

# The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

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## EDITORIALS

### 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 exceedingly 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 magi, the Saviour's coming was an event which called for a long journey, for reverent 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 out of that darkness all who would follow Him. "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 all 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 celebration 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 Christmas Day 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!

### REV. H. S. WILSON CALLED HOME

On Thursday, December 8th, Rev. H. S. Wilson, pastor of Barkers Point Church, was suddenly called to be with his Lord. The funeral service was held on Saturday, December 10th.

A fuller report will be given in the next issue of The King's Highway.

## Story of Silent Night

Clyde H. Dennis

On Christmas Eve in 1818, Franz Gruber, church organist in the little town of Oberndorf, Bavaria, made an alarming discovery. The organ would not play!

For several days previous to Christmas Eve, Oberndorf had been snow-bound. Gruber, knowing there was no one in Oberndorf capable of repairing the organ, was afraid there would be no music for Christmas. He could hardly imagine Christmas without music.

Quickly he went to the vicar, Joseph Mohr, and told him his story. He asked Mohr to write a new Christmas song which could be easily sung without the use of the organ.

Later as Mohr sat reading Christmas stories from his Bible . . . "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour . . ." the words welled up in his soul like a heavenly anthem. Long into the night he sat meditating on them. As the full meaning gripped his soul, he wrote a poem about the wondrous story.

Early the next day, Gruber took the newly written words and composed a melody. Now the people were gathering at the church. There was one man who could pick out tunes on a guitar. He was asked to accompany the new carol.

The people of Oberndorf loved the song immediately . . . and thus Joseph Mohr and Franz Gruber gave to the world one of the most beautiful and best loved of the Christmas carols. It was not long before the Tyrolean Singers took the song to America. For years it went under the title, "Song from Heaven." It was more quickly and better known in America than in Europe and today, "Silent Night" is sung in nearly every language of the world.

Oh, that the real meaning of Christmas would grip each one this season as, like Joseph Mohr, you consider these glorious words: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:11). This Saviour is unto you . . . you who have gone astray, you who are burdened with many cares, you who need the forgiveness of sin.

Christ the Lord came into this world for you. He died on the cross for you. He shed His precious blood for the putting away of your sins.

Tonight will be a "silent night" and a "holy night" in your soul if you will trust in the Saviour, Christ the Lord. "God so loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I John 4:10).

### THE BIRTH OF THE MESSIAH

John Milton

At His Birth a Star,

Unseen before in heaven, proclaims Him come;  
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire  
His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold.  
His place of birth a solemn angel tells  
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;  
They gladly thither haste, and by a choir  
Of squadroned angels hear His carol sung.  
A virgin is His mother, but His sire  
The power of the Most High; He shall ascend  
The throne hereditary, and bound His reign  
With earth's wide bounds, His glory with the  
heavens.

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