



CHRISTMAS IN EGYPT

Look what WE found!

Gabriel L. Mancino



Soon after Jesus was born, God told Mary's husband to take the family and **escape to Egypt**, for King Herod would try to find and kill the Christ-Child. So, for a good reason, Joseph, a carpenter, took Jesus and Mary **back to Egypt**. It was the country that had enslaved their people for centuries. Joseph could say: "**Look what I found; a working holiday!**"

Our elder daughter and family, living in America, recently spent a week with my wife, who remains at the old farm home, caring for her mother. **It was American Thanksgiving time**, but our son in law *also* needed some rest from his very heavy work load.

Look what they found! A vital part of the house was in an appalling state. The problem had obviously gone on for a long time and had become a health hazard. It could not be left as it was, though our son in law had hoped for complete rest. **A working holiday!**

Isaiah, the prophet, gave Israel God's diagnosis of them. **Look what GOD found!** "*The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faints. From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed or bound up, or soothed with ointment*" (Isa. 1: 5, 6). God was not assessing a bathroom...a toilet. He was assessing a nation; actually, mankind as a whole. It was not flattering, but factual.

Like the room at the farm, the deterioration, damage and defilement of the nation didn't happen overnight. The case with today's world is the same. Isaiah described it as "*the desolations of many generations*" (61:4). Yet, *even then*, God said that the damage could be corrected! **That is great news!**

Again, like that farm house room, the deplorable condition of Israel and the whole world, as seen in Isa. 1, could not be left as it was. The answer? **God went on a working holiday!** In Isa. 9, God promised His Coming Cure, which we celebrate at **Christmas!** "*For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace...The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!*" (Isa. 9: 6,7). "**Zeal,**" here, means God's strong desire and intense determination to do this.

Sadly, many people have "**zeal**" to **fight God in this purpose!** The main reason for their resistance is that God's promise says that this coming "**Child born**" and "**Son given**" is "**Mighty God**" and "**Everlasting Father!**" There has been a constant fight against God's promise and purpose to become man! "The ancient Jews incontestably referred it to the Messiah," wrote one great commentator on that Bible verse.

(continued on page 7)



"God so loved the world" (Jn.3:16,17). Charles Wesley wrote in 1749: "Oh, that the world might taste and see, the riches of His grace! The arms of love that compass me, would all mankind embrace." **A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL!**



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London Christian Standard ...and Provincial

"Lift up a standard for the people." Isaiah 62:10

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BLUE CHRISTMAS

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"Blue Christmas" was released by Elvis Presley in 1957; the year my wife was born. The song says "I'll have a **Blue Christmas without you.**" This will be my fourth straight Christmas without my wife, who is in the USA caring for her mother!

Some worldly Christmas songs mention Santa and Rudolph. Others tell the only thing the singer wants for Christmas. For one, written in 1944, it was "my two front teeth." For another, produced in 1994, 50 years later, it was simply "You."

So, Elvis, Mariah Carey and other singers were singing **Blue Christmas** to "some special person" who, for the songs' sake, they were longing to see at Christmas. "**I'll have a Blue Christmas without you**" says more



than it was meant to! Some of these songs actually hint at man's greatest deficiency—missing and needing Someone, with a **bold capital "S."**

Describing man's natural condition "**on his own,**" the Bible book of Ephesians says "*That at that time you were without Christ, being total strangers from God's chosen community, Israel, and you had no knowledge of, or right to, God's promised agreements, having no hope and without God in the world*" (Eph. 2:12).

Some of those people in Ephesus (now located in Turkey) received and believed the Good News of Jesus Christ, God's long-promised Messiah-Saviour. As a result, they experienced an amazing change in heart, mind and life; all from God. Therefore, the writer, above, continued in the next verse to show the big change, saying:

"**But now, in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off have been brought** (continued on page 2)



CHRISTMAS SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE!

This Christmas "Double Issue" is easily read in little time. Its short articles help you to know, more clearly, the true "Reason For The Season!" It tells 1) who Jesus is 2) why He came 3) and why He came the way He did...for ALL people! I wrote this as if it was the last issue I could give you. **...GOD BLESS YOU ALL THIS CHRISTMAS!**

BLUE CHRISTMAS*(continued from front page)*

near by the blood of Christ" (v. 13).

That writer told that the Ephesians had been "**outsiders**," but that they had become "**fellow citizens**." He quickly refers three times to **one of the main "Christmas Gifts"** when Christ comes into a life. **That Gift is peace.** Read it, here, and see:

"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both [*of us] one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation between us...so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, in this way making peace... and He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near... For through Him we both [*all] have access by one Spirit to the Father" (Eph. 2:14-18).

Jesus is the only one capable of bringing this Christmas Gift of peace, for HE is the One Who is most missing! Every day is "Blue"... the darkest blue... without Him!

Jesus is the only one qualified, chosen and sent by God to bring this Christmas Gift of peace. Read His credentials, as given by Isaiah the prophet who foretold His coming: "**For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace**" (Isa. 9:6).

Compare those credentials with the ones listed in Hebrews 1:1-3. Honest opponents should drop all weapons or take off the boxing gloves and stop fighting. **Yes**, and then kneel, confess, repent, submit and worship. **No**, the Devil won't do that!

Jesus said "**Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid**" (Jn. 14:27). **Notice:**

Jesus gives, but so does the world. We need **HIS "brand!"... "MY peace!"**

In this article, a "**Blue Christmas**" is not so much a "**feeling**," as a **reality; a condition**; regardless of "**feelings**."

Most people will have a "**Blue Christmas**" because, as those pre-Christian crowds in ancient Ephesus, they are "**without Christ and without God**." It will be "**a Blue Christmas without HIM**"...**but it need not be!**

There **IS** an alternative; another option! We can switch from Elvis Presley to Bing Crosby who, in 1944, recorded **WHITE Christmas!** That song starts with "**I'm dreaming of a White Christmas**." Of course, that song only refers to the white of snow, and of a moral, yet worldly Christmas.

Jesus Christ personally provided for us a **White Christmas** of holiness, purity, forgiveness of sin, ceasing from all wrong-doing, a radical correcting of self and society. That will put an end to the "**Blue Christmas without You**," that is, without Christ and without God.

Yes, **dream of a White Christmas!** The prophet, Joel, did! (Joel 2:28), and Peter quoted him on that first Pentecost, which we call Whitsun, or **White Sunday!** (Acts 2:17). God's eternal promise and provision are the unshakable foundation for a faith that can make that dream a reality, right here in London...in you...in me!

May God give us a truly White Christmas!

A man appeared at my side while I gave out my papers. "When was Jesus Christ born?" he asked, with no expression. Almost immediately, I said, "April, 1973!" "Where did you get that?" he asked. "I make it personal! **THAT** was when He was born in ME!" I replied! The Christmas song, "**O, Little Town Of Bethlehem**" says "**Oh holy Child of Bethlehem, descend on us, we pray. Cast out our sin, and enter in; be born in us today!**"

YES!

BETHLEHEM REVISITED*(continued from page 6)*

God has the answer and the resources we need. **This would make the greatest "Christmas" the world has ever known since Jesus' birth.**

When Christ was born, the angel said to those shepherds on the lonely hills around Bethlehem: "**Do not be afraid. Listen! I bring you good news of great joy which will be to all people. For today, in David's town, a Saviour has been born for you, who is Christ the Lord...And suddenly there was with the angel a great company of the armies of heaven praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!'**" (Lk. 2:10-14).

**CHRISTMAS IN EGYPT***(continued from bottom right)*

Back with a message of love and grace;
I've had a glimpse of Jesus

(Chorus)

I've found a Friend that is sweeter to me, sweeter with peace, from unhappiness free, Fuller of joy than the old life could be; I've had a glimpse of Jesus.

Our son in law found a mess at the farm. **God found a mess** in Israel. But, Andrew, Philip and other disciples confidently called out, "**We have found the MESSIAH!**" (which is translated, the Christ)...**We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote--Jesus of Nazareth!**" (Jn. 1: 40-45).

"**Look what WE found!**" I hope YOU find Him, too...even now. The Bethlehem shepherds told others about Christ, as did Andrew and Philip, above. You can, too. **Find Him and tell others!**

CHRISTMAS IN EGYPT*(continued from page 8)*

Later Jews and other critics have been fighting this truth, and oppose God in His own determined and stated purpose!

Our son in law replaced the aged, falling-apart bathroom equipment that caused such an appalling environment. The world fails to see two things: 1) man's thoroughly-sick condition, (seen earlier in Isa. 1) that is the root cause of the world's deplorable, sick condition; like that bathroom toilet, and 2) God's Cure for man's vile condition: **The Christ of Christmas!** (see Isa. 9 on pages 2, 8). **Our Creator's Cure!**

There came the time for little Jesus and His family to "**go home**," and **away from Egypt, the land of former slavery.** Israel left Egyptian slavery, but quickly complained, rebelled and wanted to return. Stephen said they DID return... "**in the hearts!**" (Acts 7:39).

Finally, there came a time when that horrific situation at the farm was radically and thoroughly corrected. **Finally...right THIS moment...** the time has come for the world, that is sick from head to foot, to be cured, as **God's zeal** determined to do—**by way of the Christ of Christmas!** It starts with each individual. It can start with you and me, **right here in London.**

Here is an old song that expresses the determination **NOT to return to the slavery of "Egypt:"**

Back to the cold world I will not go,
Back to the old paths of pain and of woe,
Back to the old life of sin, O no!
I've had a glimpse of Jesus!

Back to the night-shrouded sea to die?
Back, where the breakers of sin toss on high?
Back 'mid the billows of doubt?
Not I! I've had a glimpse of Jesus!

Back to the boon friends of former days,
Still walking on in their old sinful ways?

← (continued left)

* "of us" and "all," meaning Jews and non-Jews

BETHLEHEM REVISITED

Gabriel L. Mancino

Yes, people suffer shock and grief, also at Christmas. The "Christmas story" public knew this experience too well. Sometime after Christ's birth, Herod, the Rome-appointed king of that area, sent soldiers to kill all the boy children in and around Bethlehem that were two years old and under. He was trying to kill the Competitor he had just learned about: Jesus, the God-promised and GOD-appointed King! (Matt. 2).

Early this November, a man went into a church and killed at least 27 people and wounded 30 more; some were children. Metro's headlines read: "Massacre At Church." One week later, Metro's headlines read, "Church: Let Kids Choose Their Gender." Is this "Massacre BY the Church?" Does the "church" seek to play the part of Herod in destroying children? Is Jesus Christ, once again, being "wounded in the house of His friends,"? (Zech. 13:6; Zech. 12:10).

Bethlehem's slaughter of children is being repeated. No! Intensified! The "Church" may be poking its finger in God's eye! The child Jesus grew to manhood and sternly warned against turning little children out of the ways God intended for them.

Jesus said that it would be better for a millstone to be tied around your neck and you be drowned in the sea, than for you to turn children away from God's created and intended ways for mankind (Matt. 18:6).

Reading those words, as recorded in Mark 9: 42-50, you soon see the seriousness of Christ's repeatedly-promised banishment of such people



to that place "where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched." One early British Methodist commentator (who died in 1832), whose work has been long and highly respected, rightly said about that verse that if hell is not forever, then "the worm that dieth not, shall die, and the fire that shall not be quenched shall be put out."

The London Christian Standard is founded upon the Biblical and practical Christian teachings of Early Methodism which started here in 18th century England. John Wesley and his band of dedicated men and women, did enormous good for this country and around the world. The 19th century Salvation Army here had its roots in Methodism. None of these would have approved of the direction The Church of England and others are taking in this serious matter relating to precious children.

However, Christmas could not be better than if God's true people meet His conditions, as recorded in that classic promise, 2 Chronicles 7:14, which says: "IF My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." Oh, how many times God says "IF!" His blessing is conditioned on our complete obedience.

IF the Church... IF the professed descendants of Abraham... indeed... IF the rest of the on-looking world, meet these conditions, God could open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing that we could not contain (2 Kings 7 with Mal. 3:10). Don't wait for someone else or some other group to take the first step. Our world is in a desperate condition, yet

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WHY "CHRISTMAS" WAS NECESSARY

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Abraham (page 4) said to his son, Isaac, "God Himself will supply a lamb" (Gen. 22:8). About 1,900 years later, Christ was born: "the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world," as John the Baptist called Him (Jn. 1: 29, 36, with 1 Pet. 1: 18-21).

God promised ONE Messiah-Saviour, who would provide for man's rescue from sin by His own death. God kept this promise when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, as foretold by Micah, the prophet, 750 years earlier (see Matt. 2: 1-6 and Mic. 5:2).

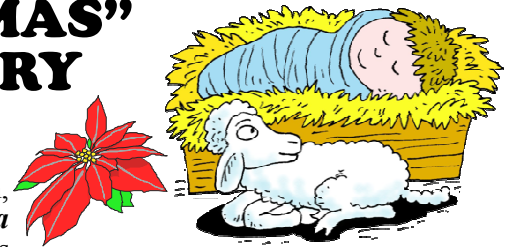
For this God-promised Saviour to die, as foretold in the Old Testament, He had to have a human body "like us." You cannot put a mere "spirit" on a cross. God's promised Saviour was Himself, otherwise the "offering for sin" would be imperfect and sinful, and therefore, unacceptable.

Here are some reasons why "Christmas" was necessary:

1) God keeps His promises! God took on human form to perform the work He promised He would! (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Matt. 1:23; Lk. 1:67-75; 2:11).

2) Christ, our perfect example (1 Pet. 2:21-23), living life just like us, shows us how man is to live pleasing to God. These next Bible verses about Jesus make this clear:

Heb. 2:14 Since the children have common, flesh and blood, physical human nature as human beings, He also shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and set those free who lived their whole lives as slaves to the fear and



dread of death. 16 For indeed He did not take on the nature of angels nor give angels aid, but He took upon Himself the nature of the seed of Abraham to give them aid. 17 Therefore, in every way, He had to be made like His brothers, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make proper settlement, appeasement and reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

That final verse, above, says that Jesus was tempted. Heb 4:15 makes this more clear: "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." Note: Sin and temptation are not the same. Christ lived life just as we do, but showed us how to do it in a way pleasing to God, with victory in temptation, resulting in victory over sin!

Notice in those verses from Heb. 2 that Christ is not an angel (Michael or any other!) like some groups teach.

3) Hebrews 10 tells us that God's system under Moses was 1. purposely temporary, 2. perfected by Christ, leaving no room for improvement! Foretold in Psalm 40:6-8 and quoted in Heb. 10: 5-10, Christ came, knowing the insufficiency of animal sacrifices.

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ABRAHAM'S CHRISTMAS GIFT TO US

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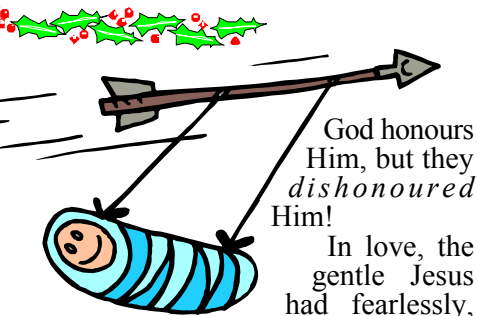
In eternity-past, God shot “a determined arrow,” so to speak, through space and time, to a very small place called Bethlehem.

From “eternity past” to the “little town of Bethlehem,” Abraham was a crucial part of the historical record. God’s calling of Abraham made it possible for God to keep His promise to send a Messiah-Saviour to save the human family from sin. Abraham was “God’s chosen man” through whom the nation began that would be “God’s chosen people.” It was through them that God’s promised Saviour would come.

Let’s speed ahead to St. John 8, where Jesus says much about Abraham. The Jewish religious leaders prided themselves in being “the children of Abraham” (Jn. 8:33), saying: “Abraham is our father” (Jn. 8:39). They went even further to say that God Himself was their father! (Jn. 8:41). Quite the claims!

In this very chapter, Jn. 8, is Jesus contradicting Himself? Not at all. He is simply showing both sides of the one coin! In verse 37, He admits “I know you are Abraham’s descendants.” But in verse 39 and 40, He says “**IF you were Abraham’s descendants!**” He then faithfully tells them that they were fighting directly against God, as Abraham would never, never do!

Finally, Jesus told them that they were indeed doing the works of their father — the Devil! (Jn. 8: 41, 44). St. Jn. 8 ends with Jesus stating that



but faithfully, told them that they were just like their father, the Devil, who is both a liar and a murderer (Jn. 8:44). In verses 54-58, He tells them His identity in such words as **they would not mistake the meaning.**

Jesus, there, referred to Himself with the very title that *God* used for *Himself* when speaking to Moses! (Jn. 8:58 with Exodus 3: 13, 14). Jesus’ own people, who lived in the same place and time-period, knew exactly what Jesus said and what He meant. He did not whisper, mumble or use a foreign language. He claimed “Deity,” that is, that He is Divine... God. His disciples believed and said it, too. So did others. *Here*, even His enemies said so, and not merely to be inventing a way to get Him in trouble. Jesus did not correct ANY of these people! He didn’t need to, for He IS who He claimed to be.

The above information connects us all with Abraham, surprisingly and significantly. The Bible says that to be acceptable to God, we must walk in the steps of faithful Abraham (Rom. 4). This is what Jesus said here in Jn. 8! It is of utmost importance, perhaps especially for Jews and Muslims, to see and understand that Jesus, who used God’s Divine title for Himself (and enraged the Jews by doing so), had also said that Abraham (the “father” they claimed connection to) “rejoiced to see My day, and saw it, and was glad!” (Jn. 8:56).

The Jews knew that Jesus was



We meet at Christ Church on the corner of Brent Street and Heriot Road in Hendon (NW4) at 5:45 pm Sundays. Nearest Tube: Hendon Central.



saying that Abraham had actually seen the Messiah with his own eyes—not merely *prophetically*—and that *THAT* was the reason Abraham rejoiced and was glad! Their reaction and words unmistakably prove this. Jesus did not correct them, *then*, nor in those enraging moments immediately following. He needed to correct nothing! **They had heard and understood Him accurately.**

God has especially blessed the biological descendants of Abraham, that is, the **Jews** (Hebrews/Israelites) and the **Muslims** (Arabs). Yet, neither of these (nor the professed Christian Church!) can boast connection to Abraham unless they walk in the faith of Abraham. That great man of God saw Christ, the Messiah-Saviour, and was glad. God wants us *all* to join in Abraham’s gladness. Abraham lived *before* the first “Christmas.” We live *after* that event. He received Christ as the Messiah-Saviour. So may we all!

Yes, God has especially blessed and prospered **Jews** and the **Muslims**. Both can boast great riches and more. Yet, if they reject God’s Gift, then they can become the poorest and most ignorant because of their favoured position. Even worse can be said about the **Church**, for its favoured position since Christ’s first coming and His God-promised “Mission Accomplished” for us all.

“Abraham’s Christmas Present” means at least two things to us today. *First of all*, as stated above, it shows the Deity of Christ—that Jesus is God. *Secondly*, it gives an Abraham-based example and warning that “*If we say we have fellowship with God, yet walk in darkness, we are lying and not doing the truth!*” (1 Jn. 1:6).

As Jesus said, and as the Bible says elsewhere, we must walk in the obedience of faith, as Abraham did.

For Abraham, this included the awareness of who Jesus the Messiah truly is: Man’s only Redeemer-Rescuer from sin, and therefore, God’s only intended Rescuer of Man from hell.

WHAT A PRESENT!!
Thank you, Abraham!



WHY WAS CHRISTMAS NECESSARY?

(continued from page 3)

“*A body have You prepared Me,*” the old prophecy said. He took “*delight*” to do God’s will. He was qualified to do so, being the only perfect and sinless sacrifice for the sin of the world that was acceptable to God. This is why John the Baptist could point the crowds to Jesus and say: “*Look! The Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world!*” (Jn.1: 29,36).

Also, Christ’s credentials, as seen in Heb. 1:1-3, for example, leave no possibility at all for anyone—*human, angel or otherwise*—to equal, much less surpass, the Lord Jesus Christ.

As stated in the opening paragraph, God spared Abraham’s son, Isaac. But God did NOT spare Jesus. The Bible asks us the exciting question: “*He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*” (Rom 8:32).

