

## FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN...

**2021**

**CHRISTMAS** is just around the corner, and there's clearly a feeling of anticipation in the air! Homes, and stores are brightly decorated; radio stations are playing Christmas music all day long -- or so it seems; adults are busy preparing for the event, and kids are getting antsy. It's such an exciting time of the year, especially for children, isn't it? Most of us probably remember our Christmases as a child; and as I look back on mine, I can say that I keep only fond memories of them...

As far as I can remember, Christmas was a big deal at our house. Way back then, we used to live in the countryside up north, and it was our family tradition to get our tree the old fashion way. When we were old enough to accompany our dad, my two brothers and I would go in the forest, just across the street from our house, to find the perfect tree that would fit into our small living room. Wearing snowshoes, and carrying a handsaw, dad would always lead the way. When we'd finally agree on a tree, he would cut it down, and drag it all the way back home, with us following behind him like little ducklings. Once inside the house, he would secure the tree in its stand, and give us the job to decorate it.

As we grew up, we realized it was not worth the hassle of walking knee-high in the snow to cut down our own tree. So, we ended up with an aluminum one, supposedly because it was in style. Quite frankly, we thought it was the ugliest tree around! We tried to improve its look by adding colorful ornaments and garlands, but it was pointless... However, no matter how our tree looked like or that our family was far from being wealthy, we would always find underneath it either handmade scarves, socks or slippers; stuffed dolls or animals; toys or books; all wrapped up with colorful paper, and bows. I have to say though that in the midst of all the excitement, we were always reminded that the birth of Jesus was the most important part of Christmas.

Most of us probably heard the slogan, "Jesus is the reason for the Season", which was quite popular a few years back. Sadly, it has somehow lost its appeal... What we see in our society today is more of an emphasis on the commercial, and social sides of Christmas, which somewhat desensitize us to what it really means. Although many people have almost forgotten what Christmas is all about, there are those who view it differently. For some, it's to witness the true excitement, and enchantment of the season through the eyes of children. For others, it's a time to spend with family, to share love, to exchange gifts, and to help other people in need. However, the core reason to celebrate Christmas should be a time to remember Jesus' birth.

In fact, the Bible tells us that prophets foretold His birth many centuries before it happened. And as these prophecies came to pass over two thousand years ago, the Bible also gives us the details surrounding His birth. From the time an angel appeared to a virgin woman named Mary announcing that she would miraculously conceive a son, and to name Him Jesus; to the moment He was born in the little town of Bethlehem. Furthermore, in His desire to proclaim to the world that a kingly child was born, God sent His angels to shepherds who were in the fields nearby; as well as a star to direct Wise Men (Magi) from a faraway land, so they could come and worship Him. In His sovereignty, God arranged every detail to fit into His plans. What an astonishing, and miraculous event!

Hanging on a wall at our house is a frame with a message in it about the birth of this child who became a man, and whose mission was to reveal God's amazing love to the world...

## One Solitary Life

*“He was born in an obscure village. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. He then became an itinerant preacher. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a house. He didn’t go to college. He had no credentials but Himself. He was only thirty-three when the public turned against Him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to His enemies, and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While He was dying, His executioners gambled for His clothing, the only property He had on earth. He was laid in a borrowed grave.*

*Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today He is the central figure of the human race. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that One Solitary Life.”*

It is interesting to observe how Jesus’ birth proved to be a prediction of how He would spend the rest of His life on earth... in great humility. In fact, to this day, these words continue to be credited to an unknown author. Perhaps this anonymity is consistent with the writer’s obvious purpose of turning our attention to this one particular man, and His one solitary life... Shouldn’t it be also our main reason to celebrate Christmas?

During our festivities, will we turn our hearts toward Jesus, the Son of God, who in His infinite love for us, came into the world not to judge it, but to save it; who taught us how to live according to His Father’s will, and ultimately died on a cross for us, sinners? The Bible clearly says that when we truly believe in Him, and sincerely repent of our sins, we are forgiven, and receive the promise of eternal life in His presence. It also says, it is by grace that we have been saved, through faith; it is not of ourselves. It is the gift of God; not as a result of good works, so that no one may boast. Truly, God so loved the world that in sending His only Son, He offered His most precious gift to us all... In turn, will we thank Him for it? Will we trust Him, and surrender our hearts to Him?

As we celebrate Christmas, may we also remember the ones who are less fortunate around us, as well as those who really need a miracle in their lives. Will we do our part in making their Christmas a little brighter this year? For those who have lost a loved one, this season will be very difficult for you. I pray that you will find comfort in the love, and affection shown you by family members and friends. For the ones who will be alone this Christmas, I pray God to bless you in a way that will be especially meaningful to you. And for all of you who will get together with your loved ones, may this Christmas be a time of joyful celebrations!

**TO ALL...  
HAVE A BLESSED, AND A MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

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