

The Christmas Story



St. Luke — Chapters I and II

And the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women.

And when she saw him she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

And the angel said unto her, Fear not Mary; for thou hast found favour with God.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus



He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be?



And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar-Augustus, that all the world should be taxed

And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David) to be taxed with

Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night

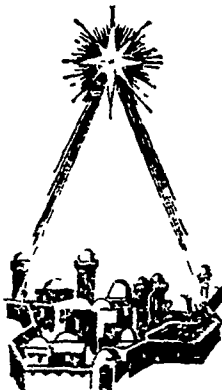


And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid

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 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.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them

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PLAINVIEW, NEBR., NEWS: "We've seen reports where reportedly the U. S. Postal System is cutting its costs. But at whose expense? It certainly doesn't appear that its service has gotten any better—in fact some of the letters we've read have indicated that it has been much slower. How many people have been inconvenienced by the slowness of mail? How many people have missed out on orders because of delay of mail? That's an indirect expense to that business then. How many people have had to pay penalties for late arriving remittances? So far, it would look like the centralization of mail to the big centers, taking away the mail from the smaller, more efficient offices, hasn't helped much."

NOW IS THE TIME . . .

Max Smith
County Agr. Agent
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TO MAKE FARM PONDS SAFE

Ice skating time is at hand when many folks will be attracted to the farm ponds when they freeze. Pond owners are reminded of the need of rescue equipment at the side of the pond in order to make prompt rescue. Wooden ladders, boards planks, rope with inflated inner-tube, or other items that can be thrown or pushed out on the ice to the person in trouble are needed. Don't plan on walking out and giving a personal hand to the person in the ice-cold water — the result may be both of you in the water. Be prepared for any emergency during the ice skating period.

TO SUBSTITUTE GRAINS

Various grains besides corn may be used in many livestock rations. Barley is commonly used in place of part of the corn in many dairy, hog, and beef rations. In beef rations barley is worth approximately 90 percent of the value of corn. In hog rations barley is 86 percent as valuable as corn. Wheat may be used in place of corn but in dairy and beef rations, not more than 25 per cent of the ration should be ground wheat. In swine rations up to 50 percent of the ration may be made up of ground wheat. Grain sorghums may also be used to replace part of the corn in most rations. Producers are urged to check the prices of these other grains and use them when they are as cheap or cheaper than corn.

TO PRACTICE FARM AND HOME SAFETY

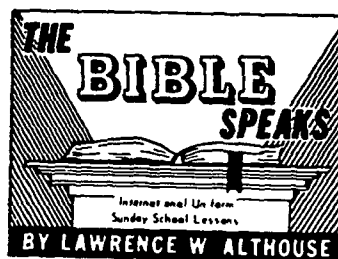
The holiday season presents many fire hazards in the home because of numerous decorations and extra power needs. The very things that make the Christmas season enjoyable can turn the period into a time of tragedy if fire safety precautions are not observed. Fire never takes a holiday. Keep all evergreens as fresh and as moist as possible. Beware of smoking or open flames near any holiday decorations. At this time of the year most barns are full of livestock and winter feed supplies. All fire hazards should be eliminated and the fire extinguishers should be checked for immediate action.

TO HAVE A JOYOUS HOLIDAY SEASON

In behalf of all the Penn State Extension Workers I want to take this opportunity of extending to all of our readers the very best for this holiday season. This is a time for family fellowship and enjoyment and we have many things for which to be thankful. We wish everyone a very happy Christmas Day and a successful New Year.

Editor's Quote Book

Life is made up of sobs, sniffles and smiles, with sniffles predominating.
—O. Henry



CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Lesson for December 23, 1973

Background Scripture: John 1:15, 14-18

E. Stanley Jones told a story of a little child, the son of missionaries, who was in school in the United States. A few days before the Christmas recess, the principal had the boy in his office and asked him: "Son, what would you rather have most of all for Christmas?" The boy looked at the picture of his father framed on his desk and said: "I want my father to step out of that frame!"



Rev. Althouse The Elusive God

The little boy unknowingly expressed one of the deep desires of all men concerning God: the desire for some tangible, concrete image of the Divine. Yet, for centuries it seemed a hopeless dream. Men had visions of God, heard voices and received messages. They felt his presence and listened as others described their encounters with him. Yet, despite all this, he seemed an elusive God.

One religion defined God this way, another described his somewhat differently. The various religions of mankind were like the four blind men grasping different parts of the elephant and describing him accordingly. Still, despite all the theologizing, dreaming, and studying, men were still asking "What is God really like?"

Did God prefer to remain obscure? Did he not want men to know what he was like? John and other New Testament writers indicate strongly that it was God's will for man to understand his nature. Thus, in the birth of Jesus Christ, he expressed himself so that man's impossible dream might come true: God revealed himself in Jesus Christ.

Different New Testament writers use different words to express this one central thought:

John: "No one has ever seen God the only Son . . . he has made him known" (1:18).

Paul: "In him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell" (Colossians 1:19).

Hebrews: "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son . . . He reflects the glory of God and bears the stamp of his nature" (1:1-3).

The communicative God

But the first chapter of John probably puts it best of all: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us . . ." (1:14). As in the story by E. Stanley Jones, man's greatest desire was for that elusive God to step out of his "frame," so to speak, and make himself sufficiently known.

That's what God did in Jesus Christ: in that one single life he told man all that he could know and would ever need to know about God. When the "Word became flesh" and the unknowable became knowable and the obscure became clear and men saw the fullness of God revealed for once and for all, then it was that God gave mankind his greatest of all Christmas presents.

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