

## **The Wednesday Word, Dec. 19, 2012: Good News from Bethlehem!**

Bethlehem means, “The House of bread.” What a prominent place it has in Scripture. It was in Bethlehem that Jacob buried Rachel and in Bethlehem that Ruth and Boaz both met and lived. King David, came from Bethlehem, and it was on the hills around Bethlehem that the lambs destined for Temple sacrifice were born and raised. But of greatest significance, it was at Bethlehem that, Christ, the true, sacrificial Lamb came into this world.

Mind you, on the day that our Saviour was born, Bethlehem was not a terribly impressive place. There was no Palace or no Temple. There was only an inn for travellers journeying between Hebron and Jerusalem and when God incarnate was born, He wasn't even given a room. This shows us something of the humility of God. It also shows us that, in His human experience, God began life as a reject. This must mean that He feels and knows our pain when we feel like rejected outcasts. (John 1:12).

And think about it, the people who welcomed him on His arrival were outcasts too. They were shepherds, members of the lowest echelon of society. According to Jewish society, shepherds were nothing more than a bunch of rogues and robbers. They weren't even allowed past the Outer Court of the Temple. Yet Jesus identifies with these nobodies, these men who didn't even have a name (see 1 Corinthians 1:26-28).

It is when we become nobodies that we become candidates for the grace of God. We can be too big for God to use, but we can never too small.

Then we have the Wise Men. We don't know how many there were. Tradition say three, but the Bible is silent on the matter (Matthew 2:1). One thing we do know, however, is that they were foreigners and would, therefore, have been considered unclean in society's eyes. Unclean? Yes indeed, but they were welcome to worship the Saviour.

You may feel unclean, maybe your life is not what it should be. You have failed. Let me urge you to take your sin to the blood and be cleansed. Go to Christ Jesus and tell Him of your uncleanness. He will cleanse you.

O that we would be like the Wise Men. If we were, we would worship Christ the Lord.

He is God manifest in the flesh.  
He is the first begotten from the dead.  
He is the Alpha and Omega.  
He is the circumference of human history.  
He is the incarnation of Yahweh's purposes.  
He is God's self-revelation.  
He is the word of the Father now in flesh appearing.

Yet here he lies in Bethlehem. In a feeding trough for cattle. But think about it, on Him, all the hopes of God are resting. God will save no one without this child. God's hope rests upon this child and not only so, man's hope rests on Him also for no man can come to the Father but by Him(John

14:6). In Him, God and man meet. In Him, man sees God and God sees man.

The good news for Bethlehem is that our God has come for us. He has stepped down from His exalted throne and come down to earth on His 33 year journey to seek and to save that which was lost. At Bethlehem, God was manifest in the flesh (John 1:14). The inaccessible God became accessible, the unapproachable God became approachable, the unseen God becomes visible, and the incomprehensible God becomes comprehensible.