



DON ANDERSON MINISTRIES

STATION A
P. O. BOX 6611
TYLER, TEXAS 75711

THE CHRISTMAS STORY FROM THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

Hebrews 10:1-17

NOTES

A. THE REASON FOR CHRISTMAS

v. 1 For the law having a shadow of the good things coming, and not the image itself of the actual things, is never able by means of the same sacrifices which they are offering continually year after year, make perfect those who are drawing near.

v. 2 Since then would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshippers once having been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?

v. 3 But in them (the sacrifices) there is a reminder of sins year by year.

v. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to be taking away sins.

B. THE RECORD OF CHRISTMAS

v. 5 Therefore when He is coming into the world, He is saying: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me."

v. 6 In whole burnt offerings also for sin you took no pleasure.

v. 7 Then I said: "Behold, I have come, in the roll of the book it is written concerning me, to do your will O God."

v. 8 After saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings also for sins you did not desire nor have pleasure in which are being offered according to law.

v. 9 Then He said: "Behold I have come to do your will." He is taking away the first in order that He may establish the second.

v.10 By means of which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

C. THE RESULT OF CHRISTMAS

v.11 And indeed, every priest has stood day by day performing his sacred service and time after time offering the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

v.12 But this priest, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,

v.13 waiting from that time onward: "Until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet."

v.14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

v.15 And the Holy Spirit is also bearing witness to us; for after having said:

v.16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days," says the Lord: I am putting my laws upon their hearts, and upon their minds I will write them.

v.17 And their sins and their lawless deeds, I will positively not remember anymore."

NOTES

THE CHRISTMAS STORY FROM THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

Hebrews 10:1-17

INTRODUCTION:

'Twas the night before Jesus came

'Twas the night before Jesus came and all through
the house
Not a creature was praying, not one in the house.
Their Bibles were lain on the shelf without care
In hopes that Jesus would not come there.

The children were dressing to crawl into bed,
Not once ever kneeling or bowing a head.
And mom in her rocker with baby on her lap
Was watching the Late Show while I took a nap.

When out of the East there arose such a clatter,
I sprang to my feet to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash!

When what to my wondering eyes should appear
But angels proclaiming that Jesus was here
With a light like the sun sending forth a bright ray
I knew in a moment this must be THE DAY!

The light of His face made me cover my head
It was Jesus! returning just like He had said.
And though I possessed worldly wisdom and wealth,
I cried when I saw Him in spite of myself.

In the Book of Life which He held in His hand
Was written the name of every saved man.
He spoke not a word as He searched for my name;
When He said "It's not here" my head hung in shame.

The people whose names had been written with love
He gathered to take to His Father above.
With those who were ready He rose without a sound
While all the rest were left standing around.

I fell to my knees, but it was too late;
I had waited too long and thus sealed my fate.
I stood and I cried as they rose out of sight;
Oh, if only I had been ready tonight.

In the words of this poem the meaning is clear;
The coming of Jesus is drawing near.
There's only one life and when comes the last call
We'll find that the Bible was true after all!

1 Cor. 15:51,52

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

OUTLINE OF THE PASSAGE:

- I. THE REASON FOR CHRISTMAS - verses 1-4
- II. THE RECORD OF CHRISTMAS - verses 5-10
- III. THE RESULT OF CHRISTMAS - verses 11-17

The reason for Christmas is: SIN

The record of Christmas is: a SACRIFICE

And the result of Christmas is: SALVATION

I. THE REASON FOR CHRISTMAS - verses 1-4

Pink points out, "In the first four verses of our present chapter, the apostle was moved to press upon the Hebrews the insufficiency of the Levitical sacrifices to bring about those spiritual and eternal effects that were needed in order for poor sinners being fitted to stand before God as accepted worshippers. His design in so doing was to pave the way for setting before them the dire need for the absolute sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice."

v. 1 For the law having a shadow of the good things coming, and not the image itself of the actual things, is (never able) by means of the same sacrifices which they are offering continually year after year, make perfect those who are drawing near.

Why was it necessary for Christ to come and to give His life? The reason is seen here in this first verse:

"For the law having a shadow of the good things coming"

The law is never able to make perfect those who are drawing near.

Now we know that what things sever the law saith it sayeth to those under the Law.

The writer uses a positive and a negative here:

*Rom. 3:19
Points us to the
Need!*

POSITIVE: "the law having a shadow of the good things coming"

NEGATIVE: "not the image itself of the actual things"

I think it is important for us in this first verse to see that the law is never able.

Never Able

The instrument of the law is the sacrifice. The law is never able by means of the same sacrifices which they are offering continually year after year, make perfect those who are drawing near.

Man is prone to sacrifice to demonstrate his CONVICTION and COMMITMENT, whether it be time or money or whatever.

Matthew 7:21-23

Not every one who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father, who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'

Make Perfect

"The law is never able by means of these sacrifices...to make perfect those who are drawing near." You see, the requirement to be acceptable by God is perfection. There's no hope for that from the human point of view.



Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

The law is never able to make perfect those who are drawing near. Those people who are drawing near are wanting ACCESS and ACCEPTANCE into God's presence, and the law cannot do that.

All the law can do is to condemn and to judge a man. There is no hope for the human race unless God does something.

Galatians 2:16

nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.

Stedman points out, "God has no interest in ritual and candles and prayerbooks and beads and chanting in any ceremony. Ceremonies mean nothing to God. What He wants is a heart that is His; a life that is His, and a body that is available to Him. That is why Paul in Romans 12:1 says, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.'"

Roy Hession in his book From Shadow to Substance has the following poem:

Under the law, with its tenfold lash,
Learning, alas, how true,
That the more I tried, the sooner I died,
While the law cried, "You, you, you!"

Hopelessly still did the battle rage
O wretched man! my cry
And deliverance I sought by some penitence bought,
While my heart cried, "I, I, I!"

Then came a day when my struggling ceased
And trembling in every limb
At the foot of the tree where One died for me,
My heart cried, "Him, Him, Him!"

Dr. Griffith Thomas, that great Bible teacher of years ago, made this statement: "Christianity is the religion of access." I do not know if this impresses you, but do you know that all the religions of the world shut man out from God? Religions are nothing but a maze of ritual and liturgy that have never guaranteed any man's entrance into the presence of God. In fact, religion stops man and blocks the way until he does something or pays something.

Even in the Old Testament man did not have access to God. The Tabernacle shut man out. There were three entrances, but there were also three closed gates. No ordinary man ever went into the holy of holies. No Israelites, except the high priest, ever went there, and he but once a year, and then only with blood according to the specific instructions of almighty God. A careful study of the Tabernacle will reveal the fact that the wonderful Person who came to this earth over 1900 years ago actually shut man out from God until He went to the cross and died for the sins of the world.

p. 10

The Cross is God's Christmas Tree by J. Vernon McGee

v. 2 Since then would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshippers once having been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?

Here in this verse we have a question to prove a point. The repetition demonstrates ineffectiveness. Once should be adequate if the law were effective in accomplishing a perfect position before God.

William Barclay points out, "Suppose a man is ill, a bottle of medicine is prescribed for him. If that medicine is efficacious and effects a cure, thereafter every time he looks at the bottle he will say, 'This is what cured me. That is what gave me back my health.' On the other hand, if the medicine is ineffective and he is in as bad a state as ever, every time he looks at the bottle, he will simply be reminded that he is ill and that the recommended cure was useless and powerless. So the writer to the Hebrews says with prophetic vehemence, The sacrifice of animals are powerless to purify a man, to take away a man's sin, to give him access to God. All that such sacrifices can do is to go on reminding a man that he is still an uncured sinner, and that the barrier of his sin is still between himself and God. So far from erasing his sin, they underline it."

v. 3 But in them (the sacrifices) there is a reminder of sins year by year.

Every year when the Day of Atonement rolled around, the nation Israel was reminded that the blood of the little lamb could only cover their sins and not do away with them.

The word "but" forms the contrast to the previous. In response to the question of verse 2 about the adequacy of the law, we have the statement: "But in them (the sacrifices) there is a reminder of sins year by year."

v. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to be taking away sins.

Here is the reason why the law is ineffective. Here is the reason for Christmas. Something must be done for the desperate plight of mankind. Guilty of sin by breaking the law, there is absolutely no hope unless God steps in and does something.

In verse 1 we saw the statement that "the law is never able to make perfect those who are drawing near."

And now we see: "It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to be taking away sins."

No sacrifice anyone makes will ever attain salvation. Man cannot do it. God must take the initiative and act.

Since the law sacrifices were doomed to failure, some other means had to be found; and a more personal way of reconciliation was required.

* * The reason for Christmas? The universal sin of mankind, and only God taking action can solve the problem.

Christmas is God taking Action to solve the sin problem!

II. THE RECORD OF CHRISTMAS - verses 5-10

Psalm 40:6-8

Sacrifice and offering you did not desire,
but my ears you have pierced;
burnt offerings and sin offerings
you did not require.
Then I said, "Here I am, I have come--
it is written about me in the scroll.
To do your will, O my God, is my desire;
your law is within my heart.

These words from the psalmist are now put into the mouth of Jesus Christ and spoken by Him in our passage.

v. 5 Therefore when He is coming into the world, He is saying: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me."

Therefore, since it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to be taking away sins--"Therefore": in light of what has just been said.

When He (Jesus Christ) is coming into the world, He (Jesus) is saying: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but (in contrast) a body you prepared for me."

A sacrifice won't get it done--it must be a human body.

Oh how significant and important is that phrase "a body you prepared for me."

What a statement of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

ISA 7:14 "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel."

There in the stable, which was no more than a cave and a makeshift place, Mary brought forth her firstborn Son. The first breath He drew was the air of a stable. He came from the atmosphere of heaven to the air of a stall! He departed from the presence of angels, and He arrived in the presence of animals! He came down from the light of the Father's house to the darkness of man's barn! He gave up the halls of eternity to enter a stable of maternity. It was a long way from the joy of heaven to the sorrow of earth! All the way He came to rescue man from hell! Is this the kind of welcome the world accords the God-man?

p. 7

No Room for Him by J. Vernon McGee

How this phrase verifies Galatians 4:4,5

But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

The Christmas story in Luke chap. 1 and 2 is the complete and detailed record of a body prepared for Jesus Christ.

It is a statement of John 1:14

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

It is another way of stating Philippians 2:6,7

who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men.

Therefore, when He is coming into the world, yes, that is Christmas.

He comes to assume a body that has been prepared for Him, in order that He might make that perfect sacrifice for sin.

Negatively, not sacrifice and offering; but positively, "a body you prepared for me."

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given."
--Isaiah 9:6

This sentence is a double one, but it has in it no tautology. The careful reader will soon discover a distinction; and it is not a distinction without a difference. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given." As Jesus Christ is a child in his human nature, he is born, begotten of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. He is as truly born, as certainly a child, as any other man that ever lived upon the face of the earth. He is thus in his humanity a child born. But as Jesus Christ is God's Son, he is not born, but given, begotten of his Father from before all worlds, begotten--not made, being of the same substance with the Father.

by Charles H. Spurgeon

p.15

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by
Wilbur M. Smith

"Behold," Isaiah cries, as he gazes across the centuries at the picture which passes before him--"Behold, the Virgin"--the language shows that he is thinking of one in particular--"is with Child, and bearest a Son, and shall call His Name Emmanuel."

by H. P. Liddon

p. 47

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by
Wilbur M. Smith

The Father "sent forth His Son, made of a woman," as St. Paul again tells us in the Epistle for today. But the Son existed before He was sent forth; the expression is evidently chosen to imply this. And this previous existence did not date from creation; for "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

by H. P. Liddon

p.51

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by
Wilbur M. Smith

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offerings thou wouldest not, but a body thou hast prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." --Hebrews 10:5-7

What a night Christmas Eve was in the spiritual heavens! Gabriel had undoubtedly made his report of all the preliminary events on earth which were committed to his care. He had told the assembled angels of the vision in which he had appeared to Zacharias, and then of the subsequent events leading up to the birth of John. He reported concerning the annunciation made to Mary, and her obedient and worshipful response to the announced will of God. He told of the accomplished work of the Holy Spirit in the creating of a body to be inhabited by the second Person of the Trinity while on earth, and now treasured under the heart of Mary. He told of Mary's visit to Elisabeth, and of their mutual joy. He reported that he had reassured Joseph in a dream, so that protection would be given to the infant. In fact, he even reported that the journey to Bethlehem had been accomplished, and that the quarters assigned to the holy family were to be in the old grotto manger on the side of the hill overlooking the fields of the shepherds....

by Harold John Ockenga

p. 221

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by Wilbur M. Smith

There are first three statements; "In the beginning was the Word"; "the Word was with God"; and "the Word was God." There are secondly three statements: "The Word became flesh"; "and dwelt, pitched His tent among us"; and "full of grace and truth." Now if we take these two series and bring them together, not exactly as one continued statement, but part to part, we shall see that the whole declaration tells how infinite and hidden mysteries came into the realm of finite and revealed things. "In the beginning was the Word"... "The Word became flesh." "The Word was with God"... "and pitched His tent among us." "The Word was God"... "full of grace and truth."

by G. Campbell Morgan

p. 198

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by Wilbur M. Smith

"And the Word was God," and again I remit the mystery, "full of grace and truth." All that men saw and heard in Jesus was an unveiling of Deity. The attractiveness of His grace, the awfulness of His truth, were revelations to men of God.

If that is the fact of the incarnation, what is this inclusive revelation that it has brought to us? "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us...full of grace and truth." Grace. You may express that in another way, in another phrase, in another sentence, of this self-same writer. "God is love," "full of grace." Truth. You may express that also in another way. "God is light," "full of truth." Out of the grace came the redemption. Out of the truth was manifest the righteousness. The supreme revelation that Jesus made to men was not a revelation first of grace, or only of grace; not a revelation first of truth, or only of truth; but a revelation of the relation between "grace" and "truth."

by G. Campbell Morgan

p. 205

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by
Wilbur M. Smith

Mary begins by offering up to God, with the whole strength and resource of her spiritual being, that praise which she knows to be His due at all times, and especially in view of the signal privilege and honour that has been vouchsafed to her--

"My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For He hath regarded the low estate of His
handmaiden."

Then, in a second strophe, she dwells for a moment on the singular and gracious distinction whereby she has been chosen to be the Mother of the Incarnate Son--

"For behold, from henceforth all generations shall
call me blessed.

For He That is mighty hath done to me great things;
And holy is His Name.

And His mercy is on them that fear Him throughout
all generations."

But during these moments of thankful exultation her vision has widened to embrace new horizons, and, in a third strophe, she sets forth some relations of the Birth of her Son to the action of God's Providence in the history of human nations and human lives--

"He hath showed me strength with His Arm;
He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of
their hearts.

He hath put down princes from their thrones,

And hath exalted men of low degree.
He hath filled the hungry with good things;
And the rich He hath sent empty away."

Once more, in a concluding strophe, she traces the great gift which, through her, has been bestowed on the race of man, up to its sources in the Compassion and the Faithfulness of God.

"He remembering His Mercy
Hath holpen His servant Israel;
As He promised to our forefathers,
Abraham and his seed, for ever."

by H. P. Liddon

pp. 95-96

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by
Wilbur M. Smith

Therefore this is the chief article, which separates us from all the heathen, that you, O man, may not only learn that Christ, born of the virgin, is the Lord and Savior, but also accept the fact that he is your Lord and Savior, that you may be able to boast in your heart: I hear the Word that sounds from heaven and says: This child who is born of the virgin is not only his mother's son. I have more than the mother's estate; he is more mine than Mary's, for he was born for me, for the angel said, "To you" is born the Savior. Then ought you to say, Amen, I thank thee, dear Lord.

by Martin Luther

p. 108

What we have said, then, has been about that second faith, which is not only to believe in Mary's Son, but rather that he who lies in the virgin's lap is our Savior, that you accept this and give thanks to God, who so loved you that he gave you a Savior who is yours. And for a sign he sent the angel from heaven to proclaim him, in order that nothing else should be preached except that this child is the Savior and far better than heaven and earth. Him, therefore, we should acknowledge and accept; confess him as our Savior in every need, call upon him, and never doubt that he will save us from all misfortune. Amen.

by Martin Luther

p. 111

"He whom worlds could not contain,
Is now in Mary's bosom lain;
That little Child, so soft and small,
Has made and holds and reigns o'er all!
Alleluia"

by Theodor Christlieb

p. 122

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by
Wilbur M. Smith

The writer here records a record of Christ speaking, using the words of Psalm 40

Sacrifice and offering you did not desire,
but a body you prepared for me.

A body For Him A place For You! John 14:

v. 6 In whole burnt offerings also for sin you took no pleasure.

v. 7 Then I said: "Behold, I have come, in the roll of the book it is written concerning me, to do your will O God."

Hebrews 5:8

Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered;

John 4:34

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work."

Luke 22:41,42

And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray, saying, "Father, if Thou art willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Thine be done."

Matthew 6:10

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

v. 8 After saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings also for sins you did not desire nor have pleasure in which are being offered according to law."

Here the writer records what has been said previously, that the Lord did not desire nor have pleasure in that which was being offered according to the law.

v. 9 Then He said: "Behold I have come to do your will." He is taking away the first in order that He may establish the second.

Jesus the Christ speaks once again: "Behold I have come to do your will."

In the pursuit of the Father's will, He finds that He is taking away the first, that is the Law, in order that He may establish the second, that is grace. That is God's unmerited favor toward us, whereby through the death of His Son upon Calvary, He can render us acceptable and perfect in His presence.

Free from the law, O happy condition!
Jesus has bled, and there is remission.
Cursed by the law and bruised by the fall,
Grace has redeemed us once for all.

Once for all, O sinner receive it.
Once for all, O brother believe it.
Cling to the cross, the burden will fall,
Christ hath redeemed us once for all.

v.10 By means of which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

"By means of which (that is, the second of verse 9, the way of grace, God's unmerited favor) we have been sanctified"--the effect upon us is that we have been set apart; we have been declared righteous. We are perfect in God's sight, and the instrument of that, salvation, is through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all.

I hear the Savior say,
Thy strength indeed is small,
Child of weakness, watch and pray
Find in Me thine all in all.

Lord, now indeed I find
Thy power and thine alone
Can change the leper's spots
And melt the heart of stone.

For nothing good have I
Whereby thy grace to claim.
I'll wash my garments white
In the blood of Calvary's Lamb.

And when before the throne
I stand in Him complete,
Jesus died my soul to save,
My lips shall still repeat.

Jesus paid it all
All to Him I owe.
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.

Not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain
Could give the guilty conscience rest or wash away
the stain.

The false way of looking at Christianity and salvation
is to believe and try harder. This is the Avis Car
Rental motto: WE TRY HARDER. And it appears in the
common attitude: I'LL DO MY BEST AND GOD WILL DO THE
REST. Now that sounds deceptively pious, even
sanctimonious and very Christian, but it is utterly
false.

Ephesians 2:8,9

For by grace you have been saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of
God; not as a result of works, that no one should
boast.

It is God at work in the human heart in response to our faith that declares a man righteous before Him and acceptable in His presence.

Romans 5:1

Therefore having been made righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

ISA. 64:6

May I say to you this morning: You have either experienced the new birth or you haven't. The divine imperative in John 3 is: You must be born again. You are either born or unborn. You have been declared righteous or you are still unrighteous, living in your sins.

1 John 5:11,12

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

John 10:28,29

And I give eternal life to them; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

* *
This is a divine act of God in response to our faith. It is His unmerited favor toward us in declaring us perfectly righteous in Jesus Christ, and may I say to you: You can never lose that. Once you have been born, you cannot be unborn. Once you have been declared righteous, you cannot be declared unrighteous. God does not change His mind. He does not make a promise and then alter that promise on the basis of human performance.

Numbers 23:19

God is not a man, that He should lie,
Nor a son of man, that He should repent;
Has He said, and will He not do it?
Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?

The Gavel Falls And God⁻¹⁶⁻ Makes A Ruling!

May I say to you, if you are sitting under the sound of my voice this morning, and you have the feeling that you can gain salvation and then lose it; if you can lose it, you probably don't have it because the focus is on what man does rather than on what God has done in the finished work of Jesus Christ upon Calvary's cross.

Ephesians 2:13

But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Back in verse 1 all of those who are drawing near could not gain access or acceptance into God's presence through the law, but they came by a new and living way: the precious blood of Christ.

"By means of which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

Now we understand the record of Christmas:

a body you prepared for me - verse 5

and verse 10 - through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all

We have been sanctified or made perfect in God's sight.

Isaiah 1:18

Come now, and let us reason together,"
Says the Lord,
"Though your sins are as scarlet,
They will be as white as snow;
Though they are red like crimson,
They will be like wool.

God is looking for a relationship, and not a performance.

No Room for Him by J. Vernon McGee

How wildly the crowd goes swaying along,
Hailing each other with humor and song,
How gay are the sleighs, like the stars flashing by,
Are bright for a moment, then lost to the eye.
Ringing--Swinging--Dashing they go,
Over the crest of the beautiful snow,
Snow that's so pure when it falls from the sky,
That it makes one regret that it's fated to lie
And be trampled and muddied by thousands of feet,
'Til it blends with the horrible filth of the street.

Once I was pure as the snow, but I fell,
Fell like the snowflakes from heaven to hell;
Fell to be trampled as filth of the street,
Fell to be scoffed at, to be spit on and beat,
Pleading--Cursing--Dreading to die,
Selling my soul to whoever would buy,
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,
Hating the living and fearing the dead.
Merciful God! have I fallen so low?
And yet I was once like the beautiful snow.

Once I was fair as the beautiful snow,
With an eye like a crystal, a heart like its glow,
Once I was loved for my innocent grace,
Flattered and sought for the charms of my face.
Father--Mother--Sisters--All,
God and myself I have lost by my fall.
The vilest wretch that goes shivering by,
Will make a wide sweep lest I wander too nigh;
For all that is on or above me, I know
There is nothing so pure as the beautiful snow.

How strange it should be that this beautiful snow,
Should fall on a sinner with nowhere to go!
How strange it should be when the night comes again;
If the snow and the ice struck my desperate brain.
Fainting--Freezing--Dying alone,
Too wicked for prayer, too weak for a moan,
To be heard in the streets of the crazy town,
Gone mad in the joy of the snow coming down!
To be and to die in my terrible woe,
With a bed and a shroud of the beautiful snow.

Helpless and foul as the trampled snow,
Sinner, despair not, Christ stoopeth low,
To rescue the soul that is lost in sin,
And raise it to life and enjoyment again.
Groaning--Bleeding--Dying for thee,
The Crucified hung on the cursed tree,
His accents of mercy fall soft on thine ear.
"Is there mercy for me? Will He heed my weak prayer?"
O God! in the stream that for sinners did flow,
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

pp. 21-23

(14-5D)

50

- 1 Can God declare the sinner perfectly right?
- ② " " drop all charges?
- ③ " " set the prisoner free?

He hears! He pities our corrupted sin He sets the prisoner free

Isaiah 1:18

In the early part of the Civil War, one dark Saturday morning in the dead of winter, a young woman, twenty-two years old, died at the Commercial Hospital, Cincinnati. She had once been beautiful and the pride of respectable parents. Highly educated and accomplished, she might have shone in the best society. But she was stubborn and willful and would not listen to warning. She played with fire and called it "fun". One day she awoke to find herself ruined by a fatal mistake which she could not erase. She was fallen.

She spent the rest of her young life in disgrace and shame, and died poor and friendless, a broken-hearted outcast. Among her personal effects was found in manuscript, the poem, "Beautiful Snow" which was immediately carried to Enos B. Reed, editor of the National Union. In the columns of that paper, on the morning following the girl's death, the poem appeared in print for the first time. When the paper containing the poem came out on Sunday morning, the body of the victim had not yet received burial. The attention of Thomas Buchanan Read, one of the first American poets, was soon directed to the newly published lines, and was so taken with the stirring pathos, that he immediately followed the corpse to its final resting place.

Such are the plain facts concerning her whose "Beautiful Snow" will be long regarded as one of the brightest gems in American literature.

Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow,
Filling the sky and earth below,
Over the housetops, over the street,
Over the heads of the people you meet.
Dancing--Flirting--Skimming along,
Beautiful snow, it can do no wrong.
Clinging to lips in frolicsome freak,
Trying to kiss a fair lady's cheek,
Beautiful snow from heaven above,
Pure as an angel, gentle as love.

Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow,
How the flakes gather and laugh as they go,
Whirling about in maddening fun,
Cheering the heart and dispelling the gloom.
Chasing--Laughing--Hurrying by,
It lightens the face and sparkles the eye.
Rollicking dogs with a bark and a bound,
Snap at the crystals which eddy around.
The town is alive and its heart in a glow,
To welcome the coming of beautiful snow!

In spite of all this, God has His Christmas tree. It is not as pretty as the department store tree, I grant you. It is not filled with baubles of color and tinsel, nor is it bright with trinkets and lights. But God does have a Christmas tree--it is the cross of Christ! In fact, the proper name for the cross is tree. You will remember that the early church spoke of it this way. In one of the first great sermons ever given in the church we find, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree" (Acts 5:30). And Peter in his first Epistle writes:

Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed [1 Peter 2:24].

p. 5

The Cross is God's Christmas Tree by J. Vernon McGee

III. THE RESULT OF CHRISTMAS - verses 11-17

1. Thus far we've seen the reason for Christmas: the sin of mankind and the inability of the law to do anything about it.
2. The record of Christmas: Jesus Christ coming to a body prepared for Him, came to make an offering of that body as a sacrifice for sin.

This brings us now to the result of Christmas and that sacrifice: and that result is stated in one word:

SALVATION

v.11 And indeed, every priest has stood day by day performing his sacred service and time after time offering the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

Here the apostle Paul speaks in an exclamatory form: Every priest representing the law has stood day by day performing his sacred service. And not only that, but time after time offering the same sacrifices. And we get the similar statement that we had back in verse 4. *indeed!*

"Which can never take away sins--
verse 4: For it is impossible for the blood of
bulls and goats to be taking away sins.

You see, sin is the problem. And how can a holy and just God who demands perfection handle the problem of man's sin. This is the beauty of Christmas.

v.12 But this priest, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,

In contrast to the futile service and tireless repetition of the law, this priest, that is, Jesus Christ, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God.

This priest Jesus Christ is a prophet, a priest, and a coming king.

He offered one sacrifice, and He did it for all time. It is all that was needed and totally adequate to make provision for man's salvation, so it was unnecessary to repeat it or to do it again.

John 1:29

Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

When He finished the work, He sat down at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 12:2

Fixing our eyes on Jesus the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

This priest, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, he made a sacrifice of himself. He cried on the cross, "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me?" We understand now that Jesus was being made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might know the righteousness of God, and that His sacrifice was good for all time. It satisfies fully the justice of a holy God in full and complete payment of the penalty for the sin of man.

Isaiah the prophet surely foresaw this when he said:

Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.

Oh that final cry from the cross is a moment of great triumph! Tetelestai! It is finished!

Jesus Christ is nothing to me if he is not the Saviour of the world. I never heard persons in moments of great agony or distress speak about the inspiration of genius being upon Christ. I have heard them say so when they were doing well: I have heard them speak thus about Christ when they were parenthetically interposing, "No more, thank you," about their fat dinner. But when I have seen them doubled up with great distress, and thrust into dark corners and carrying burdens that break the back, and shuddering under clouds that may be laden with death darts, I have heard a whimper that would have disgraced a dog. You will know what Jesus Christ is most and best when you are in greatest need of such service as he can render.

by Joseph Parker

p.68

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by Wilbur M. Smith

Those swaddling bands, and that hard, wooden manger, we see, were prophetic of the tortures of the cross, the bands of death, and the linen winding-sheets of the tomb.

This lowliness and humility of Jesus Christ, and all His active and passive obedience from His birth to His passion--what a sign it is to us, today, of the truth, the divinity of all His doctrine, as well as of the opening Christmas story.

by Theodor Christlieb

p. 123

To lie in a manger, is that so much? How then, when ye see shall Him hang on the cross? 'That His beginning and His end may suit well and not disagree.'

(correct)

by Lancelot Andrewes

p. 138

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by Wilbur M. Smith

v.13 waiting from that time onward: "Until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet."

He is simply waiting for two things:

1. The COMPLETION of His bride: the church
2. The COMING of His kingdom

1. You could say that He is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9), so he is waiting for sinners to come.

2. He is waiting for saints to learn to turn it over to Him.

3. He's waiting for the glories of His coming kingdom.

If in the arms of the Virgin he is the Saviour, what is he on the throne of God? If wrapped in swaddling bands he is Jesus, what is he now that the heavens have received him? If in the workshop of Nazareth, and sitting in the temple among the doctors, he was the child Jesus, the Saviour, what is he now that his infancy and childhood are over, and he is exalted far above all principalities and powers? If he was Jesus when on the cross, presenting himself as an offering for his people, what is he now that he hath by one sacrifice perfected for ever them that are set apart? What is he now that he sits at the right hand of God, expecting till his enemies are made his footstool?

by Charles H. Spurgeon

p. 35

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by Wilbur M. Smith

v.14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

The reason He has sat down and He is waiting is given here in this 14th verse. It is one offering and it is perfection for all time those who are being sanctified. Perfecting

Once again we have the words "one" and "for all time." This is a finished transaction and it is a work done for all time. Jesus Christ provides for justification, sanctification, and glorification. We are declared righteous through the blood of Jesus Christ when we receive the gift of His son. We are progressively being made more like His son while we continue to live here; and ultimately soon we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. GLORY BE TO HIS NAME!

We so often think of salvation as being something that is yet future, that it is a package labeled "Do not open until eternity." We think of salvation in terms of golden streets, crowns, white robes, and harps in our hands. But, my friend, the salvation that God gives is a salvation for right now, and it brings gifts to you. They are underneath God's Christmas tree. They have your name on them, and you can receive them now. You will not have to wait till Christmas.

These gifts come to us by faith. And that is the only way in the world in which you will receive any gift at this season of the year. When a package comes through the mail, or someone brings a gift to you, it is by faith that your hand accepts the gift. You have confidence in the giver, and because you believe he wants you to have it, by faith you stretch forth your hand and accept it.

p. 6

The Cross is God's Christmas Tree by J. Vernon McGee

v.15 And the Holy Spirit is also bearing witness to us; for after having said:

v.16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days," says the Lord: I am putting my laws upon their hearts, and upon their minds I will write them.

v.17 And their sins and their lawless deeds, I will positively not remember anymore."

There are three things here: /

1. I am putting my laws upon their hearts.
2. Upon their minds I will write them.
3. Their sins and their lawless deeds, I will positively not remember anymore.

Salvation is Point
Not drawn
Event Not
Process

Psalm 103:12-14

As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He removed our transgressions from us.
Just as a father has compassion on his children,
So the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him.
For He Himself knows our frame;
He is mindful that we are but dust.

Micah 7:18,19

Who is a God like Thee, who pardons iniquity
And passes over the rebellious act of the remnant
of His possession?
He does not retain His anger forever,
Because He delights in unchanging love.
He will again have compassion on us;
He will tread our iniquities underfoot.
Yes, Thou wilt cast all their sins
Into the depths of the sea.

Isaiah 38:17

You have put all my sins behind your back.

But would you now in any degree partake of the blessing? Come then to the manger cradle and embrace in child-like faith the Child there lying. Ask Him to help you in your daily needs; ask Him to cheer you in your cares and sorrows; ask Him to give you repentance and pardon; say to Him with all your heart,--

"Lord, it is good to find Thee here;
Thou sett'st me free from doubt and fear,
Hast borne the wrath of God away,
And on death's darkness poured the day.
So then to Thee, my God, my King,
A lowly hymn of praise I'll sing;
Hereafter to repeat above,
There in the courts of light and love,
An endless Alleulia."
Amen.

by Theodor Christlieb

p. 126

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by
Wilbur M. Smith

Isaiah 52:7

How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace,
who bring good tidings,
who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion,
"Your God reigns!"

Christmas in heaven, Christmas on earth, and now the factor which will make Christmas the most meaningful for you, the night before Christmas in your heart. It is a fundamental truth of the Bible that Christ is reborn in the regeneration of every child of God. Paul wrote to the Galatians, "I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (4:19). When a man is born again, it is literally true that there is another incarnation of God, so that he can say, "Christ liveth in me."...

by Harold John Ockenga

p. 225

Great Sermons on the Birth of Christ, Compiled by
Wilbur M. Smith

There is a type of gift that is becoming quite popular today. It is an unique sort of thoughtfulness in which a friend is presented with a credit certificate by another. The friend then may go to a certain store, present the certificate and purchase up to the specified amount. Today there is at the foot of the cross of Christ a certificate--one which says that you and I may go directly and immediately into God's presence and there find all the grace and help that we need. It would be a terrible thing to receive a gift of credit like that and not use it. How tragic it is to see Christians who have been given access to God and are failing to use it in this hour!

p. 11

The Cross is God's Christmas Tree by J. Vernon McGee

In the prologue to John's Gospel, there is a disputed statement in the 11th verse which says, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Weymouth translates it thus: "He came to His own home and His own people gave Him no welcome." This translation is no improvement over the others beyond the fact that it calls attention to the first "His own" as being neuter gender and might properly be rendered "His own things." The second "His own" is masculine gender and evidently means "His own people." It does not do violence to the original to say that "He came unto His own world (creation) and His own people received Him not." The Creator of this world had come, and instead of a royal welcome, His people, who were living on the fat of the land and who were not paying rent to the Owner, were indifferent to Him and refused to give Him a place even to lay His head. Later on they conspired together and put Him to death. Someone has said, "He was born in a public stable, He died on another's cross, and He was buried in a borrowed tomb." p. 13

No Room for Him by J. Vernon McGee

The Christmas Tragedy

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." (John 1:11.)

He came unto His own--His own--and they
Received Him not. They, who with eagerness
Ought surely to have welcomed Him, 'twas they
Who closed and barred their doors;
They would not let Him in:
No prodigal returning home in rags
From far-off land, where he had spent his all,
Could have been treated worse.
No felon's mark of shame touched His fair brow;
He was a King, and yet, because He longed
To share His glory with His own, He laid
Aside His kingly power; He left His throne,
And in the guise of human man, He came
To bring to those on earth, freedom, and light, and love.
He came to those He loved, sinners, and saints:
And there were some who heard with joyfulness
His wondrous news, and bringing Him their sins,
They opened wide the door, and asked Him in.
But when He came unto His own--His own--
The door was shut and barred.
And in these later days He comes to men,
O'er battlefield, on land, or sea, or air.

He comes to lonely spots where men in the
Deep silences brood o'er the world's great need;
And oft He walks the crowded streets, seeking
Some open door, that He may enter in.
But (saddest thought) He comes unto His own,
And they who ought to be His temples, where
He could reside, forbid His entry, for
They know full well the house that should be His
Is full already. Pride, and selfishness,
Ambition, and the cares of life have shut
Him out. There is no room for Him.
So once again the bitter cry is wrung from Him:
"I came unto My own--My dearest own--
And they--yea they--received Me not."
--K.H.L.

pp. 15-16
No Room for Him by J. Vernon McGee

CONCLUSION:

We have considered the Christmas story from the book of Hebrews.

We have seen the reason for Christmas. It's the sin of man and the inability of the law to make it possible for man to gain acceptance and access into the presence of God who demands perfection.

We have seen the record of Christmas. Jesus Christ coming to a body prepared for Him in order that through the offering of that body He might provide a way of salvation once for all.

And third, the results of Christmas. It is the forgiveness of sin and the declaration of righteousness. It is salvation for all those who will receive Jesus Christ, for by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

O please afresh behold the Lamb of God
Who takes away the sin of the world.

Yes, SIN, SACRIFICE, SALVATION: the great truths of the Christmas season. *They hang as the backdrop for the Nativity.*

During World War I a British detachment had been cut off from the main forces in the front lines. They had gone out to explore and had been caught in the terrific fire of the enemy. Their communication line had remained open but finally was severed by a shell. The captain called for a volunteer who would trace the line to the point of trouble, bring it together and tie it. He warned that it would be a dangerous assignment. Several volunteered and one was chosen. He crawled into No Man's Land and followed the wire. Finally he found one end in a shell hole, and feeling around in the mud, he discovered the other end. But he could not bring the ends in a position to tie them, for the enemy had him under fire by now. He just lay there and held the two wires together so that communication was restored. However a shell fell close to him and exploded. He was killed, yet the communication was not disturbed. The next day after victory they found this man frozen in death, one line locked in his right hand, the other in his left hand, and through his body the message had been passing.

Nineteen hundred years ago there came down from heaven One who restored communication through a line that had been broken by sin. He laid hold of God because He was God, and He laid hold of man because He was man. He could not make the connection by His life; it was made when He died on the cross.

The British government took a picture of that man performing his duty in death and underneath they put only one word, CONTACT!

pp. 19-20

The Cross is God's Christmas Tree by J. Vernon McGee

Conclusion —

Do you have room for Christ this Christmas?

1. He came unto His own + His own received Him not.
O! the tragedy of it all. God's own son veiled in
human flesh & the only place we have room for Him
is on God's Christmas tree, the cross of Calvary.

2. We have no room. Nor did they care
that God's own son was lying there.
All power laid down, all glory sped
a baby in a manger-bed.

But angels lowly bowed in love.

to praise the Lord of Heaven above.

+ joined the humble shepherds there

In happy song + ardent prayer.

3. won't you ponder these things in your heart with Mary
concerning Him + make haste with the shepherds to
find Him and make room in your heart for Him

4. Lord there is room, my heart I bring

to thee, a humble offering.

It bears the marks of sin + shame

and is not worthy of thy name,

So cleanse it Lord, that it may be

a throne that's fit to offer thee.

Then through the blood my sins forgiven,

I'll find there's room for me in heaven.

P. 199 Only Trust Him

P. 25 Thou did leave thy throne