

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord May Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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The Unwanted Babe

Introduction

Being a father, I well remember the concern, and yet excitement, before the birth of each of my children and grandchildren. I sometimes wonder what must it have been for Joseph and Mary with the approaching birth of Mary's firstborn son. What whisperings there must have been concerning her pregnancy, and who can tell the mental anguish of Joseph when he heard that his betrothed was going to have a baby, and he was not the father! Beyond these matters was that of the decree from Augustus for the world to be taxed, and the journey by either walking or on a donkey for some seventy miles! It must have been exhausting and a wonderful sight when they saw Bethlehem. Yet, this was only the beginning of their sorrows.

Despite Jesus being "the Desire of all nations" (Hag. 2:7), the masses of humanity were not interested, and those in the political world sought to slay him almost from the moment He was born. This baby was the one who was announced by Gabriel when He told Mary: "Thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the LORD God shall give unto him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Lk. 1:30-33). In spite of this glorious person being born into this world, there was no room for Him in the inn, He was born in a manger. Neither the great city of Jerusalem nor the town of Bethlehem had room for Him. He was, by the world, an unwanted baby. Does this reflect today's attitude to many of the unborn and already born babies? They are unwanted! Furthermore, the ancient writers inform us that He was a "man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3), and the preacher made the statement: "All His days are sorrows, and His travail grief" (Ecc. 2:23).

Thank God that for the most of us we have never known what it is to be "unwanted", and by the majority uncared for and uninterested in. His was to be a life of paradoxes. There were those who hated Him and those who loved him, those who used Him and few that thanked Him. He lived with multiple attempts made on His life. Life was not easy for the Lord, for His was a life of constant despising no matter how kind He was to others. In Him we see the personification of: "Charity [love] suffereth long, and is kind" (1 Cor. 13:4).

The Difficulties of His Life

One of the hardest experiences to endure in life is that of being "used". I expect many of us know what it is like. Folk do not bother with you until they need something done by you. Then they come asking for help and promptly forget you again. This was something the Lord knew, for we read:

- a) "Beseeching Him", such as the centurion (Matt. 8:5); the leper (Mk. 1:40); the elders of the Jews for a centurion (Lk. 7:3)

- b) Crying “have mercy” when they wanted healing, such as: the two blind men (Matt. 9:27); the woman of Canaan (Matt. 15:22); the father of the lunatic son (Matt. 17:15).
- c) Only on one occasion do we read of anyone returning to give glory to God and thanking Him (Lk. 17:14-19). We also read of several women who were delivered and ministered to Him (Lk. 8:2-3). While we never read of the women thanking Him verbally, they did show their appreciation by ministering to Him.

One of the choruses I learnt as a child was:

No room for the Saviour at Bethlehem's Inn, only a cattle shed;
 No room on this earth for the dear Son of God, nowhere to lay his head.
 Only a cross did they give to my Lord, only a borrowed tomb,
 Today he is seeking a place in your heart, will you still say to him “NO” room?

In the reading of the gospels, one is impressed by the experiences He had which came like the unceasing waves of the ocean as one dark experience flowed into the next.

- a) He knew what it was to have His “familiar friend” lift his heel against him. In other words, to turn against Him (Psa. 41:9).
- b) Who can tell the sorrow of bitter disappointment that swept over His soul when his disciples, “forsook Him and fled” (Mk. 14:50)?
- c) What was the loneliness like when, “every man went to his own” (Jn. 16:32), or when in the hours of grief the disciples slept (Matt. 26:45).
- d) He experienced what it was to be:
 - i) Misunderstood (Matt. 27:47)
 - ii) Wrongfully insulted (Jn. 18:23)
 - iii) Silent amid wrongful accusations (Isa. 53:7)
 - iv) Hungry (Matt. 21:18; Lk. 4:2) and thirsty (Jn. 19:28)
 - v) Weary (Jn. 4:6; Mk. 4:38)
 - vi) Looked down on (Jn. 1:46; Jn. 9:29)
 - vii) The object of drunken jest (Psa. 69:12).
 - viii) He knew what it was not to be wanted, as by the Samaritans (Lk. 9:53); the people of the Gergesenes (Matt. 8:28, 34); the rabid crowd at Pilate’s Judgment Seat (Jn. 19:15).
- e) We never read of Him receiving the only thing He ever asked for, that being personal relief (Jn. 4:10).

Can it be true, the things they say of you, You walked this earth, sharing with friends, you knew
 All that they had, the work the joy the pain, That we might find the way to heaven again.

Can it be true, the things they did to you, The death, the shame, and were your friends so few,
 Yet you returned again, alive and free, can it be true, My Lord? it had to be.
 . . . *William S.S.F.*

Beyond these experiences were the times when, by people or nature, Satan sought to have Him killed or commit suicide. Surely Satan was the force behind Herod when he sought to slay Him (Matt. 2:8); when the people brought Him to the top of the hill to cast Him over (Lk. 4:29); when Satan directly tempted Him to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple (Matt. 4:5); or when He was asleep and the storm came (Mk. 4:37). When it was God’s time for the Lord to die, then He was nailed to the cross, and while this was the ultimate rejection, God used it to provide salvation through the substitutionary sacrifice of His Son. What blessedness it is to go to sleep and know: “My eternal salvation is secure, I shall never perish, because Jesus died for me”.

The question I must ask myself is: “Do I have any room for Christ, or as far as I am concerned, He is to be the unwanted, uncared for, unloved Christ?”

Hilda Day wrote:

“O Lord, in my heart there’s a welcome for Thee, gladly I now would say,
 Come in, blessed Saviour, my heart and my life, henceforth would hold Thy sway;
 Long hast Thou waited and long knocked in vain, outside my heart’s closed door;
 O cleanse me from sin, then dear Lord enter in, and dwell there for evermore.”

Conclusion

There can be no doubt that there are those of the readers who have had a dark year, and to them Christmas brings no cheer. The merry carols are like stabbings of a knife in ones heart, and the happy faces make the sorrow deeper, for others do not understand the grief of your heart. For some Christmas will mean sitting alone, just another day, perhaps getting dressed up for no purpose and then wish the day was over. For others the last year has consisted of being used and then forgotten, of storm tossed days and lonely nights. It all has been a reflection of the life of the Lord. In those dark hours we feel the words of Frank E. Graeff; and J. Lincoln Hall, and yet how hard it is to sing the refrain.

Does Jesus care when my heart is pained, too deeply for mirth or song
As the burdens press and the cares distress, and the way grows weary and long?

Refrain:

*Oh yes, He cares, I know He cares, His heart is touched with my grief
When the days are weary, the long nights dreary, I know my Savior cares.*

Does Jesus care when my way is dark, with a nameless dread and fear?
As the daylight fades into deep night shades, does He care enough to be near?

Does Jesus care when I've said, "Goodbye" to the dearest on earth to me
And my sad heart aches till it nearly breaks, is it aught to Him? Does He see?

Thank God we have one who not only knows what it is to be unwanted and uncared for, *and not only knows* but feels with full sympathy and empathy with us in it. Thank God this is not the end of the story:

- a) For the child of God who is used by others, they will receive from the Sympathizing Jesus a reward for being there to help despite the fact they knew they were being used.
- b) For the one who is unloved, they will enter the fulness of His love and His care, and the sorrows of this life will never cause them grief, loneliness, and sorrow ever again.
- c) Then such ones will be able to sing: "Tis past the dark and dreary night", for the Dayspring from on high will have risen, and they will be in that land of endless joy where tears will never flow again.

. . . Rowan Jennings



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