



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 Cyrenius 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.

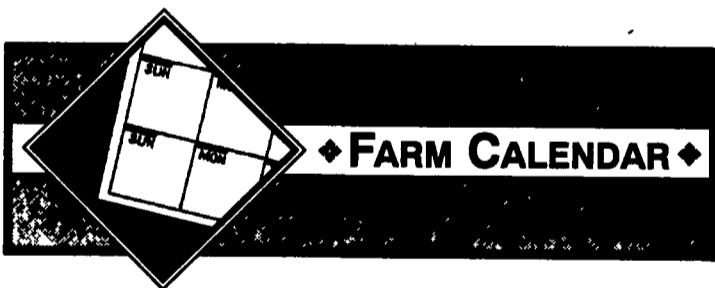
And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good 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, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Holy Bible



Saturday, December 24

Sunday, December 25
Merry Christmas!

Monday, December 26

Tuesday, December 27

Wednesday, December 28

Thursday, December 29

Friday, December 30

Saturday, December 31

1995

Sunday, January 1
Happy New Year!

Monday, January 2

North Eastern Weed Science Society Meeting, Boston, thru Jan. 5.

Tuesday, January 3

Bucks-Montgomery Dairy Day, Family Heritage Restaurant, Franconia.

Western Pa. Forage Schools,

Northwest Rural Electric Co-Op, Cambridge Spring, also Jan. 10.

Wednesday, January 4

Farm Records Made Easy/Check Writing Workshop, Willowbank Building, Bellefonte, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., also Jan. 6.

Adams County Dairy Day, Extension Office, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Western Pa. Forage Schools, Brown's Country Kitchen, Portersville, also Jan. 11.

Lancaster County Tobacco Show, Farm and Home Center, youth entries 9 a.m., adult entries 10:30 a.m., judging 1 p.m.

Chester County Dairy Day, East Brandywine Fire Hall, Guthriesville.

Thursday, January 5

Sprayer Meeting, Elder's Sales and Service, Stoneboro.

Northeast Regional Tomato Growers meeting, Thompson's Dairy Bar, Clark's Summit, 9:30 a.m.

Western Pa. Forage School, Sandy Kayes Restaurant, Shelocta, also Jan. 12.

Franklin County Dairy Day,



Now Is
The Time
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Clean Vehicles

Getting your vehicle ready for winter includes more than checking the mechanical parts and fluid levels. It also means cleaning.

The best way to prepare the outside of your car or truck for winter is to clean it. Salt and snow are less likely to erode a clean surface. Dirt, salt, and stones accumulate in hard-to-reach nooks and crannies under the fenders — thus, holding moisture and promoting corrosion.

You may flush them out by using the garden hose's nozzle attachment or going to the local car wash. To properly clean a car or truck, attack the interior first.

Use a household vacuum cleaner to clean the carpet or rugs and seats. Next, clean the inside windows with a glass cleaning product to cut the hazy film.

Scrub rubber or vinyl mats with a brush saturated with a light duty liquid dish washing detergent. Mats cleaned this way will look almost new. When washing the exterior of the vehicle, start at the top and work down.

To Use Tractors Safely

Wednesday officially marked the beginning of winter. Even though planting and harvest seasons are the high risk times for tractor accidents, the lower use winter period should not be overlooked.

Farm safety specialists have noted that tractors used for towing are extremely unstable if incorrect hitching is used.

When towing a car or truck out of a snowbank, tow chains or ropes should be attached at the drawbar so that the tractor's center of gravity is not disrupted. Logs being dragged should also be hitched properly and a safe speed maintained so that any logs which may become wedged between stumps or fence posts will not result in a rear overturn.

Tractor operators should also reduce their speed on snow and ice

Kauffman's Community Center, Chambersburg, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Berks County Dairy Day, Berks County Ag Center, Leesport.

Friday, January 6

Farm Records Made Easy/Check Writing Workshop, Willowbank Building, Bellefonte, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Penn Jersey Dairy Management Seminar, Holiday Inn, Bethlehem.

Potter County Holstein Annual Meeting, Ulysses Community Building, Ulysses, 8 p.m.

Saturday, January 7
Pennsylvania State Farm Show.

(Turn to Page A11)

covered lanes and roads. Many tractor overturns occur when they slide off the road's surface and into a ditch.

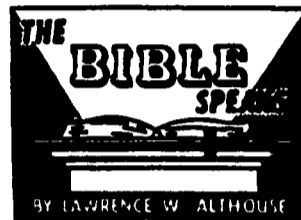
To Look At Farm Trends

A new USDA report titled "The New Generation of American Farmers: Farm Entry and Exit Prospects for the 1990's" makes some interesting observations.

More than 500,000 older farmers will leave farming between 1992 and 2002 and will be replaced by about 250,000 new and younger farmers. Farm numbers should decline to about 1.7 million by 2002 compared with 2.1 million in 1987.

That does not mean there is a threat to the food supply, because farms now produce so much more than in past decades.

The traditional pool of new farmers is made up of children who grew up on farms. With more people leaving farming than entering, there will be fewer but larger farms.



ARE YOU ONE OF THE
WISE MEN?
December 25, 1994

Background Scripture:

Matthew 2

Devotional Reading:

Isaiah 11:1-9

Marco Polo tells us that in his travels he came across a village in Persia from which, according to the villagers, the wise man started on their journey following the star of Bethlehem. Various scholars believe that the star which they followed might have been a conjunction of the planets Saturn and Jupiter in 7 B.C. or Halley's Comet in 12 B.C. It is believed that these wise men were astrologers and members of a Median tribe of priests or a Zoroastrian priestly caste.

The Bible itself — Matthew only — says very little of these men, only that they were wise men/Magi and from the East. Later tradition presumed that, because there were three gifts — gold, frankincense and myrrh — there were three of them and somebody later gave them names — Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar — and put them on camels. Tradition also determined that Balthazar was black. Historians tell us that an embassy of Parthian magi paid tribute to Nero at Naples in A.D. 66 and returned home by another route.

Smart Guys Vs. Wise Men

The traditional details make the story more colorful, but we must not miss some of the meaning implicit in the Biblical account. Beyond the facts of who and what they were and what it was that led them to Bethlehem, we can appreciate that these men, like Joseph and Mary, were persons who were responsive to God's revelation and had the faith to act upon it. As George Arthur Buttrick says, "the magi acted with abandon."

I love that sentence, but I doubt that I would live up to it. It is a long time since I have acted with abandon in matters of faith. Where and when did I learn such caution and reserve? Their example of faith serves to indict me of calculation when dedication is what God asks of me. Without the benefit of the

The challenge to young farmers entering farming is building equity. Fewer young farmers can easily replace the large number of older farmers if the transfer of assets across generations can be accomplished.

Government policy and family values will determine who will own farm assets. Farm operators are either looking at land rental or contract farming as a strategy to stay in farming.

Land rental permits farmers to take advantage of economies of scale of large farms with a smaller capital investments. This then permits entry to young farmers with limited financial resources.

Since contractors often furnish variable inputs, animal inventory and coordinate financing of buildings and equipment, contract production may allow entry by persons with lower equity levels.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching out and lifting people up."

Hebrew Old Testament or the Greek New Testament, these men found a message in the heavens and followed it. My own hesitancy is a sign of the times, for the really smart guys of today, the clever and calculating, the worldly wise and experienced — they wouldn't follow a star, no matter how bright.

Silent Night

Holy Night

Something else about these men intrigues me; when they found the Christ child, "they went into the house, fell down and worshipped Him" (2:11). They didn't take any photographs, sell any souvenirs, or ask for autographs. That wasn't why they were there. As John Ruskin put it: "These men, for their own part, came — I beg you very earnestly again to note this — not to see, not to talk — but to do reverence. They are neither curious nor talkative, but submissive." They came to do exactly what they told Herod: "...we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship Him" (2:2).

There is nothing wrong in all the clamor that surrounds Christmas so long as we do not let it get in the way of what Christmas is really all about: to worship God in Christ and submit ourselves to Him. I love the carols, the decoration, the Christmas cards and letters, the holiday foods, the special activities and get-togethers, but most of all I love the "silent nights, holy nights" when I can realize once again "how silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given," and, meditating upon the meaning of the Christ Child, find Him reborn in me.

Being a wise man in this season means swimming against the worldly tide, for following the star always seems to be contrary to common sense and practicality. The smart guys, like Herod, know that and they never find the manger. But wise men abandon themselves to their faith and, following a different light, are the ones who find their way to the Christ Child.

To all readers: A VERY BLESSED CHRISTMAS

Lancaster Farming

Established 1955

Published Every Saturday

Ephrata Review Building

1 E. Main St.

Ephrata, PA 17522

— by —

Lancaster Farming, Inc.

A Stehman Enterprise

Robert G. Campbell General Manager

Everett R. Newswanger Managing Editor

Copyright 1994 by Lancaster Farming