

## THE KING'S HIGHWAY

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

— THE ORGAN OF THE —

REFORMED BAPTISTS OF CANADA

Published Semi-Monthly at Moncton, N. B.,  
by a Committee of the Alliance

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— SUBSCRIPTION PRICE —

Per year, in advance.....	\$1.50
Ministers, per year.....	1.00
Four months' trial subscription.....	.40
Sample Copy.....	Free
United States Subscribers.....	1.50
Ministers, U. S. A. ....	1.00

### SPECIAL NOTICE

All correspondence for The Highway should reach us before the 12th and 25th of each month.

The King's Highway, Box 277, Moncton, N. B.  
Printed by Moncton Publishers Ltd.,  
Printers and Publishers, Moncton, N. B.

MONCTON, N. B., DECEMBER 15TH, 1949

## EDITORIAL

### THE LIGHT STILL SHINES!

The moral and spiritual state of the world at the time of Christ's Bethlehem advent is well described by the prophet Isaiah: "The people sat in darkness." A long period of spiritual decline, in which the voice of the prophet and his message of God were conspicuously absent, produced a state of moral deterioration with sinners becoming more exceeding sinful while the few who sought to live righteously watched and waited for "the consolation of Israel."

And then out of the night and the darkness came the angel of the Lord with his attendant glory and soul-thrilling message: "I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born . . . a Saviour." And then there was the descent of "a multitude of the heavenly host" with their wondrous anthem of glory, peace and good will." The radiance of that heavenly light brought comfort, assurance, and hope to the wondering shepherds of Israel leading them to the manger and the Christ-child, and, reflected in the heavenly luminacy, shed its message of hope into lands afar and invited peoples of other lands to "come and behold Him, born the King of Angels."

The Bethlehem birth with its light of hope, its song of praise, and its promise of salvation, did not banish from the world the sin and darkness which enveloped the souls of men, but it did bring to all the promise and pledge of Divine deliverance. To the shepherds it became an occasion for "glorifying and praising God for all things that they had seen and heard"; to Simeon it meant beholding the Saviour who was a God chosen "light to lighten the Gentiles; to the prophetess Anna the birth of the Christ was a glad day for "all them that looked for redemption"; and to the men of the east, the magic, the Saviour's coming was an event which called for a long journey, for worship and the offering of gifts.

The message of Christmas is still the message that brings light and hope to them that "sit in darkness." Nineteen hundred years after Christ was born sin is still a terrible fact and factor in the world. Individuals and systems are dominated by the power of evil and iniquity and oppression are prevalent. We have come to realize what God made known as His purpose long ago, viz: that Christ did not come to

dispel moral and spiritual darkness from the world by sovereign decree, but to provide light and deliverance by saving grace. 'Twas not to force the darkness out that He came, but to lead all who would follow out of that darkness. "I am the light of the world," said He, "he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness." Moreover, He gave the promise to all who would believe that the night of darkness would one day end in a glorious eternal day, that the reign of sin and Satan would be displaced by His own glorious reign of righteousness and truth.

To all who sit in darkness the good news of Christmas is this: Follow the Gospel gleam until it brings you to the One who is able to give light and grace to the soul. Then shall you also rejoice with exceeding great joy and follow Him who leads in the way of light and life. And to those who have "turned from darkness to light" and are yet painfully conscious that sin and evil still abound in the world, that cruelty, greed, suffering and sorrow cause pain and heartache still, "be patient brethren, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." He who will destroy the wicked one and his evil works "with the brightness of His coming" will soon appear to dispel and that brings grief and sadness to the world.

On the eve of another Christmas day, the star of hope once more appears. Shining with undimmed luster it sheds its blessed beams throughout the earth bringing saving health and a glorious hope to all who will believe. Thank God, the Light still shines!

### DON'T LEAVE HIM OUT

One of the most tragic aspects of our Christmas celebrations is that Christ is too often left out. We have our place for Santa Claus, Christmas trees, gifts, Christmas dinner, etc., but what of the Saviour whose birth we are supposed to be celebrating? Is He not too often forgotten, or at least given far less prominence in the day than He deserves?

Just what part of our Christmas celebration gives the Saviour the place He merits? Is the story of His birth re-told to the children, is the significance of His great gift made known? Is the family called upon to unite in worship and praise to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us? Surely these things should be a part, a prominent part of the Christmas celebration.

When Dec. 25th comes round and there is the joyful exchange of gifts with expressions of thanks and praise, and all the blessings of the day are being enjoyed, let's guard against the danger of forgetting our honoured Guest whose birthday we celebrate. Let us seek to create a Christ-consciousness in our homes this Christmas season and bestow the highest honour on Him who was born of man that we might be born of God!

### THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT

W. E. Smith

Text: II. Cor. XIX:15. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

The proximity of Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day to each other is a striking feature in our calendar. But Paul seems to join the two in one in our text: "Thanks be unto God for His **Unspeakable Gift.**" Here is a good text for either a Thanksgiving message or a Christmas meditation.

Paul was the master of a great vocabulary. The greatness of his intellect, the bigness of his heart and the genius of his rhetoric enabled him to marshal words of the deepest meaning. All his natural ability, his acquired culture, crowned by plenary inspiration, are wonderfully revealed when he discoursed on the person of Jesus. But when he has gone as far as mind and heart can carry him, in his eulogy of Christ, he stops as it were, and as much as says, words cannot express it all: "Thanks be unto God for His **Unspeakable Gift!**"

As we gather today by faith around the manger cradle of the Christ child, with what praise and adoration do we come! Like the shepherds from the hills and the Wise men from the East, we come to worship him. But we see in him far more than they saw. The background of their lives and their lack of historical knowledge make us marvel at their seeing in that little babe born in a stable, one that was worthy of their gifts and worship. They were inspired by a special illumination, that went beyond the angel's message and the heavenly chorus, or the guiding star. God opened their eyes to see in the birth of Jesus something that was hidden from men for thirty long years to come.

But with all the historical knowledge we have of Jesus, in the Gospels—a bit of his earliest days, his ministry climaxed by his death and Resurrection, and all his unfolding in the Epistles, especially those of St. Paul, we stand by the little babe in the manger and see in him a mystery that words cannot fully describe, and if they could that would make it harder for us to accept him as saviour and Lord. "Great," said St. Paul, "is the mystery of godliness; God manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, believed on in the world and received up into glory."

A child begotten and born according to the established laws of procreation presents an unexplainable mystery. But an established law makes it only an ordinary event. But here is one who being in the form of God thought it not a prize to be grasped at to be equal with God, but emptied himself of it all, and came down to be born of a peasant mother under conditions that have enabled vile men to question the moral purity of that mother, and submit to most of the conditions of physical, and mental limitation during his childhood, and the physical limitations were his during his ministry that led to Calvary's brow. Nearly two thousand years have gone by since the Judean hill blazed with the glory of the Upper world and shepherds heard music by a choir from the throne of God. But the birth of Jesus that was noticed only by a few at that time, in a little world where a small distance or a little mountain secluded groups of people from the rest of the world, is today commemorated by all peoples, in all lands, of all colors and myriads of tongues.

We may wonder why a birth so divinely

