may have possessed the prophecy of Balaam which had been handed down from generation to generation. He had foretold that "there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." This was the promise of the Messiah—Immanuel, God with us!



★ The aged King Gustav V of Sweden with his two-year-old grandson, Prince Carl Gustaf. The hope of the royal houses of earth is in the children who will carry on the royal line. The hope of the entire human race is in Jesus, the Babe of Bethlehem.

As the wise men studied the heavens, they longed to behold the Star of promise. Then, one night it appeared! A strange and brilliant heavenly body was seen in the west, and the hearts of the watchers were thrilled. Was this the

JUST FRIENDS

★ If a friend of mine gave a feast and did not invite me to it, I should not mind a bit; but if a friend of mine had a sorrow, and refused to let me share it with him, I should feel it most bitterly.

OSCAR WILDE.

T'WOULD never do for God to live across the street,
Or in the house next door where we should daily meet,
For in His wisdom and His love He always sends
His angels kind to walk with us. We call them friends.

Just "friends," one word, but these few letters can express
A wealth of sympathy and pure unselfishness.
One syllable, a single breath can form it—"friends,"
But, oh, how much our happiness on them depends!

When trouble comes, or loss, when grief is ours to bear,
They come, our friends, with words of cheer our load to share.
How could we face defeat without a friend's caress?
Had we no friends to praise, how bare would be success!

'Tis not God's plan that we shall see Him face to face;
Yet He would hedge us in with His abounding grace.
And so His messengers of love to earth He sends—
They're angels, but we call them friends!

—Selected.

sign of the coming King, the hope of the world?

Faith became action, and some of these men, like Abraham of old, started upon a long journey across the shimmering sands. They did not travel empty-handed; they showed their faith by carrying gifts the Lord of heaven would accept.

When the caravan arrived at Jerusalem, the travellers from the Orient sought Herod and asked: "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: 2.

The religionists of Israel should have been watching intently for the Star, but they were engrossed with selfish interests, political bickerings, and hidebound traditions. The Son of God "came unto His own, and His own received Him not." John 1: 11.

The wise men followed the star and found the holy child. Their vision of life was for ever changed; their hope was fulfilled as they beheld the love of God in the gift of His only Son. The record declares, in words almost symbolic, that these men "departed into their own country another way."

"We have seen His star," and a new way is opened before us—the way of truth and life!

A mother in war-ruined Germany is ready to commit suicide. She has no food or fuel. Her children are cold and starving. Remembering the faith of her childhood, the woman kneels on the earth floor of her cellar room. The gaunt faces of her little son and daughter look with pleading eyes into the tear-dimmed eyes of mother. They hear her whisper: "Mein Gott." There is hope; there is faith. Before the day has passed there is a box from America with food and clothing. Because men have seen the Star there is sacrificial giving, there is love and hope.

A Japanese boy in Hiroshima hobbles into his home—a rough shack in the midst of rubble. He is blind in one eye and there are fearful scars on his arms and legs. He is a victim of the atomic bomb. Does he hate the nation that destroyed his home and killed his father and his sister? He might have an inbred hatred that could never be overcome were it not for the blessed Book and the mission school. This Japanese boy and his mother have seen His Star, and the love for the Son of God has kindled a forgiving love in their hearts.

A young doctor sits at his desk after a tedious day in the city hospital wards. His hospital training is almost at an end. On his desk are two letters. One is from a friend of the family offering the young doctor a partnership in an excellent prac-

tice in a great metropolis. The second letter is from the mission board of his church calling him and his young wife to be medical missionaries to Central Africa. He weighs the opportunities for wealth and advancement against the call of loving service. He remembers the words: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matt. 20: 28. He pauses, and then begins an answer to the mission board: "We are accepting the call to service in Africa." This young Christian doctor has seen His Star!

The greatest gift heaven could bestow is offered to us by God's dear Son. The Father speaks to us in this Person. In Jesus, God speaks His will, His intention, His future plans, and His matchless love. At this season of joy and giving may our hearts be touched by the gift of heaven. Look up; the Star shines in the darkness. He is our hope and our salvation. We can courageously face hunger, privation, loss—yes, and death itself—for "we have seen His Star, . . . and are come to worship Him."



The Star of Bethlehem

(Concluded from page 5)

The apostle is writing about the dawning of the day of God; the second coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He prays that the Day Star—the Morning Star—shall arise in our hearts. We may have Him with us here and now; but the fellowship and communion with Him will be far more wonderful when we see Him face to face.

"Tis shining still, 'tis shining still,
That beautiful star, o'er plain and hill;
'Tis shining still, 'tis shining still,
Salvation's star of God's goodwill."

Let us all pray that the Star of Bethlehem may shine down upon us; and that it may shine in our hearts, that we may, ourselves, one day, "shine . . . as the stars for ever and ever." Dan. 12: 3.



The King's Motto

LAWRENCE MAXWELL

THE sun rose one morning on a dreadful scene. Strawn over the ground was the flower of the French nobility—knights and nobles interspersed among the common footmen, lying where they had fallen.

Here, the day before, the English and the French had fought the great Battle of Crécy. Late into the night the battle had raged. Midnight struck before all the defeated French had fled.

An exquisite panel of Nottingham lace hanging in the Guildhall, London, commemorates the heroism and sacrifice of the men of the R.A.A.F. in the Battle of Britain.

Not until the day broke did the English realize how complete the victory had been. But as soon as it was light, out they went to count the dead, search for comrades, aid the wounded.

King Edward III and his son, the Black Prince, were among them. Eagerly they sought to identify the chief knights and lords. Presently they noticed one arrayed in unusually expensive armour. Examining the armour carefully, they recognized it as belonging to old King John of Bohemia, who, though blind, had insisted on joining in the fight.

As the familiar old story relates, Edward saw on the king's crest a badge of three white ostrich feathers, with the words, *Ich Dien*, "I Serve."



Plucking it from the armour of the dead king he gave it to his son as a fitting token of that great day. From that morning in 1346 to the present time, the Prince of Wales has always borne this badge and motto.

Once there was another battle, and another King who died. Though infinitely greater than the king of Bohemia, yet His was the same motto. His life centred in the theme, "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Matt. 20: 27. "From His earliest years He was possessed of one purpose; He lived to bless others."

God, our Father, takes that motto from the heart of King Jesus and offers it to each one of us, a pattern for our lives.

"I Serve." Wonderful words! Motto of the first-born sons of the kings of England. Motto of the only begotten Son of the King of heaven. What more fitting motto for us, called to be, with Jesus, sons of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords!

HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED



C. B. Dixon

Won

H. M. S. Richards

WHAT is the most unforgettable experience of your childhood? No doubt a number of things stand out above everything else, and it may be hard to say which holds the first place in memory. In childhood, events closely connected with our family life are likely to make the deepest impression. As we grow out of childhood into youth, the world seems to grow larger, and things that we never noticed before impress us as being important.

For instance, a young man seventeen years of age, who from the days of earliest recollection had felt that he would some day be a minister, sat one night in a board tabernacle and listened to the great evangelist, Billy Sunday. He will never forget that experience; it was one of the big dates, a red-letter day in the calendar of his life. And the subject of the sermon was as unforgettable as the man; it was one word from Isa. 9: 6. The preacher said it was one of the 256 names of Jesus. That word is "Wonderful"! Let us read the text as it is here in the Holy Bible:—

"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isa. 9: 6.

No wonder that sermon stands out in his memory as one of life's unforgettable experiences. With such a text and such a preacher it will glow like a flame in his heart for ever.

Jesus is called Wonderful because that name describes His character. In the holy Scriptures names are always descriptive or predictive. They tell what a person is or what he will be. So every name given to our Saviour in the holy Book describes Him. That is why He is called Wonderful—the name is appropriate. His birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, mediation, and second coming are all wonderful.

The creation was wonderful, something above and beyond the common experience of mankind. The Flood, overwhelming a wicked world and leaving its signature carved in the rocks of the earth, was wonderful. There had been nothing like it before, and there has been nothing like it since. When the Red Sea opened for the children of Israel to cross over on dry land, it was wonderful. It was wonderful for the mighty rock to pour forth water for a million people. The sun standing still for Joshua was wonderful. All the acts of God are wonderful and beyond and above the common order of life. So also is Jesus

wonderful. He is the Wonder Man of the ages.

1. He was wonderful in His birth. No other birth was ever like His. Jesus had only one human parent. He was both God and man. Before His birth in Bethlehem His goings forth had been "from of old, from everlasting." Micah 5: 2. At the creation of the world He was with the Father, and all things were made by Him. John 1: 1-3.

It would have been an unutterable condescension even had He been born in the golden palace of a king and rocked in a diamond-embellished cradle with princesses for nurses. But He gave up the glory of heaven and was born of a poor woman and cradled in a manger.

2. Christ was wonderful in His life. He came to bless, not to curse; to lift up, not to drag anyone down; to save drunkards, thieves, blasphemers, and failures; to dry tears, bind up broken hearts, heal the sick, and comfort the troubled. But when He came, there was no place for Him in the hotel. Every room was taken. The king tried to kill Him, and babies were His first martyrs. He lived most of His earthly life in an obscure village; He wrote no book, organized no army, built no home, owned no property; but the mighty empire of

erful!

Rome which ruled the world when Jesus was on earth is but a memory, while His name is known all over the world.

His is the only sinless life that has ever appeared on earth. He was "holy." Heb. 7: 26. He "knew no sin." 2 Cor. 5: 21. "In Him is no sin." 1 John 3: 5. He "did no sin." 1 Peter 2: 22.

His life was one continual victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 4: 15. His power to heal the sick and to raise the dead was wonderful. His teaching has never been equalled in simplicity, clearness, and adaptation to His hearers. His parables were original. What He taught and the way He taught were both wonderful. The parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son are the greatest short stories ever written. He claimed to be the Son of God and declared that all who rejected Him as such would be lost.

He forgave sins and raised the dead and said: "I am the resurrection, and the life." John 11: 25. The Holy Spirit in the Gospel of Matthew cries, "Behold your King!" in Mark, "Behold your Prophet!" in Luke, "Behold your Priest!" and in John, "Behold your God!"

3. Christ was wonderful in His death. He foretold how and when He would be betrayed by one of His own disciples. It was wonderful that He should be sold so cheaply—for thirty pieces of silver, or about £5. He was crucified between two thieves. He prayed for His enemies and died quoting the words of Holy Scripture. His death was wonderful also in its time. Taking place three and a half years after His baptism, it occurred in the midst of Daniel's seventieth week of years, and so fulfilled to the letter a divine prophecy made five hundred years before. It was at the Passover season, when hundreds of thousands were assembled to worship in Jerusalem, that Christ

our Passover was sacrificed for us. 1 Cor. 5: 7.

The events which took place at His death were wonderful. The sky was darkened, and the sun hid its face from the awful scene. The earth shook, graves were opened, and many of the saints which slept arose and came out of their graves at the time of Christ's resurrection and appeared to many. The great veil of the temple was rent in twain, from top to bottom.

His death was wonderful in that it was for others. We read in 1 John 2: 2 that He died "for the sins of the whole world." He was holy, and His death was voluntary. He gave Himself, therefore it was acceptable to God. "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." 1 Cor. 15: 3. His death was wonderful because in that one mighty act He was the burnt offering. He "offered Himself without spot to God." Heb. 9: 14. He was the sin offering; He was made "sin for us." 2 Cor. 5: 21. He was the trespass offering, "who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." 1 Peter 2: 24. He was the peace offering, "having made peace through the blood of His cross." Col. 1: 20. So through faith in Him, we can rejoice in sins forgiven because—

"Christ has for sin atonement made,
What a wonderful Saviour!
We are redeemed! the price is paid!
What a wonderful Saviour!"

—Elisha A. Hoffman.

4. Christ was wonderful in His resurrection. He had foretold that He would arise from the dead. He had said: "The third day I will arise." But all His disciples seemed to have forgotten it. None went to His tomb early that day except a few women, and they went to prepare His body for burial, a work which they had postponed on the approach of the holy Sabbath. His resurrection was wonderful in the way it took place. When the disciples came to the tomb they found no disorder. There was "the napkin, that was about His head,



not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." John 20: 7.

His recorded appearances after His resurrection were wonderful and so different from what man would have arranged. Had the story been false, it would have had Him appearing to Caiaphas, the high priest, to Pilate, to the Pharisees, and to Herod. But, instead He appeared only to His friends, and His best friends at that. Not one of His enemies ever saw Him again. His wonderful resurrection is God's vindication of the character and work of Christ. He claimed God as His Father, and now He is "declared to be the Son of God with power, . . . by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. 1: 4.

5. Christ was wonderful in His ascension.

"When He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight." Acts 1: 9.

After giving many infallible proofs of His resurrection, He ascended up on high as a mighty victor over sin and death and Satan. No wonder He was greeted with song by the holy inhabitants of heaven!

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." Ps. 24: 7.

6. Christ is wonderful in His mediation. After giving His last benediction on the Mount of Olives, our Saviour ascended to heaven; and, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down in mighty power, a witness that He is now exalted at the right hand of God. This is clearly stated by the Apostle Peter in his great Pentecostal sermon as reported in Acts 2: 33:—

"Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

In the first chapter of Hebrews we see Him at "the right hand of the Majesty on high," as the Son and Creator. In the eighth chapter He is our great High Priest, our representative before the throne of God. In the dignity of that office we see Him "on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Heb. 8: 1, 2.

Last, but not least of all:—

7. Christ will be wonderful in His second coming. When He went away, the clouds received Him out of their sight.

"While they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which

also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1: 10, 11.

No event is more certain in the promises of Holy Scripture than the literal, visible, personal, and bodily return of Christ. At some moment unknown to anyone on earth today, He will come again and His people will be "caught up . . . to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4: 17. So we look for the wonderful appearing of our wonderful Saviour and pray that last prayer in the Holy Bible: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22: 20.

Oh, wonderful Jesus! There is no other like Him. There may be another

Homer, another Virgil, another Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, or Raphael—but there will never be another Jesus. We read of Alexander the Great, Cæsar the Great, Frederick the Great, Alfred the Great, Peter the Great, Napoleon the Great, but we never speak of Jesus the Great. Yet there has been only one supremely great and of Him the angel said:—

"Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1: 21.

It is the story of Jesus that men everywhere need to hear. Preach that message, tell that story, and they will listen.

Fanny J. Crosby was sightless as far as this world is concerned, but God gave her marvellous spiritual vision when she wrote:—

"Tell me the story of Jesus,
Write on my heart every word,
Tell me the story most precious,
Sweetest that ever was heard."

The Holy Bible is true. Jesus is wonderful—He is the Son of God. All those who accept Him as their Saviour find their burdens rolled away, their sins forgiven, and their hearts filled with a song. I know it is true, and that is why I am speaking to you today.

Come to Him now and make the full surrender that your heart longs for. When you do—believing, repenting, confessing, obeying—the loving Saviour will not fail you nor forsake you; and, with all who truly love Him, you, too, will know why His name is called "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Isa. 9: 6.



The Innkeeper

A. L. Crosbie

"Yes, I am Batthias. Yes, I kept an inn
Down in Bethlehem, beside the gate
Whence travellers came and went,
Seeking food and lodging day and night.
What is this you ask me? To take
My old mind back full thirty years
Ago and more, to when the great Augustus
Decreed that all, both high and low, taxed should be?
Well do I remember. From all parts
The people came, crowding the cities.
I was pressed night and day
For lodging, till there was no further room.
And still they came.
Yes, I remember those two lowly ones,
Just a common working man
Leading a donkey,
With a woman set thereon.
'No room!' I cried,
Impatient at his pleading,

'No room! You must go your way
And seek rest elsewhere. . . . But wait—
Your lady, friend, is ill—I have a wife—
Still, there's no room in the inn—
Only the stable; I will spread clean straw. . . .'
He led the donkey there,
And lifted down the woman, pale and tired,
Well, I heard about a strange light
Lingering o'er that stable, but I was too busy
To heed such stories;
Midst all the clamouring duties
Of an inn, what time had I for such?
Some said a God was born, some a King
Who would take proud Herod's sceptre,
And with righteousness and glory rule the earth.
A brutal slaughter of the innocents there was
When Herod heard that tale!
I've wondered often if that babe escaped his wrath.
Yes, I heard of one, Jesus,
Through the later years.
I once was strangely drawn to go to Him myself.
I saw His face, and heard His voice. I beheld
The wondrous miracles He did.
It is not these so much that stir me yet.
'Tis the strange longing in my breast
That He aroused. A sense of need I feel,
That makes me long again to see the matchless
Kindness of His glance.
I, Batthias, keeper of the inn at Bethlehem,
To be thus weakened by this strange Teacher!
Well, anyway, they slew and crucified Him,
Those rough Romans and the treacherous priests,
Deeming Him a traitor, death deserving.
What's this you say? That He was once this Babe,
Born in my stable all those years ago!
They told me this Man rose, and that the soldiers
Guarding His sealed tomb saw a strange
Light that smote them to the ground,
And He came forth a King and Conqueror!
Ah, the wonder of that story grips me day and night.
Far into the lone nights I've studied
The scrolls of prophets, priests, and psalms,
Seeking the truth about this Being who could break
The portals of a sealed Roman tomb.
But if this is true you say—that that Babe
Was Jesus, and Jesus was Messiah—
Then I, Batthias, keeper of the inn at Bethlehem,
Turned the Lord of earth and heaven from my door!"



"SON OF THE HIGHEST"

THE out of doors, even in a city, lies quiet on Christmas Day. The suburban streets are almost deserted; the tall houses of commerce stand in strange aloofness; far off the burnished fields recline motionless. Perhaps all the jollity and activity have crept indoors, where people, no doubt, are absorbed in the traditional Christmas celebrations—superb dinners from tables bright with festive decorations, the gaiety of spangled trees and mysterious, wrapped parcels, the good cheer of this day of pure relief from any labour, the singing and toasting.

But without, a calm silence prevails, which seems to fit in with this season and the thought of that first Christmas long ago.

"All in the August evening
August airs were abroad.
I saw the sheep with their lambs
And thought on the Lamb of God."

It was in such stillness, one thinks, that the Christ-child first opened His eyes upon this world.

"But peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of light
His reign of peace upon the earth began.
The Windes, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joys to the mild Ocean
Who now hath quite forgot to rave
While birds of calm sit brooding on the
charmed wave."

But how different was the scene the next day! No profound quiet reigned. The clatter of many footsteps resounded in the little Bethlehem street that passed by the meagre lodging of Mary and Joseph. There were many people in the city at this time, the normal number being increased by those who had come for the taxing; all lodgings were congested, and as Mary and Joseph had found to their cost "there was no room in the inn."

Many, both of local inhabitants and strangers, had cause to traverse the streets. The news quickly spread among the neighbouring dwellings of a baby born in the cattle stalls. And so people

found cause to peep within, some from curiosity, the women with a desire to help if they might, the children, eager but shy, reaching no further than the door. The ox-herd came to attend his beast and a few found cause to accompany him. A stranger-woman, delivered of her child in a nearby cattle-shed!—can you not hear the news, with its accompanying comments, flying from lip to lip?

But Mary—no destitute stranger, but angel-guarded daughter of God—was she embarrassed? Did she feel the acuteness of her delicate position? this sacred hour of her life become common news, the morning item of gossip among these unknown people?

One thinks that a holy rapture crowded out less worthy thoughts. Was there humiliation in her circumstances, it was forgotten in the holiness and purity of her loving thoughts. Sweet was this woman whom God had chosen—this favoured among women.

"Mother of Jesus! no lady thou;
Common woman of common earth.
Our lady ladies call her now,
But Christ was never of gentle birth;
A common man of the common earth."

"For God's ways are not as our ways:
The noblest lady in the land
Would have given up half her days,
Would have cut off her right hand
To bear the child that was God of the land."

"Never a lady did He choose,
Only a maid of low degree,
So humble she might not refuse
The carpenter of Galilee;
A daughter of the people, she."

Whatever outward stir or interruption came it shook her not from the heavenly calm which surrounded her.

"A woman, when she is in travail, hath sorrow that her hour is come, but when she is delivered of her child, she remembereth no more her sorrow for joy that a man is born into the world." So said her Son later. Had Mary told Him of her joy as she looked into His face—her son, her first-born, but exquisite wonder, the child of God? This child was the offspring of herself and God; He was God. She now knew the joy of woman-kind, but oh!—amazing thought—this was the Child of the Ages.

What thoughts, divine and human, must have counter-played across her mind; what tender hopes were born; what waves of emotion gushed through her soul as she looked into the tiny face and marked the little form in her arms! Did she see minutely delineated there her own features? for she was the only parent from whom they could derive their cast. Love and wonder rose and swelled within her, and as she pondered on the wee Child in her arms, tender pity sprang up in her heart and for the sake of her little Son she regretted the crude circumstances in which His being had first seen the light.

Isaac Watts in "A Cradle Hymn" sings to a little child:—

"Soft and easy is thy cradle:
Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay,
When His birthplace was a stable
And His softest bed was hay."

"Blessed babe! what glorious features—
Spotless fair, divinely bright!
Must He dwell with brutal creatures;
How could angels bear the sight?"

"Lo, He slumbers in His manger
Where the horned oxen fed.
Peace, my darling; here's no danger,
Here's no ox anear thy bed."

Like a dream was the visit of the shepherds, a visitation that fitted in with the calm rapture of that day. To Mary, these big, hardy, out-of-door men, kneeling in humble worship before a helpless baby, seemed not at all incongruous; for all things seemed caught by a gleam of heavenly radiance that came into the circuit of the bright influence of the little one in her arms. Heaven and earth had blended. To the mother, at this moment, they were one.

And in the Christmases that followed, one wonders how the boy Jesus celebrated the event. One imagines the little cottage, with its sanded floor and wooden implements made by father Joseph, lit by a lamp on the table and fading into mysterious dimness in the corners; with mother Mary beside the fire, Joseph on the other side relaxing, and Jesus sitting at their feet; and once again they repeat His birthday story. The boy listens with intent eyes, now fastened upon father



Joseph who is telling the story, now turned eagerly to mother Mary as she interjects with the remembrance of some detail; for a woman's mind loses nothing of such happenings. Perhaps on later birthdays they recalled to His mind the words of Scripture, pointing out to this Child early versed in Holy Writ, how His birth had thrillingly fulfilled words of the ancient prophets.

Christmas is a wonderful time, especially for the children. Perhaps Jesus meant it to be. The joy of that birthday lives on. Its greeting, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord," are glorious words which thrill one through. Yet they are but a prelude to a grander chorus. The future glows with the joy of a million Christmases to come when those who now lie in the lap of mother-earth in sleep shall, with all His shepherds and sheep, hear the words, "Peace, . . . goodwill."

We have watched the Babe grow out of His mother's arms, out-grow His boyhood's sandals, and exceed even the promise of His brilliant manhood, until as a crucified and risen Saviour He is lifted up into the heights whence the

angels sang. Our love for the little Babe was all pity and tenderness; but our devotion for the risen Lord is composed of all the fullness of strength and adoration, of admiration, gratitude, and joy, that can be summoned from the depths of human nature. How much more majestic and inspiring is the pronouncement, "This same Jesus . . . will come again," than the words, "Unto you is born . . . a Son."

He came heralded by a choir of angels; but His coming again will be amidst the hosts of glory. He came once announced by the song of angels—and its sweetness has rung down through the ages to bless the human ears in which its echo rang; but His return will be "with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God." A little band, a few favoured ones, gazed upon Him in His infancy, but at His next appearance "every eye shall see Him." As a child He lay helpless in His mother's soft embrace; but "the throne of His glory" shall bear Him the second time to earth.

What a glorious Christmas that will be, when the Son of David, the Jesus whom we know and love, shall come again!

E. M. A.

GOD'S SUNSHINE

*Never once since the world began
Has the sun ever stopped shining.
His face very often we could not see,
And we grumbled at his inconstancy;
But the clouds were really to blame—not he,
For behind them he was shining.*

*And so behind life's deepest clouds
God's love is always shining;
We veil it at times with our faithless fears,
And darken our sight with our foolish tears,
But in time the atmosphere always clears—
For His love is always shining.*

—John Oxenham.

heart, "There is no God." We should ask ourselves: "Do I find myself in this category; do I disbelieve the existence of God?" If so, we are fools.

Perhaps you say: "Well, I don't deny the existence of God; I'm not an atheist." Good! But, friend, are you a doubter? Is your unspoken thought: "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Matt. 11: 3.

As you have no sound reason to deny God's existence, you have no sound reason for doubting Jesus. Make a personal test of Him and you will never doubt Him. The Bible tells us that Jesus was God in the flesh. Jesus proved this by His power. In Mark 2: 5 we read: "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." "Oh," whispered the onlookers, "He blasphemeth. Only God can forgive sins." Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, continued: "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (He saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and go thy way into thine house. Verses 10-12. Jesus can work similar miracles today. In honest contrition, kneel before Him asking forgiveness. The miracle that occurs then, the pardon and peace that will flow over your soul, will for ever remove you from the ranks of the doubters.

But while you do not disbelieve the existence of God, while you do not doubt the Messiahship of Jesus, perhaps, like Peter, you sometimes follow Him afar off. (Luke 22: 54.)

Many of us fit into this group. We are lacking in devotion, wanting in purity, and failing in generous, practical kindness.

Friend, how do you stand? Do you come short of the glory of God? A new year is before you. The past may be forgiven and forgotten. Why not start this new year right? Won't you kneel down now and pray: "Oh, Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief." Remember, wise men still worship Him.



WISE MEN STILL WORSHIP

JERRY LIEN

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.

In our minds' eye we see these three men of profound wisdom, arrayed in splendid garments, presenting their symbolic gifts. They looked on their best possessions as not good enough for the King of heaven.

The intervening centuries have given us a basis for sound evaluation. From

our vantage-point we look back upon history. We see the cultured Greek, the imperious Roman, the learned scribe, the bigoted Pharisee, and we realize that the men from the east were wisest of all. They could discern eternal values; they worshipped Him.

We have come nineteen hundred years since the manger scene at Bethlehem, but still it is the truly wise who worship.

In this matter of worship we may fall into one of three categories, which the Bible points out plainly.

We find the first group specified in Ps. 14: 1. "The fool hath said in his

XMAS A RACKET ?

Lora E. Clement

CHRISTMAS is a racket! A plain, simple, undisguised racket!"

Eva May looked up from the perky bow she had just tied on a dainty, holly-trimmed package, and placed the box on the "finished present" pile.

"I've been thinking the same thing," murmured Irene, who was tatting furiously.

"There are dozens of people whom I like about the same," Eva May went on to say, as she measured and cut the paper that was to wrap Elsie's pen-and-pencil set, "and selecting presents for all of them is getting to be such a burden."

"To say nothing of paying for them," put in Jack.

"How more than true!" agreed Irene without looking up.

"And when somebody gives me something, I feel that I must give them something in return and—"

"Vice versa," interrupted Jack.

"Yes, of course; but what I'm trying to say is that it would be a real relief to declare a moratorium on all presents for one Christmas season, and then start over again, and give only to the people I really want to give to."

"Let's!" Irene was enthusiastic over the idea.

"What'll folks think—and say?"

"We should worry! Next year let's not give a single thing outside the family."

"I'm tired enough and financially embarrassed enough to agree one hundred per cent," sighed Eva May. "Are you with us, Jack?"

"Y-e-s, I guess so," their brother spoke thoughtfully, "since you don't eliminate the family; but how silly of you girls to ever let yourselves get into such a fix."

"Well, it's rather like Topsy in Uncle Tom's Cabin," Irene explained. "Our lists just grewed!"

"And I for one wasn't aware how deep I was getting in until I suddenly realized that I'm sending gifts to fifteen casual friends, and I could add fifteen more just as easy as not!"

"There are twenty outside-the-family names that could be struck off my list," Irene added. "And when I actually do it, the people concerned will probably be as relieved as I."

"It'll be a bit hard to make the break," Eva May admitted, "but let's shake hands on it, and promise not to weaken at the last minute."

"And it'll be my duty to see that neither of you forgets your agreement," Jack promised. "I've never branched out much from the family, so it'll be easy for me to cut down."

A year had passed. Once more the holiday season was almost at hand. Once more the three Weldon young people were in the cosy home living-room together. But this time there was no hectic atmosphere. Their Christmas shopping was all finished.

"What a relief!" the girls sighed in unison.

"Not to be rushing around at the last minute!" added Irene.

"Making or buying presents for Tom, Dick, and Harry." Finished Eva May, "who felt the very same way about receiving them that we did about giving them."

"Yes, Christmas is a racket," Jack mused, as he stood back to admire the

evergreen wreaths he had just hung in the windows. "That is, it's a racket one way as you look at it. But that's the wrong way. The spirit of Christmas is what really counts."

"I want to go on record as believing in giving—definitely, yes!" Irene spoke thoughtfully, "but not miscellaneous—just to folks who really will be helped by my gifts, and who will not feel under obligation to give me something in return."

"You're altogether right," agreed Eva May.

"I read something interesting the other day," offered Jack. "It was about a prominent New York surgeon who, in giving one of his patients a prescription for happiness, said, 'Stop standing in the way of your generous impulses.' She had been having surgery treatments from him, and knew that his prices were exceeded only by his reputation. So, when she was ready to settle her bill and the doctor's secretary told her that there was no charge, she was very much astonished, and demanded an instant interview."

"The doctor chuckled when she had had her say, and spoke something on this wise: 'You needn't be surprised. I do these things once in a while. Just a whim of mine. You're a student. I was a student once myself. It's a lovely spring day, and it all adds up to a generous impulse. Go out and splurge on some books.'"

"And when she questioned him more closely he added: 'Most people are too fenced in by convention, false pride, or timidity to carry through the simple, friendly—often no more than courteous gestures—dictated by their less foolish and more benevolent selves. They ruthlessly stifle these pleasant impulses with, 'What will folks think of me?' or, 'I'll lose prestige.' And thus they build up high, lonely walls around their more human, attractive selves."

"In my own case I long ago determined to indulge my more generous nature, no matter how unconventional the result, whether it was Christmas or not and whether it was directed at friends or strangers. Perhaps it's purely selfish, for I know of nothing that gives one a greater lift than being able to give something away. And besides, I like to think that when I do something unexpectedly nice for someone, that person will pass it along, and thus form an endless chain of goodwill which must reach back to me sometime."

"Which reminds me of a story that is told of Abraham Lincoln," Irene spoke now. "It was a Christmas Eve, and his face was worried as he bent over his desk. As he wrote, however, a smile

LISTEN IN EVERY SUNDAY TO THE VOICE OF PROPHECY

N.S.W.

2UE - 9.30 a.m.
2GB - 5.30 p.m.
2CA - 5.30 p.m.
2KA - 1.30 p.m.
2GZ - 1.30 p.m.
2MG - 6.00 p.m.
2WG - 5.30 p.m.
2DU - 5.45 p.m.
2BH - 5.45 p.m.
2LF - 9.00 a.m.
2RG - 7.15 p.m.
2GN - 6.00 p.m.
2AY - 6.00 p.m.
2QN - 9.00 a.m.
2BE - 9.30 a.m.
2HD - 6.00 p.m.
2HR - 6.00 p.m.
2TM - 6.00 p.m.
2AD - 6.30 p.m.
2LM - 2.30 p.m.
2PK - 1.30 p.m.

QUEENSLAND

4BH - 9.30 a.m.
4GR - 10.00 a.m.
4SB - 9.00 a.m.
4GY - 9.30 a.m.
4ZR - 6.00 p.m.
4MB - 5.30 p.m.
4BU - 9.00 p.m.
4RO - 3.30 p.m.
4TO - 9.30 p.m.
4CA - 9.30 p.m.

VICTORIA

3AW - 2.30 p.m.
3UL - 5.00 p.m.
3GL - 6.30 p.m.
3CS - 6.00 p.m.
3YB - 5.00 p.m.
3BO - 6.00 p.m.
3SR - 5.00 p.m.
3CV - 5.30 p.m.
3MA - 6.30 p.m.
3HA - 3.30 p.m.
3TR - 3.30 p.m.

SOUTH AUST.

5DN - 1.00 p.m.
5RM - 1.00 p.m.

WEST AUST.

6AM - 6.00 p.m.
6PM - 6.00 p.m.
6PR - 6.00 p.m.
6TZ - 6.00 p.m.
6CI - 6.00 p.m.

TASMANIA

7HT - 5.30 p.m.
7EX - 10.15 a.m.
7AD - 7.30 p.m.

FIJI

ZJV - 9.30 p.m.

gradually began to pull at the corners of his expressive mouth.

"'But the woman is your enemy,' said a visitor who stood beside him, watching the words his pen was forming. 'She has been saying dangerous things about you, Mr. President. Do you think it wise to grant her this courtesy now?'"

"'Our country has seen enough of hate and bloodshed,' Lincoln returned. 'It is Christmas Eve. Surely I can show kindness to an enemy if I am so disposed. Miss Laura Jones came to Washington to care for her seriously ill mother.

Now she wishes to return home. She shall go.'

"A broad smile lit his face as he read aloud what he had written: 'December 24, 1864. Allow this young woman to pass to Richmond. A. Lincoln.'

"Merry Christmas," smiled Eva May, as she started kitchenward to help with dinner preparations. "And let's remember that all through the year 'living is giving, and giving is living.'"

"Hooray! Then every day'll be Christmas!" exclaimed Jack, as he settled down to enjoy the evening paper.



Stories for the Children



Little Lost Lambie

SARAH E. LOUCKS

IT was a beautiful Christmas season among the hill shepherds of a small village in the south of India. It was beautiful with hundreds of bright red poinsettias; with Madonna lilies scattered over the green hillsides; with perfume of golden jasmine and choice Christmas roses; with white trees, not white with snow, but with the glistening white plumage of numberless ricebirds, perched along their branches; and beautiful, too, with charming songs of bulbuls; and with the happy voices of Christian shepherds preparing for Christmas.

Just one year before, Little Lost Lambie, as these shepherds called him, had been found wandering about in the hillside fields. No one, not even little five-year-old Lambie himself, could tell who he was, or where he had come from.

He was a shy little fellow, shy toward everybody except Jaya Ram. Jaya Ram was the kind-hearted watchman who guarded the compound of Miss Barlow, a missionary among these Hindu shepherds. He took Little Lambie to live with him in his hillside hut; and every morning he led this timid child to a sheltered spot behind a clump of buttercup trees. Here, shy Little Lambie, without being seen, could listen to the lovely Bible stories and songs the missionary taught her outdoor class of children.

Peering through the yellow blossoms of the buttercup trees, he could see the pictures that Miss Barlow showed of the gentle Shepherd guarding His lambs, or searching for the wandering sheep that was lost. Of course, Little Lambie had



known for a long time that he was lost from his home. Now he learned that he was lost from Jesus. And oh, how he wished that this loving Shepherd would search for him, Little Lost Lambie, and find him, too!

If Little Lambie had not been too shy to tell the missionary of his longing, how gladly she would have explained to him that the purpose of this tender Shepherd's coming into the world was to seek and save the lost; and, that right then, Jesus was seeking him, and inviting him to come and have his sins forgiven, so that he—Little Lost Lambie—might be found, and thus become one of the pure white lambs of His fold.

It was Christmas night in the hillside village, and as the shepherds of Beth-

lehem gathered, long, long ago, about the manger bed of the little Lord Jesus, so these shepherds of India gathered now at their church; and as the angel of the Lord came, long ago, to bring "good tidings of great joy . . . to all people," so these shepherds came now to tell of the Saviour, of whom God had said, "Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1: 21.

In the corner of the church stood a Christmas tree, a stubby little thorn tree, bright with burning wicks of string coiled within tiny, saucerlike clay lamps—clay lamps filled with castor oil, and set among the sturdy, twisted branches of the tree.

Little Lambie listened wistfully while the pastor told how "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son [His Son who was born in the manger of Bethlehem], that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3: 16.

Little Lambie listened, also, to the story of Wise Men who came from the East to find and worship Jesus, and to present unto Him gifts. He heard the pastor remind the Christian shepherds of the words of the Lord, how He said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Matt. 25: 40.

When the pastor invited all those who wished to do so, to bring their gifts and lay them at the foot of the tree, Little Lambie watched as those poor Christians brought their gifts for people who were still poorer than themselves. And these were the gifts he saw them bring: a handful of rice, a tree tomato, an ear of corn, an egg, an onion, a stalk of sugar-cane, and other gifts like these.

While Little Lost Lambie watched the people, and listened to their simple service, again he longed to have the loving Shepherd seek and find him. At length his longing became so great that, hardly conscious of what he was doing, he sobbed out his first prayer: "Here I am, Lord Jesus. Seek, and find me. Make me one of the pure white lambs of Your fold."

Softly came the Shepherd's reply: "I have sought you, Little Lambie, and I have found you, too. Welcome into My fold."

Then, forgetting his shyness, Little Lambie hastened to the Christmas tree with his gift for the Saviour Shepherd. His gift? It was Little *found* Lambie.

If you are a little lost lambie, won't you let the waiting, searching Shepherd find you, just as the other Little Lost Lambie, on a Christmas night, in far-away India let the precious Lord Jesus find him?

▶ **APPARENTLY** Seventh-day Adventists are missionary-minded. This past year they sent 545 missionaries to seventy-three different countries and territories.

▶ **ANDRE LABARTHE**, using an American Bell helicopter recently, took off from Lympe airport and landed gently on the flat roof of the Galeries Lafayette department store in the centre of Paris. He hopes one day to initiate a roof-top taxi service.

▶ **THE** first two licences for the export of high-voltage X-ray generators were approved by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission. These generators are capable of producing "microscopic amounts of fissionable materials." Teddington and Sheffield, England, are their destinations.

▶ **THE** British florin, or two-shilling piece, is 100 years old; it was in the year 1848 that this coin was first issued by the Royal Mint. It was welcomed. Not so, however, the double-florin or four-shilling piece. This was a handsome coin issued to mark the Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887; but it proved as unpopular as the florin was popular, and was withdrawn in 1890.

▶ **"IN** the inter-war period," writes Mr. Dudley Kirk, in "Europe's Population in the Inter-War Years," "Russian emerged as the first language of Europe in the number using it as a means of ordinary speech. . . . At the outbreak of the second World War there were 100 million Russian-speakers in Europe and the U.S.S.R. The second language of Europe in its number of adherents is German. Up to the middle of the inter-war period it was the first."

▶ **WHEN** a parcel addressed to nine-year-old Mary Pender, a patient in the Folkestone Hospital, arrived at the local sorting office, it was found that grapes in it had been squashed and that the juice had ruined a little plaid purse in which the senders had placed a new half-crown. The workers in Folkestone Post Office did not like to think of the little patient's disappointment; so they clubbed together, searched the town until they had found a similar purse, bought two pounds of grapes, and repacked the parcel.

▶ **BISHOP MIROSLAV NOVAK** of Prague announced last March 15, according to the New York Times, that the Czechoslovak Church is fully behind the new government of Klement Gottwald. The Czechoslovak Church is the independent (Protestant) church of former Roman Catholic priests and people who broke with Rome after the first World War. It is the second largest church body in Czechoslovakia with nearly one million members.

▶ **THE** terrible effects of Hinduism were obstacles enough to missionaries, but Gandhi's assassination has given new impetus to this satanic system. Prayer is now made in Gandhi's name. He is practically a god. Hindus garland his picture and worship before it.

▶ **A U.N. SURVEY** estimates the Soviet Army Air Force as having 700,000 personnel; that of the U.S. as having 600,000; and Britain's R.A.F. as having about 400,000.

WANTED KNOWN

Would Captain E. W. Money, late C.O. of B.B.C.A.U. Compound, Labuan, kindly contact reader W. B. Haffenden, Kampong Parit, Labuan. Mr. Haffenden urgently requires certain testimonial papers entrusted to Captain Money for safe keeping. His present economic circumstances are such that without the papers he finds it impossible to obtain employment.

WANTED: Reliable Christian woman to do light domestic work, country home, daily mail bus service, six miles from town. Applicants please state wages required to Jane Lamb & Son, Boobalaga R.M.B. 621, Crookwell, N.S.W.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge with thanks the sum of £5 tithe received from S.D.S.

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★ **"FOR WE ARE LABOURERS TOGETHER WITH GOD."** 1 Cor. 3:9.

Signs of the Times

Editor: R. PAVITT BROWN
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▶ **EXPLORERS** of the California expedition claim to have recently located the exact spot where Moses miraculously produced water for the Israelites. It is ten miles south of Suez.

▶ **To** a large part of the 5,000,000 Jews in America, the Old Testament is an unknown book. Only twelve per cent of American Jews are affiliated with their religious organizations. Not more than 50,000 of New York's 2,500,000 Jews actually attend the synagogue regularly.

If the "SIGNS" Should Come to You Unexpectedly

★ We never send out papers that have not been ordered. Should you therefore be receiving the "Signs of the Times" without ordering it yourself, it is being sent by a friend with the hope that you will enjoy it. ★ If for any reason you should prefer not to accept, would you kindly advise the Publishers by letter. The wishes of all are respected.

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A

FRIEND of mine, who seems to have had more than his share of troubles, is an unusually happy man. Several times illness has laid him low, there have been troubles in his home, financial reverses came to plague him, one trial followed another.

His face never seemed to register the struggles going on inside his breast. He was always kind and courageous and cheerful. He was constantly doing for others.

He conducts a furniture business in a thriving little country town. In this area are many farmers, and a good many of them are finding it hard to supply their families with all of life's necessities.

This friend secured the name of every boy and girl in his district, and at Christmas time sends a suitable gift to every one of them—clothing, fruit, sweets, a toy, a book, or something to bring joy to the heart of the youngsters. Business is usually good at this time of year, but he is more interested in his giving than in the sales being made in his store.

There are many happy people in that area on Christmas morning, made joyful by the gifts of Martin Scott; but no one in the district is ever any happier than he. He has learned the truth of the Master's statement that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

We are nearing a holiday season, a time of peace, and joy, and goodwill. The happiest people this Christmas time will not be those who receive the most gifts, but those who have given most.

We may get and get and get, and be most unhappy. But we cannot give and give and give without getting a lot of real joy ourselves.

Of course we will remember our own dear ones. There are millions outside our family circles who need our help this Christmas time—yes, millions beyond the seas whom we have never seen.



Give

And Be HAPPY!

★ C. L. Paddock

Many are actually starving. Countless thousands are in need of clothing. Many have no homes, and are separated from their families, not knowing if their dear ones are still alive.

In every community there are those in actual need. There are lonesome, neglected souls in homes for the poor

and the aged. There are plenty of friendless, discouraged souls to whom even a card would bring some joy and sunshine.

There will be many happy people this holiday time, but the happiest of them all will be those who have thought of others, those who have given most.

