

# Christmas Reflections

Yet one more Christmas!

How many times have we heard the message of Prophet Isaiah? "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given" (Isaiah 9:6)

How many times have we listened to the good news by the angels to the shepherds? "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born.....Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests." (Luke 2:11 &14)

15, 20, 30, 50, 65, or 75 times?

The angel was announcing the fulfillment of the prophecy. The son grew, died and went back to His Father. He is going to come again.

Have these messages triggered any interest in us? How far have we tried to have this promised joy in our daily lives? The joy promised by the angel is available only to those who have Peace offered by the host of angels. This means the joy and the peace go hand in hand. One cannot have joy with out the peace of God. This is the peace or reconciliation that the Savior born in Bethlehem brought by His death on the cross. Man who was alienated by himself by the disobedience in the Garden of Eden was recovered by the obedience of the Son of God at Calvary.

The shepherds went and saw Him and the kings from the East took a lot of trouble to come and worship Him. Now we do not have to go any where to meet or worship Him. He is "Emmanuel - God with us'. He is still with us alive. But it is promised only to them "on whom His favor rests". So, how to get this favor? It is only by loving Him in return and accepting His offer of salvation by faith. Have we not to respond to this offer of Grace? Once we believe in His sacrifice for us, we are reconciled to God and are accepted as the children of God, "To all who received Him, to all who believed in His name, He gave them the right to become the children of God". (i.e. born of God) (John 1:12). This is the real favor by a loving Father and the result is the real peace that gives the real joy, "The joy of salvation". Nothing else in this world can give this real joy.

But the world has forgotten Him. Now Christ is not in "Christ-mas" It is only a "Holiday" Now there is no worship, only 'enjoyment'; only party and no prayer.. Are we also on this 'Band wagon'? Must we who bear the name of Christ not be different? Are we confused to recognize the God promised real JOY with the momentary pleasure that the world offers?

Let us make this Christmas a CELEBRATION by inviting the Savior born for us and handing over our lives to Him who can manage it much, much, better than we do by ordering and disciplining it for His glory and for the benefit of our fellow beings. This was the joy that God meant when He sent His only begotten son to the manger in

Bethlehem. This is the ultimate fulfillment of our lives and the JOY OF HEAVEN. Let us not grieve our Lord by rejecting this offer of favor. The joy will be ours, if we do not. It is ours not only in this New Year but through out our lives till eternity.

Wish you all a very Happy Christmas, indeed!

(Cherian Kurian).