



OPINION

The Christmas Story

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 this taxing was first made when Cy-re-ni-us was governor of Syria.) 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 so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 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.

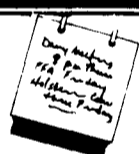
And there were, in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good 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 the saying which was told them concerning the child. All they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

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.

Farm Calendar



Wednesday, December 27

Lebanon County 4-H Livestock Club Winter Roundup, Lebanon Area Fairgrounds, Lebanon, pig show at noon, beef and lamb shows 1:00 p.m. December 28, and sale 6:00 p.m. December 28.

Monday, January 1

Red Rose Alliance pork and sauerkraut dinner, Churchtown Fire Hall, Churchtown, 11:00 a.m.

Tuesday, January 2

Penn State income tax meeting, Farmers Best Restaurant, Lewisburg, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Cumberland County Extension Board of Directors meeting, Cumberland County Extension office, Carlisle, 7:30 p.m. 44th annual meeting of the Northeastern Weed Science Society, Sheraton Boston Hotel & Towers, Boston, Mass.; runs through January 5.

Wednesday, January 3

Penn State income tax meeting, Bethany Methodist Church, Honesdale, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Schuylkill County Dairy Day, Penn State Schuylkill campus, Student/Community Activity Building, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program second annual banquet, Holiday Inn, Grantville, general session at 2:00 p.m., banquet 5:30 p.m. Lancaster County tobacco management meeting and show, Lancaster Farm & Home Center, Lancaster, 11:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Lancaster County home horticulture seminar, Lancaster Farm & Home Center, Lancaster; beginning beekeeping at 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. and home gardener's guide to fruit production at 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Review Your Will

I don't know of anything that changes more than our tax laws. As these changes take place we must review our personal affairs. First, a thorough examination of your will should be done; second, examine how you own property; and third, check for application of the tax laws to determine savings.

Everyone should have their will thoroughly reviewed if it hasn't been done since September 1981. One major point of the review should be to determine ways of applying the unlimited federal estate tax marital deduction.

Any amount of property can now be transferred tax-free to a spouse at death. However, this option should be considered carefully, medium and large estates may pay more tax if the entire estate is passed to the surviving spouse.

Consult your attorney about making necessary changes.

To Take Inventory

An area of our operation that is very important at this time of year is inventory. With the close of the year most of our farmers close out their records for the year. This means that if you are going to have a Farm Analysis made you should take inventory of all your supplies.

You'll need this to do any kind of farm analysis, because the amount of grains, hay and other supplies that are in storage will vary from year to year, and unless

Thursday, January 4

Penn State income tax meeting, Shadowbrook Dairy Bar, Tunkhannock, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Regional tomato growers meeting, Thompson's Dairy Bar, Lackawanna County, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.; register by January 2 at 717/963-6842.

Friday, January 6

Penn State income tax meeting, Pomona Grange Hall, Wellsboro, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 7

Pennsylvania Farm Show, Farm Show Building, Harrisburg; runs through January 12. Times are 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday.

(Turn to Page A31)

this is taken into consideration, you cannot have an accurate analysis of your year's operation. So, as accurately as possible, record the amount of hay, grains, feed, seeds and fertilizer that are on hand. This is the first step in an accurate farm analysis.

To Protect Orchard Fruit Trees

While most of the hard work for fruit growers may be over, it is that time of the year for mice, deer and rabbits to get busy.

On young trees preventive measures are necessary. The most effective way to prevent rabbit damage is to use tree trunk guards on individual trees. Cylinders of 1/4-inch mesh hardware cloth 18 to 24 inches high, set into the ground surrounding the tree, will help prevent gnawing damage to the main stem. The "self-wrapping" plastic wrap also does an excellent job.

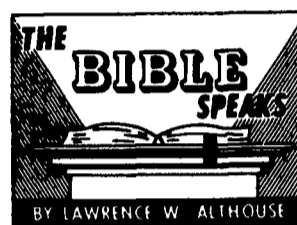
Another way to keep rabbits and deer from chewing branches and buds is to "paint" tree trunks and limbs with a mixture of 5 to 6 pounds of powdered rosin in one gallon of ordinary alcohol. Simply use a whitewash brush to apply the

material. The rabbits and deer find the rosin too gritty and aside from an occasional nip will usually leave the tree alone. Be sure to apply the material to a height well above the reach of the deer.

To Be Aware Of Tax Reporting Timetables

Farmers planning to estimate what their tax is going to be for 1989 should file form 1040ES by January 16. If you file your Estimated Return by January 16, you have until April 16 to file a complete tax return on Form 1040 and pay any tax still due or request a refund if they overpaid in making the tax estimate. However, farmers who do not file and pay an estimated tax must file the completed 1040 form by March 1 and pay in full whatever tax is due at that time. Non-farmers have until April 16 to complete their 1040 and pay any tax due. Farmer's Tax Guides are available at any extension office to assist in preparing and filing your reports. Stop by and pickup a free copy.

The Penn State Cooperative Extension is an affirmative action, equal opportunity educational institution.



WHEN THE FLESH BECOMES WORD
December 24, 1989

FEEBLE MINDS

When we try to conceive of the ways in which the universe was formed, God the Creator seems too vast for us to grasp. And although we may be fascinated with origins of the universe, that is not where we personally live. At this moment in time, we live, not in the heavens, but right here on earth, where the problems are not universal in scope, but personal and social. That's the level upon which all of us need help. We can die without ever solving the mysteries of the universe, and that's all right — they are desirable, but not essential. What is essential is that whole host of daily questions, conflicts and challenges that come to us.

That is where Christianity comes to the rescue once again, for John assures us that this same "Word" that was instrumental in the divine origins of the universe became incarnated in a human being. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Somehow, the mighty Creator was expressed in the life of one human being, Jesus. So, the eternal and divine became temporal and human so that all we really need to know about the Power that created the universe is wrapped up in the life and ministry of Jesus.

We talk a great deal about the Incarnation. But what Christmas demands of us is not talk — not for the flesh to become mere words — but for God to be incarnated not only in Jesus, but in us too.

"To all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God" (1:12). At Christmas it is not enough to believe that God was incarnated in Christ alone, but in all of us.

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Background Scripture:

Luke 2:8-12; John 1:1-5, 9-18.

Devotional Reading:

Proverbs 8:22-31.

Some years ago, when scientist Robert Jastrow was in Dallas, he said that although he is an admitted "agnostic in religious matters," he nevertheless is fascinated by the questions raised by the "Big Bang" theory. We have discovered that the universe is an expanding one. Galaxies are rushing away from us, "as if we are witnessing the aftermath of a gigantic explosion." By tracing that process backwards 15 or 20 billion years ago, we can arrive back to the moment when a dense mass of matter exploded and set the universe into motion. But what puzzles him and others is the question of what preceded the "Big Bang"?

Virtually all astronomers today concede that we will never be able to answer that question scientifically. And that is where faith provides an answer: "In the beginning, God..." Or as the writer of John puts it: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (1:1-4). If the "Big Bang" does pretty well account for the beginning of the universe, then Christians are convinced that, before the "Big Bang," there was God the Creator.

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Merry Christmas everyone! Dave Berwick