



# Embers

*Where is He who is born king of the Jews? Matthew 2:2*

## Thoughts on the Reason for the Season

*What does this holiday mean to you?*

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## Thoughts on the Reason for the Season

In a few more days it will be Christmas and when it passes where will the world be and what will the people of the world be thinking? Will they still be wondering in amazement at the wonderful love of God for us is sending His Son to die for us. Will they truly realize that that was the only way that He could redeem us from our plight? Will they in their hearts continue to sing songs to the one that was born in a manger? Will they bring an offering of thanksgiving the next time that they go to church? Will the thought of what their redemption cost enter their minds again or will it have to wait until they celebrate Easter Sunday?

What we truly need to do is to ask ourselves the same set of questions. How would you answer them if they were asked you a month from now? Has the Lord Jesus been on your mind even leading up to Christmas, or has it been who do I have left to

## Christmas Thoughts for Children

*Children, what do you think about Christmas?*

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but for? How many times during the day does your mind naturally turn to Jesus in thanksgiving and in prayer. How much of the day is your mind engaged in the pursuit of knowing Jesus? How often have you felt Jesus draw near to you and have you felt your hearts burn within you as to two on their walk to Emmaus?

That is truly the experience that Jesus wants each one of us to have, to experience every day in our lives. We often say the world needs to know the Lord, but the real truth of the matter is that each one of us needs the Lord. As Seventh-day Adventists in the last days, we especially need the Lord. If we are going to carry out the mission that Jesus gave us. A mission to let our friends and neighbors and work-mates know the Jesus that we have fallen in love with; Jesus the baby of Bethlehem, and Jesus the redeemer, and the good news of Jesus the resurrected Lord who is coming again.

May that be the goal for ourselves and family and mission to those around us; to live the life of Christ

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and to share the life of Christ. For the grace of Christ is given us to share and remember that the grace of Christ is His character.

*by Pastor Frost*

## Christmas Thoughts for Children

The 25th of December has long been commemorated as the day of Jesus' birth, and in this article it is not my purpose to affirm or question the propriety of celebrating this event on this day, but to dwell upon the childhood and life of our Saviour. It is my purpose to call the attention of the children to the humble manner in which the Redeemer came to the world. All heaven was interested in the great event of Christ's advent to earth. Heavenly messengers came to make known the birth of the long-promised, long-expected Saviour to the humble shepherds who were watching their flocks by night on the plains of Bethlehem. The first manifestation that attracted the notice of the shepherds at the birth of the Saviour, was a radiant light in the starry heavens, which

filled them with wonder and admiration. "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Dear children, shall not these precious words, coming from the lips of heavenly angels, find a response in our hearts? Shall they not awaken gladness and melody in the soul because Jesus has come to our world to bring back to God those who through sin were estranged from him? If the angels of heaven glorified God, and poured forth their joy in divine melody and sacred song over the plains of Bethlehem, shall our hearts be cold and unimpressible? Shall we with indifference turn from the salvation brought to light through Christ?

The astonished shepherds could scarcely comprehend the precious message borne to them by the angels, and when the radiant light had passed away, they said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and

found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child."

They were filled with joy; they could not keep to themselves the precious knowledge of the advent of the Redeemer, but with glad enthusiasm they told to all whom they met the wonderful things they had seen and heard; and all who heard them, related the wonderful experience of the shepherds to the others, and many wondered and rejoiced, for they believed the words that had been spoken by the heavenly messengers. Glorifying and praising God, the shepherds returned to their flocks on the plains of Bethlehem.

All heaven was moved on the occasion of the Saviour's birth. The triumphant song which the shepherds heard was only an echo of the praise resounding round the throne on high. The whole angelic host rejoiced and sung praises because salvation was presented as a free gift to fallen man. After the proclamation song to the shepherds, the heavenly multitude veiled their faces from human sight, the flood of heavenly light passed away, the thrilling song of praise was no longer heard by the shepherds; but the remembrance of that song could never die out of their hearts. O, what reason have we to praise God that this wonderful revelation from heaven was made to humble men! It is not those who occupy high positions, who hold most honored places in the world, who are selected as bearers

of God's message of peace and salvation, which is of the greatest interest to fallen men. The Lord has said, "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

Those who love God should feel deeply interested in the children and youth. To them God can reveal his truth and salvation. Jesus calls the little ones that believe on him the lambs of his flock. He has a special love for and interest in the children. Jesus has said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me [let no one place any obstruction in the way of the children's coming to me]; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Jesus has passed through the trials and griefs to which childhood is subject. He knows the sorrows of the young. By his Holy Spirit, he is drawing the hearts of the children to himself, while Satan is working to keep them away from him. The most precious offering that the children can give to Jesus, is the freshness of their childhood. When children seek the Lord with the whole heart, he will be found of them. It is in these early years that the affections are the most ardent, the heart most susceptible of improvement. Everything that is seen and heard makes an impression on the youthful mind. The countenances looked upon, the words uttered, the actions performed, are not the least of the books the young read; for they have a decided influence upon the mind, heart, and character. Then how important it is that the children come to Jesus in their earliest years, and become lambs

of his flock! How important it is that the older members of the church, by precept and example, lead them to Jesus, who taketh away the sin of the world, and who can keep them by his divine grace from the ruin it works. The better acquainted they become with Jesus, the more they will love him, and be able to do those things that are pleasing in his sight. God has sanctified childhood in that he gave his only begotten Son to become a child on earth.

What matchless love Jesus has manifested for a fallen world! If angels sung because the Saviour was born in Bethlehem, shall not our hearts echo the glad strain, Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men? Although we do not know the exact day of Christ's birth, we would honor the sacred event. May the Lord forbid that any one should be so narrow-minded as to over-look the event because there is an uncertainty in regard to the exact time. Let us do what we can to fasten the minds of the children upon those things which are precious to every one who loves Jesus. Let us teach them how Jesus came into the world to bring hope, comfort, peace, and happiness to all. The angels explained the reason of their great joy, saying, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Then, children and youth, as you celebrate the coming Christmas, will you not count up the many things for which you are to be grateful, and will you not present a gratitude offering to Christ, and so reveal that you do appreciate the heavenly Gift?

The angels were amazed at the great love of Christ that led him to suffer and die on Calvary to rescue man from the power of Satan. The work of redemption is a marvel to the angels of heaven. Why, then, are we, for whom so great a salvation has been provided, so indifferent, so cold and unloving? Children, you can do errands for Jesus which will be wholly acceptable to him. You can bring your little gifts and offerings to Christ. The wise men who were guided by the star to the place where the young child was, brought offerings of gold and frankincense and myrrh. When they found the Promised One, they worshiped him. Children, you may ask, "What gifts can we bring to Jesus?" You can give him your hearts. What offering is so sacred as the soul temple cleansed from its defilement of sin? Jesus stands knocking at the door of your hearts; will you let him in? He says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Will you let Jesus into your hearts? Will you clear away the rubbish, and throw open the door, and willingly, gladly welcome in your heavenly guest? I shall not need to plead with you to bring you thank-offerings to God if you will but let the Saviour in. You will be so grateful, that you cannot be restrained from laying your gifts at the feet of Jesus. Let the hearts of all respond with exceeding joy for the priceless gift of the Son of God.

*by Mrs. E. G. White - Review & Herald,  
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## Preparation for the Sabbath

At the very beginning of the fourth commandment the Lord said: "Remember." He knew that amid the multitude of cares and perplexities man would be tempted to excuse himself from meeting the full requirement of the law, or would forget its sacred importance. Therefore He said: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." Exodus 20:8.

All through the week we are to have the Sabbath in mind and be making preparation to keep it according to the commandment. We are not merely to observe the Sabbath as a legal matter. We are to understand its spiritual bearing upon all the transactions of life. All who regard the Sabbath as a sign between them and God, showing that He is the God who sanctifies them, will represent the principles of His government. They will bring into daily practice the laws of His kingdom. Daily it will be their prayer that the sanctification of the Sabbath may rest upon them. Every day they will have the companionship of Christ and will exemplify the perfection of His character. Every day their light will shine forth to others in good works.

In all that pertains to the success of God's work, the very first victories are to be won in the home life. Here the preparation for the Sabbath must begin. Throughout the week let parents remember that their home is to be a school in which their children shall be prepared for the courts above. Let their words be right words. No words which their children should not hear are to escape their lips. Let the spirit be kept free from

irritation. Parents, during the week live as in the sight of a holy God, who has given you children to train for Him. Train for Him the little church in your home, that on the Sabbath all may be prepared to worship in the Lord's sanctuary. Each morning and evening present your children to God as His blood-bought heritage. Teach them that it is their highest duty and privilege to love and serve God.

Parents should be particular to make the worship of God an object lesson for their children. Passages of Scripture should be more often on their lips, especially those passages that prepare the heart for religious service. The precious words might well be often repeated: "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him." Psalm 62:5.

When the Sabbath is thus remembered, the temporal will not be allowed to encroach upon the spiritual. No duty pertaining to the six working days will be left for the Sabbath. During the week our energies will not be so exhausted in temporal labor that on the day when the Lord rested and was refreshed we shall be too weary to engage in His service.

While preparation for the Sabbath is to be made all through the week, Friday is to be the special preparation day. Through Moses the Lord said to the children of Israel: "Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning." "And the people went about, and gathered it [the manna], and ground it in mills, or beat it in a

mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it." Exodus 16:23; Numbers 11:8. There was something to be done in preparing the heaven-sent bread for the children of Israel. The Lord told them that this work must be done on Friday, the preparation day. This was a test to them. God desired to see whether or not they would keep the Sabbath holy.

This direction from the lips of Jehovah is for our instruction. The Bible is a perfect guide, and if its pages are prayerfully studied by hearts willing to understand, none need err upon this question.

Many need instruction as to how they should appear in the assembly for worship on the Sabbath. They are not to enter the presence of God in the common clothing worn during the week. All should have a special Sabbath suit, to be worn when attending service in God's house. While we should not conform to worldly fashions, we are not to be indifferent in regard to our outward appearance. We are to be neat and trim, though without adornment. The children of God should be pure within and without.

On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness and that all the cooking is done. Let the boots be blacked and the baths be taken. It is possible to do this. If you make it a rule you can do it. The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment. Before the setting of the sun let all secular work be laid aside and all secular papers be put out of sight. Parents, explain your

work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.

We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time. Whenever it is possible, employers should give their workers the hours from Friday noon until the beginning of the Sabbath. Give them time for preparation, that they may welcome the Lord's day with quietness of mind. By such a course you will suffer no loss even in temporal things.

There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church, should be put away. Let all bitterness and wrath and malice be expelled from the soul. In a humble spirit, "confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." James 5:16.

Before the Sabbath begins, the mind as well as the body should be withdrawn from worldly business. God has set His Sabbath at the end of the six working days, that men may stop and consider what they have gained during the week in preparation for the pure kingdom which admits no transgressor. We should each Sabbath reckon with our souls to see whether the week that has ended has brought spiritual gain or loss.

It means eternal salvation to keep the Sabbath holy unto the Lord. God says: "Them that honor Me I will honor." 1 Samuel 2:30.

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