

The Wednesday Word, December 25, 2024: Good News from Bethlehem!

Bethlehem means, “The House of Bread.” It was small, insignificant town but what a prominent place it had in Scripture.

It was in Bethlehem that Jacob buried Rachel.

It was in Bethlehem that Ruth and Boaz met and lived.

It was from Bethlehem that King David hailed.

It was in the hills around Bethlehem that the lambs destined for Temple sacrifice were both born and raised.

But of greatest significance, it was at Bethlehem that, Christ, the true, sacrificial Lamb came into this world. There was no Palace or no Temple in Bethlehem. There was only an inn for travellers journeying between Hebron and Jerusalem but when God incarnate was born, He wasn't even given a room.

This shows us something of the humility of God. It also demonstrates that, in His human experience, God began life as a reject and in His life he was despised and rejected. That is why He knows our pain when we feel like rejected outcasts. The Lord Jesus, however, wants every believer to know that He does not reject us. He is for us. He loves each and every believer with a powerful love.

Come to think about it, the people who welcomed Him on His arrival were outcasts too. They were shepherds and shepherds were members of the lowest echelon of society. According to Jewish mindset, 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).

Then we have the Wise Men. We don't know how many there were. Tradition says 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. Go to Christ Jesus and tell Him of your uncleanness. He will cleanse you. Oh 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 a baby in Bethlehem.

Think about it, all the purposes of God were resting on this baby. God will save no one without this child. No one 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 from Bethlehem is that our God has

come for us. He has stepped down from His exalted throne and come down to earth to seek and to save his people.

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.

And that's the Gospel Truth!