

BIBLE MONITOR

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DECEMBER, 2020

NO. 12

“For the faith once delivered unto the saints”

OUR MOTTO: Spiritual in life and Scriptural in practice.	OUR WATCHWORD: Go into all the world and preach the gospel.
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OUR AIM: Be it our aim to be more sanctified, more righteous,
more holy, and more perfect through faith and obedience.

ANGELS REJOICED AND SWEETLY SUNG

Angels rejoiced and sweetly sung
At our Redeemer's birth;
Mortals! Awake; let ev'ry tongue
Proclaim his matchless worth.

Glory to God, who dwells on high,
And sent his only Son
To take a servant's form, and die,
For evils we had done!

Goodwill to men; ye fallen race!
Arise, and shout for joy;
He comes, with rich abounding grace,
To save, and not destroy.

Lord! Send the gracious tidings forth,
And fill the world with light,
That Jew and Gentile, thro' the earth,
May know thy saving might.

—William Hurn

COMMENCEMENT AND CHRISTMAS

We have all attended commencement or graduation exercises. Whether it was graduation from kindergarten, junior high, high school, or college, the past accomplishments of the students are celebrated. Often the graduation speaker may recount some of the events of the past school years but will mostly encourage the graduates to use the tools and information they have gained through their education to meet the responsibilities and opportunities that lie before them. The speaker may say that graduation is not an end but a commencement of their future lives.

The ending of one phase of life becomes the beginning of a different and probably more serious phase than has engaged them in the past. Their past schooling has

prepared them with knowledge, tools, and plans for future studies or careers. While they have finished one level of education, that is not the total journey.

There are many parallels between commencement and Christmas. We love to celebrate Christmas with its gifts and good times, but we do not cherish the real reason for Christmas. It is easy to become enamored with the feasting, fun, and family times during the Christmas holiday season. It is a feel-good experience. The festivities may entertain us so much that we give little serious thought to the original spiritual significance of the season. We dine, we play, we give and receive gifts, we party, we sing, and we forget the future events the original Christmas scene in Bethlehem foretold.

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MILTON COOK, Editor; 1138 East 12th Street, Beaumont, CA 92223. (951) 845-6231

KEN BROCK, Assistant Editor, 20845 County Rd H50, West Unity, OH 43570.

PAUL SKILES Associate Editor, 6561 Mountain Hawk Loop NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87144

KEVIN FUNK, Associate Editor; 24107 N Avenue, Dallas Center, IA 50063.

Christmas should be a celebration of Christ, the central figure of the occasion. We may speak His name and sing the carols of the season, but where are our hearts? In the gifts, the parties, the food, or in Him? Christmas was the commencement of His active earthly ministry, which culminated on a cross on a hill outside of Jerusalem.

The celebration began in the heart of Mary as she pondered the fulfillment of the prophecies the Archangel Gabriel shared with her in Nazareth. It also fulfilled the multitude of prophecies of the Old Testament forecasting the Messiah would be born in the City of David. While the prophecies of the coming king and deliverer were heard with high hopes, the other darker prophecies of a suffering savior were not understood.

The celebration continued in the fields that surrounded Bethlehem where the shepherds were watching and protecting their flocks. That celebration was a musical tribute orchestrated by the angelic choir who sang and spoke of His glory and His ultimate aim to bring peace to people's troubled hearts. The celebration continued with the shepherds leaving their sheep to worship the Babe who would be the Good Shepherd. The

celebration culminated in the arrival of the far-traveling wise men from the east. They represented a world that was seeking something better than what they then knew. They worshiped Him with kingly gifts. Although a spiritual king He uses the worldly treasures of those who desire to serve Him.

The scenes of Christmas can be quite enjoyable, but they only represent a commencement of His Father's work that He was sent to accomplish. His virgin birth was one of His qualifications as the Passover Lamb on the cross. It took a miracle of Godly proportions for Him to be birthed without the normal human process of conception and birth. It freed Him from the imperfections of the human body and spirit.

He was a child in the home of Joseph and Mary, where He learned the skills Joseph shared with Him. As He matured, He desired to be about his Father's business, which was not the world's usual business.

He called to Him the disciples with whom he would travel the countryside, preaching and teaching, and supplying the needs of those He encountered. He fed the hungry; He resurrected the dead; He healed the sick and maimed. He verbally battled with the Pharisees and others as

they sought to embarrass and harass Him.

He offered Himself as their Messiah, but they were not looking for a meek and gentle leader; they were looking for a king to defeat their Roman conquerors. They chose rebellion and death over the Spiritual Kingdom He offered them.

He died on the cross arranged for Him as the sacrifice for all the

sins of mankind. He continues serving as the Advocate of the saved and the potential Savior for the lost.

Christmas was the commencement of His ultimate service. Will Christmas be the commencement of your worship of Him as your Savior?

M. C. Cook

IT'S GOD'S MESSAGE THAT COUNTS

One problem repeatedly occurring in the Old Testament is the fact that God's people were so accustomed to God's Word that they got to the place where they could not hear God's Word.

Those people most familiar with the Word of God are the people who allow the Word of God, the least amount of influence in their life. Does that not sound a little silly? You would think that those who hear the Word of God on a regular basis would embrace it to such an extent that that Word would dominate their life.

Most emphatically, God's Word falls on deaf ears. Repeatedly in the book of Revelation, we read, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." (Revelation 2:7.)

Just because something is

being said does not mean that someone hears it.

If you have relatives with whom you try to share the gospel, they usually shrug you off because they have heard this a thousand times before. Nothing is new, and they are always looking for something new. We are addicted to "new".

Listening to the Word of God is somewhat of a discipline. It is not like reading Shakespeare or some book of poetry or some fascinating novel. When we come to the Word of God, we are coming to the "word" of God, and therefore we need to approach it in a way that honors the God who gave it to us.

Many people take the Bible, pull out a verse here and a verse there, and make it say something and embrace something that is

completely out of context with the Word of God.

We hear some people say, "I can do all things through Christ," yet they have no idea what that means. To them, it means that they can do whatever they want to do, and God is obligated to give them the strength to do that. That is completely and totally wrong.

The prophets in the Old Testament were commissioned to give the people of God, God's message. It was hard for them at times, and many of them paid a hefty price for bringing the Word of God to the so-called people of God.

Those who were supposed to be the people of God silenced those who spoke out for God.

Why is it that God's people do not have an insatiable thirst for the Word of God and the things of God? It seems that the longer a person has been a Christian, the less interested they are in the Word of God. This seems to be contradictory to the truth found in the Word of God.

The thing that should obsess me as a Christian is to understand God's message. I know this is difficult. I know we cannot grasp it all in one neat little package. But what we need to do is spend time in the Word of God, allowing the Holy Spirit to illuminate our hearts with God's truth.

I need to get up each day and query God by saying, "What message do you have for me today?" I need to be persistent in this and dedicated to hearing from God.

It is one thing to hear the Word, and I enjoy listening to a man of God presenting the Word of God. But I need to go further than that. I need to hear God himself, speaking his Word into my heart. This is the joy of really being a Christian.

When was the last time, God spoke to my heart? What was the last message that God brought into my heart?

Perhaps one thing that has deadened people's hearts to the voice of God is listening to people interpret the Word of God in a culturally friendly fashion. After all, we want everybody to feel good about themselves.

The doctor will not encourage you to feel good about yourself if there is something drastically wrong in your body. His first and primary concern is to deal with that physical threat.

Our first and primary concern is to deal with the spiritual threats in our lives. We cannot take them sitting down. We need to stand up against all of this that is hurting us spiritually. We need to hear God speak to us in order for us to make our stand for the truth.

Our foremost danger is listening to someone who puts a spin on God's Word that eventually and slowly leads us away from the truth in God. This is something we must fight against. In the apostolic days, this was one of the great concerns of the apostles. They were concerned that heretics would

come in and lead the people away from God using the Word of God.

I need to know God's message in the context of God's character and nature.

James L. Snyder
324 Bahia Circle
Ocala, FL 34472

LET US KEEP THE FEAST

"Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." I Corinthians 5:8

The Communion service has two distinct purposes. First and foremost, it is to remember and commemorate the death of our Lord Jesus Christ and by doing so honor and glorify Him. Second, it is to express our fellowship with all believers in Christ. We all know that we cannot physically break bread with every believer. Yet as often as we do so, we are expressing common union with each and every believer in Christ. It may be symbolic, but it is no less real.

When the bread is blessed and then broken there is increase, just as there was when Jesus fed the five thousand. The increase comes in the way of blessing. The common use of the bread and cup become commemorative. We remember collectively Christ's death for us, knowing that, as we break bread, Christians all over the world are doing likewise. We are fellowshiping with Jesus Christ and also with each other.

Also, when we commune, we have the hope that someday soon we will sit at the marriage supper of the Lamb and Jesus Himself will gird Himself and serve us. As we commune here below, we need to let all earthly things behind, just as we will in Heaven. Lot's wife looked back to Sodom and did not attain salvation. Let us look forward, not back.

Lord, cause Thy face on us to shine,
Give us peace, and seal us Thine;
Teach us to prize the means of grace,
And love Thine earthly dwelling place.

One is our faith, and one our Lord;
One Body, Spirit, hope, reward;
May we in one communion be,
One with each other, one with Thee.

Bless all whose voice salvation brings,
 Who minister in holy things;
 The elders, ministers, deacons, bless;
 Clothe them with zeal and righteousness:

Let many in the judgment day,
 Turned from the error of their way,
 Their hope, their joy, their crown appear:
 Save those who preach and those who hear.

—Thos. Cotterill 1819

Brother Lynn H. Miller
 Mohler's Congregation

PHIL'S PONDERINGS

As we "study to shew ourselves approved unto God..."

December 2020 Study Questions

December 6 – Luke 1:26-56

How many ways do you think Mary was startled and had reason to fear?

In all that Gabriel told Mary where did she stop listening?

Do you see any difference between Zacharias' response to Gabriel in verse 18 and Mary's response in verse 34?

How long a trip was it for Mary to visit Elizabeth and why was she in such a big hurry?

How is Elizabeth's greeting similar to Gabriel's?

What is Elizabeth telling Mary that she knows about Mary's child?

Commentary: Being in the presence of an angelic being who also stands in the presence of God is likely to overload anyone's senses. It is definitely not a typical earthly experience. Couldn't Gabriel have knocked on the door rather than appearing inside Mary's house where she seems to be alone and easily alarmed for a whole host of reasons? Okay, so there might have been a nosy neighbor looking across the street at the wrong time and Gabriel had to go with Plan B. And I am not sure how much Mary heard after Gabriel told her she was going to have a son by the name of Jesus. "Wait, I'm not married yet," her inner voice must have been screaming. But God's ways are not our ways

and He is not limited by our rational thoughts nor the physical boundaries that define our existence. Once Mary had time to process all this totally unexpected information there was only one course of action left for her to consider. She was a woman and a servant of the Lord. "...be it unto me according to thy word." No matter what God brings our way, a pandemic, an unexpected pregnancy, loss of a job and maybe a home, or a call to ministry in unexpected ways is there a better answer than the one Mary gave?

December 13 – Luke 1:57-80

Who chose John's name?

What is significant about the name "John"?

What verse tells us that Zacharias understands the significance of Mary's pregnancy?

What does Zacharias' prophecy anticipate?

What covenant is described?

Commentary: The Christmas season is fully upon us with all of its busyness, family gatherings, shopping, and many preparations for what is just ahead. It is a season of anticipation. Add to this mix the expectation of a child to be born in a few weeks with all its hopes and worries. And further a possible change of presidential administrations, the likelihood of a soon coming vaccine for Covid-19 and an end to the pandemic. Through these and other realities that generate the hopes and fears in our own lives we begin to experience in some small way the hopes and dreams of the people living in the hill country of Judah who heard of the events surrounding the birth of John the Baptist. God is just as much involved in our events as He was in theirs. We are not that much different from those folks. We wonder, we hope, and we worry about what lies ahead. Yet seldom are there hints that prepare us for what comes. A year ago, no one could foresee all the turbulence and troubles of this last year. So, let us pin our hopes where our faith can grow, regardless of temporal circumstances, in the gracious abundance

of life that is in Christ Jesus.

December 20 – Luke 2:1-24

How far was it from Nazareth to Bethlehem?

How far is Bethlehem from Jerusalem?

How did God arrange for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem?

Why does Luke mention Quirinius?

How might Christmas be different if we did not have the gospel of Matthew?

What are some possible reasons for the angels appearing only to shepherds?

Why was David, Jesse's youngest son, the one who tended the sheep?

Commentary: Our faith should be strengthened, and our hearts motivated as we realize what God can do to fulfill His word. The Messiah was prophesied to be born in Bethlehem. Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth. At perhaps the worst point in time during Mary's pregnancy, she and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem. Why? Because Caesar Augustus decided he wanted to know how many people he ruled in his empire. Why did the most powerful man on earth need to know such a detail? To prove how powerful, he was? No, but to show how powerful our God is. God values His Word and proves to us repeatedly that it is absolutely trustworthy. He can move an emperor to make a decree that ultimately moves Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem at the last possible moment to accomplish the purposes He decreed in His Word. It is likely they traveled through Jerusalem unnoticed, under the nose of another self-important and paranoid potentate in King Herod. In just a day or two the Ruler over All Creation was born a few miles down the road in Bethlehem. God provided the instrument of His will in Augustus, the traveling mercies for Mary, protection from an easily provoked King Herod, and the safest and last place anyone would ever think to look for a newborn King: a manger in a barn. In keeping with a very low

profile it is shepherds, perhaps the lowest on the economic ladder, who received God's announcement to the world of the birth of His Son, their, and our Savior.

December 27 – Luke 2:25-52

What does it mean to “present him to the Lord?”

What does the sacrifice provided by Joseph and Mary tell us about them?

The “consolation of Israel” is synonymous with what other term?

Why is Luke eager to tell us about Simeon's blessing of Jesus?

How do you think Joseph and Mary responded spiritually to the proclamations made about Jesus by Simeon and Anna?

How do you think Luke gained so much information about the birth narrative and childhood story of Jesus?

Commentary: God-moments always seem to be random in their frequency and come unexpectedly. When Joseph and Mary entered the temple to present Jesus to the Lord, they had no expectation that anyone present would notice them. Yet God had prepared two people to give witness that this babe was the long-anticipated Messiah and Redeemer of Israel. Such moments help strengthen our faith for those times of struggle, doubt, and fear when we wonder if God really cares for us. There had already been many God-moments for both of them in the months previous. Though Luke does not record it they will soon flee from Herod's murderous plotting. Yet, God continues to provide for this young family and always just in time. Luke also provides us a short glimpse of a precocious twelve-year-old, who is already aware of how different He is from the humanity surrounding Him. But as we end our study of Luke, we can be thankful for Luke's robust curiosity about Jesus. In his gospel nearly one third of it is unique to Luke alone. Though a gentile, who never knew Jesus personally as Matthew or John did, he provides us with a knowledge and portrait of Jesus that we would be much poorer without. Since Luke was with Paul during his house arrest in Caesarea that lasted nearly two years I often wonder if he availed himself of the opportunity to

talk to people who know Jesus that he might learn first hand as much as possible. Perhaps in these first two chapters of Luke that we have just studied are the memories of a woman, well into her 70's who tells Luke about a visit from the angel Gabriel.

Brother Phil Franklin
Modesto, CA

FISHING FOR MONEY!

Rudy Cover

Matt. 17:24-27

Peter went fishing one time and a very strange thing happened. A tax-collector had come to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your Master pay taxes?" Peter, always quick to answer, said, "Yes."

I don't suppose Peter had ever seen Jesus pay taxes. Jesus didn't have any property. He didn't own a house or a camel or a donkey or anything. One time, Jesus said, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Jesus was the poorest of men and yet He had created the earth and all that we see around us. John says, "He was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world received Him not." Why did Peter say that Jesus paid taxes? Maybe Peter was a little embarrassed and maybe a

little ashamed of Jesus. Maybe he answered before he thought.

Jesus was in a house. It could have been Peter's, or He may have been just visiting someone. Anyway, Peter went in the house and Jesus said to Peter, "What do you think, Peter? Of whom do the kings of the earth take taxes; of their own children or of strangers?" Peter said unto Him, "Strangers." Jesus said, "Then are the children free."

I suppose this was the temple tax that everyone was to pay. It was called "an atonement for the soul." Jesus was the King of the temple and He had never sinned. If anyone was to be free from tax Jesus certainly was. Nevertheless, Jesus didn't want to offend anyone, and He especially didn't want Peter to get in trouble.

I don't think Peter had any money with him or Jesus either. Jesus hadn't been with Peter when he was asked about paying taxes, but Jesus knew what the tax-collector said to Peter and He knew what Peter answered. Jesus knows what you and I say, too. He even knows what we think. So, Jesus told Peter what to do. He said, "Go down to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish you catch. When you open its mouth, you will find a piece of money. Take it and give to the tax collectors for me and thee.

Do you think Peter did what Jesus told him? I'm sure he did. Do you think Peter caught a fish and when he opened the fish's

mouth, he found a piece of money in it? I know he did. How did Jesus know that the first fish Peter caught would have a piece of money in its mouth? Jesus knows everything. He knows the number of hairs on your head. There isn't a sparrow that falls to the earth but what Jesus knows.

Jesus is the greatest person who ever lived in this world. He is your best friend. He died on that old rugged cross for you and me. You'll never be sorry to live for Jesus. He will bless you abundantly in everything you do for Him.

Selected from the
September 15, 1980
issue of the Bible Monitor

THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST

Howard J. Surbey

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:1, 14. This important miraculous heavenly event, which Satan is trying to deny throughout the world through the influence of unbelieving man, is the greatest event which ever took place to help

the eternal destiny of man. The incarnation is "the act of taking a human body and the nature of man" by our Lord and Saviour.

For our meditation on this important subject, vital to each of our soul's salvation, we wish to refer to a number of Scriptures in both the Old and New Testament. The Bible gives us a true account of God's dealing with man, throughout the ages of history. It is a Divine book because it records both the

good and evil of man and God's blessing and cursing of man for his deeds. Without the Bible we would be in the dark of the many ways and means of God's dealing and His promises for man. It is so vital to our life and our future eternal abode, that if we reject its truths, we actually reject God and His blessings for us. We cannot believe one part and not the other, because thus we would be in a state of confusion, not knowing which part to believe and which to reject. The New Testament is a fulfillment of the events in the Old Testament and realization of God's provisions for man's Spiritual welfare.

Notice, the "Word of God". Who revealed God's Will unto men, did not originate at the year B. C. or December of 5 B. C., as the time is commonly known, but the Son was in the beginning of creation. Christ was not only with God, but He was God. He took on the flesh of man, that He might shed His blood for the atonement of the sins of man and that He might be so closely in contact with man that He might reveal to man the Will of the Heavenly Father. The year of the birth of Jesus was the time of the Incarnation, the time of His taking on the form and nature of man and not His actual beginning. "Hath not the scripture said that

Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" John 7:42.

The first promise of our subject is given when God pronounced the curse for sin, in the Garden of Eden, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heal." An endless warfare is here forecast between God's servants and Satan, as long as time shall last. Gen. 2:15. At the call of Abraham God renewed his promise, "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Gen. 12:3. God here promises two important facts; that He will take care of His followers and that His eternal promises will be a blessing to each one of the family of the earth, especially unto those who will accept His plan of salvation.

God renewed His promise unto Moses, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." Deut. 18:18-19. Of all the prophets

of God, Christ was supreme. He delivered unto man only God's Will and He delivered every part of God's Will. Did you notice the curse that God here pronounces upon anyone, who will not hearken unto the words which Christ shall speak?

God revealed many of the details of the birth of Christ unto the prophet Isaiah. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." Isa. 7:14, 16. "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." Isa. 9:6. Many other facts concerning our Saviour are given by Isaiah, especially the fifty-third and fifty-fifth chapters.

The prophet Jeremiah also foretold much concerning the coming of our Lord, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shalt reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." Jer. 23:5. "In those days, and at

that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land." Isa. 33:15. Is our Saviour known and respected today in the way the prophets foretold? How must our Lord feel about the many times His name is taken in vain? Why cannot we say that we now have, justice, righteousness, and judgment in the earth?

The prophet Micah also gives us a number of wonderful facts which will accompany the coming of our Lord unto this earth. "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. It seems that the learned Jews could hardly believe that their beloved Master would be born or intermingle with so humble a people as those of Bethlehem. My ways are not your ways, saith the Lord.

The apostle Paul, who did not live at the time of Christ's coming, gives us many facts to prove that He came unto the earth and took on the form and nature of man for our every good. "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman,

made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. 4:4. "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Phil. 2:7. Have we accepted our adoption as sons? Who knows it? How do they know it? Are we willing to humble ourselves for our Lord and Master?

May we close by referring to a few verses which might sum up the whole matter in our minds and lives. "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like

unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Heb. 2:17-18. Are we worrying ourselves into suffering and perhaps death or are we taking Christ exactly at His Word and allowing Him to succour us at all times?

Selected from the
December 1, 1960
issue of the Bible Monitor

THE HARBINGER OF PEACE

B. E. Kesler

Some 2,700 years ago a servant of God, by prophetic vision, lifted the veil of futurity and announced to the world the birth of a child that was to bear the name "which is above every name", and whose character was to be indicated by the titles applied to him. And it is noteworthy that none of these titles indicate anything but high and novel purpose of life, loving deeds, wholesome teaching and royal birth and Divine parentage.

True, his enemies applied degrading epithets to him and

impugned his motives, and accused him of being in league with demons, but none gave him a title or name to indicate it.

The prophet said, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." And truly his name is wonderful when we come to consider it in the light of its relation to the present and future salvation of men, "for there is none other name under heaven, or given among men whereby we must be saved."

As Counselor the world has never produced his equal. His counsels are of this nature: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear."

The Mighty God, an appellation that sets him forth "the Creator of all things, visible and invisible", and "without him was not anything made that was made", and as the "Father of our spirits", for as the Word he "was in the beginning with God and was God", hence the Everlasting Father, co-eternal with God, the Father, almighty and all-eternal, from everlasting to everlasting, "without beginning of days or end of life."

The Prince of Peace, said the prophet, is to be one of his titles. As Prince, he is the Son of the King and heir to the throne, and the harbinger of peace. And so after he had lived a peaceable life among men, and had taught them the principles of peace by which peace may be secured and maintained, just before leaving them he said: "My peace I give unto you, my peace I leave with you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." He would give peace, not at the mouth of the cannon or point of the bayonet, but on the great principles

of justice, equity and love, which is justice to all and nepotism to none; equity to all and favoritism to none; love to all, hatred to none; fairness to all and coercion and oppression to none.

On these broad principles of peace, families may be at peace, communities may be at peace, states may be at peace, nations and even the world may be at peace. "Whatsoever ye would that others should do to you do ye also unto them" is his rule for securing and maintaining peace, and "if thy enemy hunger feed him, and if he thirst give him drink" is his rule to deal with enemies. These principles and rules have never been known to fail to bring about amicable relations when properly applied.

The prophet said further: "The government shall be upon his shoulder; and 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 forever." And Luke tells us: "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." (Luke 1:32.) While seated on the throne of David rebuilt (Acts 15:16) yet his kingdom

and peace are to increase and have no end. So that his kingdom is a kingdom of war and bloodshed, as was that of his father, David. And so, he said: "I came not to destroy men's lives but to save them."

It will be recalled that part of the "good tidings" the angel brought to the shepherds was: "Peace on earth, good will to men." So that he may appropriately be called the Harbinger of Peace, and his kingdom, a kingdom of peace in which his subjects do not fight, or engage in carnal warfare; for "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal." Yet, while disarmed for carnal warfare, we are fully equipped for the spiritual conflict.

Other appellatives described the character of this Harbinger of Peace. The angel said, "his name shall be Jesus for he shall save

his people from their sins", hence the title Savior. At his baptism, the Spirit came down and abode upon him, hence he is now Christ the anointed. Then too, another title that endears him to our hearts is "Immanuel", which means "God with us." And so, he said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world", for his kingdom has no end. Praise God for his abiding presence, and for his peace, which passeth understanding and has no end. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men" this bright, glad Christmas morning. And let all the earth say, Amen! In honor to the Harbinger of Peace.

Selected from the
December 15, 1930
issue of the Bible Monitor

THE PROMISES AND COMING OF OUR REDEEMER

Otto Harris

The world must have been a delightful place to live before the fall of man. "God saw everything that he had made and, behold, it was very good." Everything that was necessary for the preservation of man was at his disposal. He had an almost endless supply of raw material out of which to fashion and form

anything he might desire. All was going well until sin came into the picture and spoiled it all. Consequently, our first parents were driven from the garden of God and the way back guarded by an angel. This seemed to be the ending of an auspicious day.

But our first parents did not go out of God's garden bearing

the burden of their sin without any hope. Intermingled with the words of sentence were prophetic words telling of a divinely determined deliverance. In Genesis 3:15 the promise is stated, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between her seed and thy seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This gave Adam and Eve the hope that though they must leave the presence of God because of sin their course was not hopeless, but somewhere ahead there was deliverance.

In the life of Abraham, we find another promise of a coming Redeemer. When God said to Abraham, "In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." He threw out the greatest prospect in life that has ever been vouched to mortal man. The way God carried all this out is marvelous. When God led Abraham out of Mesopotamia into the little strip of territory, we now call Palestine, the world did not know that He was leading in one of the most strategic movements ever undertaken in the interest of mankind. The great conquest was in the interest of a spiritual kingdom, but seemingly temporal kingdoms helped to carry out this great purpose. Babylon,

Egypt, Persia, and Rome each coveted and held the Holy Land for a time. Their marching armies going to and fro across Palestine seemingly helped pave the way for the coming of the Prince of Peace. Consequently, when Christ was born in Bethlehem, Roman legions were policing the world. Good roads were built in the provinces. Travelers and merchants were guarded on their journeys. Property was guarded and a degree of religious freedom was allowed. "The fullness of time had come" and everything seemed to be in readiness for the coming of man's Redeemer.

As we conclude our meditation upon the birth of our Redeemer, many scriptures come to our mind. We think of the scripture concerning the wise men who were guided by a star. We, too, have a sort of a star in the East to guide us. Many of us have gone to church from childhood. We have heard many sermons presented and much scripture has been read to us. In various ways we have been guided toward the cradle of our Lord and Saviour.

Another scripture that presents itself for meditation is found in Matt. 2:15, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son." This was

literally fulfilled in the life of our Lord. Has this scripture found its literal and spiritual fulfillment in our lives? Have we left Egypt altogether behind? As we once more commemorate the birth of

Christ, are we looking back to the "flesh pots of Egypt"?

Selected from the
December 1, 1960
issue of the Bible Monitor

"A NAME"

B. F. Masterson

"And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." (Acts 11:26.)

It is said that there is nothing in a name, but one can easily make for himself a name. One's character suggests the name. The wise man says, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." It is one's privilege to choose a name pertaining to character if he is willing to pay the cost. The character suggests the name. "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophecy of you saying, this people draweth nigh unto me with their lips but their heart is far from me," pretending to be what they were not suggested the name, hypocrite.

When persecution was rife at Jerusalem, the preachers were scattered abroad and some landed at Antioch, preaching the Lord Jesus; the hand of the Lord was with them and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord

and it was here that the disciples were called Christians. I am inclined to believe that outsiders gave them the name and that the lives of these disciples suggested the name.

As the Platonists have their name from their master Plato because they accepted his teaching and credited his doctrine, so the disciples were called Christians because they took Christ for their teacher and followed His rule of life. There is no title attached to one's name that is as honorable and suggests as high a standard of character as Christian.

Of the many characteristics that enter into the makeup of a Christian life there are two that are perhaps the most prominent. Jesus refers to these when He said to His disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth" not that ye shall be but ye are, as a matter of course, it cannot be otherwise.

If true to name, "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place, sweet water and bitter." It is natural for a Christian life to be a preservative; he is not salt in a sense to preserve his own life here and from everlasting destruction only, but the salt of the "earth", that is reaching out of self. It is the influence that goes out from the regenerated life that preserves others. It has a marvelous influence over society, but if the salt has lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing. If the Christian professor is not true to name, he has lost his power for good and brings reproach on the name. It is the Christian who molds sentiment in communities and cries against the evils that tend to degradation. Why should not the church cry against the vain fashions of dress as well as against war and intemperance and set an example of decency and economy? One is as degrading as the other.

One may by his spirit and action build up an appellation which will endure through all eternity, "And they shall see his face and his name shall be in their foreheads." (Rev. 22:4).

John the Baptist called the Pharisees and Sadducees, a

brood of vipers, a progeny of serpents. Christ called a king a fox and others a whited sepulcher. Their characters suggested these names. At Antioch Christ's disciples were called Christians. Jesus called them salt of the earth. I may be called a radical upon the subject of nonconformity. No, radical is not the proper word, but say, I am indeed earnest on that bible doctrine, because the majority of the ministers do not as much as mention it, which makes me all the more insistent.

Those who are indeed earnest in advocating the peace and temperance doctrines to the exclusion of conformity doctrine are inconsistent, lopsided, the tree is not symmetrical, one side is loaded heavy with peace and temperance but lo and behold, no nonconformity on the other side to balance it. The tree is leaning world ward. The gold and diamond ornaments, the gay dressing and expensive churches are in evidence. I am fearful that the beam will interfere when disciples are called for. This is the organization which received me into her fellowship sixty-one (61) years ago. When she stood as a beautiful symmetrical tree, its branches representing all the

doctrines of the New Testament which I was called and set apart to advocate and defend from behind the sacred desk, now in my declining years of retirement must see some of these teachings ignored and trampled in the dust of worldliness, which fills my heart with sadness and my head bowed in shame because of the reproach brought upon the church.

The other characteristic of a genuine Christian which makes him worthy of the name is "light." "Ye are the light of the world." God has chosen the Christian as an instrument to illuminate the hearts and minds of men. As God has created the sun to give light to the world so He ordained the church to shed spiritual light into the hearts of the human family.

Christ confers this title upon His disciples who by the doctrine He taught were to be the means of diffusing the light of the life throughout the world. "Go ye therefore and preach." He was the light of the world, but when He left and ascended to Heaven, He transferred this title upon His disciples because they had His spirit. He said "Ye are the light of the world." If Christian professors become darkness, how great is that darkness.

On Bedloe Island, New York, stands a statue, it is the statue of a woman named the Goddess of Liberty. It is one hundred and fifty-one or more feet high. The pedestal is over one hundred and forty-nine feet high. The total height is over three hundred and one feet above the water level. Its arm stretched high holding a torch in hand, continually burning, lighting the ships coming through the dangerous channel. It was presented by France to the United States, representing the republic of the two nations that mete out Liberty tending to peace and prosperity. But Jesus the Christ presented to the whole world a monument based on the depth of the ages and reaches into heaven. It is the symbol of a woman, "and there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." It is a symbol of the universal church, composed of people called Christians that are true to name, which is the light house which, illuminates the world and represents Liberty of conscience, peace to the soul and prosperity to the inner man. This statue stands high above the imagination of man,

its arm stretched far and high, holding the light of the gospel in its hand, lighting each honest and sincere soul to sail safely over life's sea through the dangerous channel of false theology into the heaven of eternal rest, where they shall

receive a "...white stone and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receive it." (Rev. 2:17).

Selected from the
December 1, 1930
issue of the Bible Monitor

THE HOLY CHILD JESUS AND HIS KINGDOM

An Earnest Appeal to Watch and Be Ready

Paul Reed

According to our method of counting time almost two thousand years have gone into the pages of history since the great redeemer, King Jesus, was born of the Virgin Mary over in a little town known as Bethlehem of Judea.

Do we prove to God by our actions that we actually thank Him for the great gift. I am sure we as weak and unworthy creatures cannot express in our limited use of language just what it really means to us.

Man had fallen from grace, and no longer would the slaying of lambs, etc., atone for sin. But it took that ignominious death on the cross, and the shedding of His blood, to atone for sin.

This little child was soon about His Father's business, going about doing good, healing the sick, curing

the lame, causing the deaf to hear; giving sight to the blind and establishing the kingdom that had been prophesied of, that God would set up, or establish. This kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. We believe Daniel very forcibly prophesied about this kingdom, (Daniel 2:44) "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

Chapter 7, verses 18 and 27 are very consoling scriptures for the saints and is strong evidence of the existence of the kingdom and its continuation. "But the saints of the most high shall take the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever.

And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominion shall serve and obey Him."

When we came to the age of accountability and realized that we must either accept Christ and His plan of salvation; or be eternally lost if we died having never accepted Him. Then we were led down into the liquid stream of water, and there immersed beneath the surface of it, to rise and walk in newness of life.

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

Now after we have been baptized, truly born again; born of the water and of the Spirit, we are then in His kingdom, or church. Then if we remain in His kingdom, we must serve Him. Do the things He has commanded of us to do. It seems to me the beloved apostle Paul has fore warned the followers of Christ if they expect to maintain the integrity of Christ's teachings they must "put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood,

but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Heb. 6:11-12.)

The writer feels sure that all Monitor readers are indeed thankful that we live in a land and country in which there is freedom of speech, freedom of the press and where we may worship God according to the dictates of our conscience unmolested. But still there are many things that will lead to degradation and sorrow if the Christians allow themselves to become entangled. At this present time there are many openings, that would lead to a field of financial prosperity. But after being brought into a saved relationship with God can we afford to fall away? If we do, what are the grave consequences?

(Heb. 6:4-6) "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gifts, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentances; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame."

With these thoughts before us don't we believe it would be

exercising the best logic, and in many cases be very expedient to consult the church before applying, or taking many positions that are available?

Money that is honorably earned and applied to a good purpose; is not a detriment; but a blessing. The giver, if he doesn't give to be seen and honored by man will receive a great blessing. It maybe would be the means of getting the gospel to some poor soul. If we can be instrumental in causing one soul to accept Christ, I am sure our labor is not spent in vain.

But dearly beloved, let's not become too eager about wealth and accept a position that would destroy our fellowman's life. Remember the message the angel brought to the shepherds. "Fear not: for behold, I bring tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Jesus declares Himself to be the prince of peace, and in His farewell sermon He speaks these comforting words, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid." (St. John 14:27.)

It is an obvious fact from these scriptures and many others that Jesus is not the instigator of confusion, malice, hatred, grudge, envy, strife, and wars, but is the contrary to it.

Jesus has told us that we are in the world, but not of the world. Then if not of the world, we have our citizenship in Christ's kingdom, and we are entitled to protection from it. This we believe He will do, for He has verified it through holy men of old.

First let us see what some of the promises are. (I Cor. 10:13) "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape."

(II Pet. 2:9) "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." The apostle James tells us, "I (God) will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

These are only a few of many scriptures to prove God's unlimited power, and protection of His people.

We wish to give a few examples where God has stayed by His people. (Daniel 3) King Nebuchadnezzar made a golden

image and made a decree that those who would not fall down and worship the image should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. As a result, we find three, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who would not fall down and worship the image. Then the king had them bound and cast into the furnace that has been heated, "One seven times more than it was wont to be heated." It was so hot the flames of the fire slew those that put them in. Then the king rose up in haste, and said unto his counsellors, did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O King.

He answered and said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

"And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them."

As space doesn't permit, I won't give Daniel's experience in the lion's den. If we desire to read it, we may by turning to Daniel 6. It

is wonderful to read, seeing how the Lord sent His angel and shut the lion's mouth. So, Daniel came out without a scratch. This has been a good many centuries ago; but God has revealed unto us that He is the same yesterday, today and forever. Neither do we believe God's arm or power has shortened or diminished one hair's breadth.

I do not mean to say by this that if we were put to the test as Daniel and the Hebrew children were that God would deal with us as He dealt with them. But this the writer does conscientiously believe that God will never allow us to be tempted above that we are able to bear. If our faith were sufficient, we maybe would have to give our lives, as did Stephen. But what could be greater, nobler, or more honorable than to give our life for Christ's sake and the gospel?

(Mark 8:35) "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's the same shall save it."

Now in conclusion we earnestly entreat all to watch and be ready for we believe our Lord is coming soon. The command He left to His followers is "occupy till I come." Then if we have faithfully occupied, we will hear that welcome call: Well done thou good and faithful servant;

thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of the Lord.

As the soldier of the cross of Christ journeys on through this old world, he will meet with many obstacles that may cause much sorrow, pain, grief, heartache and many a tear; for we are told "All that will live godly in Christ

Jesus shall suffer persecution."

But when the blessed Master calls us to that heavenly home these trials and persecutions will be no more, but all will be joy, happiness, peace, and love through the ceaseless ages of eternity.

Selected from the
December 15, 1940
issue of the Bible Monitor

MARRIAGE

MANUEL – JOHNSON

Sister Bethany Manuel, the daughter of Brother Rudy and Sister Susan Manuel, of Merced, California, became the bride of Brother Micaiah Johnson, son of Brother Jeremiah and Sister Debra Johnson, of Hart, Michigan, on October 31, 2020, during a lawn wedding at the Pleasant Home Dunkard Brethren Congregation, Modesto, California. Following a wedding devotional by Brother Jeremiah Johnson, the marriage was performed by Brother Milton Cook with the assistance of Brother Ronald Marks. The couple will be living near Hughson, California, but currently are receiving their mail at 1148 West Cardella Road, Merced, California, 95348.

NEWS ITEMS

NOTICE

Presiding Elders or their designates should check the information concerning their congregations in the February 2020 issue. If there are any changes that need to be made, please inform the Editor of those changes by January 1, 2021. Your co-operation will ensure the accuracy of the information in that issue. Thank you,

Editor,
951-845-6231
mcookdb@gmail.com

THANK YOU

To the Brotherhood,

Maxine and I would like to send a big Thank You for all the prayers, cards, and phone calls during Maxine's recent stay in the hospital and rehab. She is doing well and gaining strength each day.

The Lord has been close through this time. Without His healing, where would we be?

Your concern has been much appreciated. God Bless each of you.

Sister Maxine and Brother Ken Wilkerson

THANK YOU

We wish to thank you, one and all, for your fervent prayers, cards, and gifts of love since September 16, when Glen had a brain tumor removed.

Your support was a real blessing to us, and we continue to thank God as we travel onward and upward on our journey, one day at a time.

Please continue to remember us at the throne of Grace as we Praise Him for all that is past and Trust Him for all that is to come!

In appreciation,

Glen and Shirley Frick

THANK YOU!!

We want to thank everyone for the prayers, cards, and uplifting notes in the death of our brother, Marlin Kegerreis. Thank you and may God bless each one of you.

Fern Wolfe, David Kegerreis, Darlene Marks,

Jean Keeney, Maxine Wilkerson,

Sister-in-law, Fern Kegerreis

2021 CASP PROJECT - REBUILDING

Our fourth CASP Pilot Project is being planned for the month of January in 2021. We recently received confirmation that this project will take place at Port Arthur, Texas. The dates are January 4 through 29 (the time for reporting to the site will be announced later). Unlike our other projects, this is a rebuilding project.

This project is an opportunity for young men of draftable age (18-25) who are members of the Dunkard Brethren Church to develop spiritual growth, grow in maturity, enjoy the satisfaction of service, and develop new, deeper, and lasting friendships with likeminded young brothers from across our Brotherhood. The cost is taking a month out of the volunteer's life from a job or whatever else he might be doing. The experience will be somewhat stretching but rewarding. Usually it is when we get outside of our comfort zones that real growth occurs.

Along with the work projects, emphasis will be made throughout the time of service on outreach in the community, personal spiritual growth, times of Bible study and singing, recreation and other activities to promote spiritual development.

Young men who are interested in serving on this project should contact Bob Lehigh at rlehighdb@gmail.com or 717-817-6025 (cell # for texts or calls). As of this writing, one young brother has made a commitment to serve. We need at least seven others who are willing to serve in this way. You can help by spreading the word among the young men in your life or in your congregation.

We deeply appreciate the prayers and financial support of the Brotherhood during our past projects and would appreciate that on this project as well. It is our goal to have the Brotherhood cover the costs associated with this project, including reimbursement for travel costs of getting to and from Port Arthur, Texas. Contributions for this project should be made as follows:

Dunkard Brethren Church Relief Board

And sent to:

Ward Deaton, Secretary

2620 Thacker Rd.

Zillah, WA 98953

Please mention that your contribution is for the Dunkard Brethren CASP Pilot Project.

If you have questions (or if a young man has questions), feel free to get in touch with the Civilian Service Board member from your District or Bob Lehigh.

Thanks so much for your prayerful support and cooperation in this effort.

Sincerely in Christ,

Brother Bob Lehigh

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR JANUARY 2021

Jan. 3 – Defection from and Revelation of the Gospel of Christ – Gal. 1:1-17

1. What does Paul understand as the basis of his apostleship?

2. How have you been delivered from this present evil age?

3. Why does Paul remind the Galatians of his past history before Christ?

Jan. 10 – Two Trips to Jerusalem – Gal. 1:18-2:10

1. What reasons can you think of why Paul did not preach to the churches in Judea?

2. What confirmation was Paul looking for on his second visit to Jerusalem?

3. How do you describe the liberty we have in Christ Jesus?

Jan. 17 – Conflicts, Confrontation, and Crucifixion with Christ – Gal. 2:11-21

1. What happens when liberty is limited by the fear of what others think and practice?

2. What justifies you as a believer?

3. What does Paul mean by “dead to the law”?

Jan. 24 – Foolish Futility or Faith Foreseen by a Father – Gal. 3:1-14

1. In verses 2 & 3 what two phrases does Paul use to describe the nature of the law?

2. How does the law work its way into our thinking and acting?

3. How have you experienced the curse of the law?

Jan. 31 – Inheritors of the Seed of Promise – Gal. 3:15-29

1. How does Paul justify the New Covenant over the Old Covenant?

2. What dual purpose does the law serve?

3. How do you become part of Abraham’s seed?

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