

Baby Jesus was a Title One Baby

by Betty Oxendine Mangum
Lumbee Indian

This is what happened when this little baby was born...

Mary and Joseph Oxendine were behind on their State taxes and received a letter stating that they would have to be jailed if the taxes were not paid by the end of the day on December 24th. Joseph and his very pregnant wife Mary left very early in the morning from Pembroke to travel to Raleigh to pay their delinquent taxes. They took all the money they had and loaded into their Volkswagen bus. They were sad and frightened as they were expecting a baby anytime if they paid their taxes they had no money to go to the hospital. They also were so proud they did not want their first child born in prison or jail. They realized there would be no money for food, extra gas, or for a new outfit for the baby.

They arrived into the city at 4:30 P.M., and finally found the State Office building and got a meter space where some extra time was left on the meter. Mary and Joseph held hands as they climbed the steps to the big office building. It was deserted except for a security guard and some homeless men on the street.

Mary was not feeling well and in a great deal of pain. Finally they found the office, 7777 for State taxes. In large letters on the door was a sign that said...CLOSED EARLY FOR OFFICE PARTY...PLEASE COME AGAIN ON DECEMBER 26TH. OFFICE IS OPENED AT 8 A.M...5 P.M.

Mary began to quietly cry and her husband held her closely and tried to wipe away her tears. He wondered if

they would be stopped on the road by the patrol man and sent immediately to jail. They thought they better find a place for Mary to rest as she was in pain and felt frightened and alone.

They wondered if their parents, Cora and Clifton, would try to come by and see them tonight. You see, they were too embarrassed to tell them that they might go to jail so they had left town and not told anyone. Mary's family didn't like Joseph as they thought he had gotten her only daughter pregnant, although he repeatedly denied it and said that angels had told her she would bear a child.

No one in the family, or the town for that matter, believed any of that. They were both from very poor families, and no one from the Indian housing projects ever amount to anything. So what could you expect? They were very much in love, although Joseph himself suspected that Mary was pregnant for another Jones boy. He just kept those thoughts to himself because he had always loved Mary since first grade.

Mary told Joseph that she felt like the baby was going to be born any time and she needed to find a place to lie down. Although they had no money for a hotel room they did stop at the Holiday Inn, Velvet Cloak and the Brownstone, and inquired about any free rooms in the city. The desk clerks thought the guy must be on drugs as he was dirty and he was driving a beat up Volkswagen bus. Surely, the clerk thought, he must realize that rooms in Raleigh cost \$89.00 a night.

One girl on Hillsborough Street told them there were some vacant barns on the road to Fuquay-Varina and around Holly Springs. Mary and

Joseph decided that they had to find a place soon. It was getting dark and very cold and the wind was beginning to howl.

They took the exit for Fuquay-Varina, off Highway 1 and were soon out in the country in Wake County. Everywhere traffic had almost vanished and animals were gathering for their evening feeding time. Joseph and Mary selected an old barn that was abandoned. Nearby there was a cow pasture and horses. Some little bantam roosters and hens were walking around, eating and talking. Joseph quickly stopped the Volkswagen bus and went to the barn. He found manure, straw and stalls in much need of repair. He quickly made a nice bed of straw for Mary and got some fresh water cupped in his hands for her. She laid down and closed her eyes and tears streamed down her face. Joseph wished he had left her with her folks and their nice warm house. He knew she was hungry, tired and frightened. The cows stopped eating and the chickens and the horses gathered around her bed. They wondered what was happening at the old Mangum barn.

Sometime during the night he kissed her tears and fear away and the time came for the baby to arrive. Stars over the barn began to glow with brilliance. Outside you could hear whispers in the sky and hear wings fluttering and yet nothing was visible to the eye. Mary and Joseph both wept with the arrival of a little boy. He was so precious, had baby blue eyes and a head of black curls. The baby began to cry and the singing in the sky became louder. The animals were amazed and realized that something very special had happened in the Ole' Mangum

barn.

Joseph ran to the old Volkswagen bus to get the old blanket from the front seat to wrap the new babe. The air grew still and the stars became a million and it was as light as day. They were frightened that they would surely be found now. You could now see the barn for miles, hearing the singing and see a host of angels over the barn. Such a sight had never been seen before in the world.

The town drunk said he saw the bright lights when he left the bar in downtown Holly Springs...rumors were that at dawn the First United Methodist Church brought milk, food and warm blankets. The Triangle Native American Society brought gifts of deer meat, buffalo stew, squash, nuts, fruits, corn, red and white potatoes, fish, oysters, cranberries, pumpkin bread, little deer skin jackets, a beaded cradle board and moccasins.

JC Penney's bought a baby bed, a case of formula and many little blue clothes for the baby boy. The news went like fire to Raleigh and soon the News and Observer photographer Earl Wilkins came and took a picture for the front page. The Sydney Morning Herald also sent a reporter named Dawn Tanner to get the cover story. Governor Hunt got a call from Dr. Brian Gentle and Rev. Doug Jesse of the United Methodist Church. They had collected the taxes in their church offerings and wished to pay the taxes for Mary and Joseph Oxendine...And that is what really happened one night in Wake County when the Title I baby was born.

(Mangum served as a Title I Consultant with the State Department of Public Instruction and wrote this story in December, 1995.)



Aviator turned author Antoine de Saint-Exupery disappeared without a trace on a photographic mission in 1944. His most famous work is, perhaps, *The Little Prince* which he wrote in 1943.



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Anita L. Jackson, M.D., an otolaryngologist, has joined the medical staff of SRMC. Her private practice is Greater Carolina Ear, Nose and Throat located in the Southeastern Medical Park. A native of Georgia, Dr. Jackson earned an undergraduate degree from Princeton, a master's degree in biology from Stanford and a medical degree from the University of Illinois. She completed her surgical training at Howard University Hospital and earned a master's degree from the Harvard School of Public Health. She completed her residency training at the University of Tennessee.

Anita L. Jackson, M.D.

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According to Scripture

by Robert O'Quinn of the Pembroke Seventh Day Adventist Church

The Dead- Part 2. I was taught that when one died the soul or spirit went straight to heaven and that one learned everything they desired, praised the Lord, and much more. Don't we rise to a higher plane of knowledge and ability? Psalm 6:5 "For in death there is no remembrance of thee; into the grave you shall give thanks?": Psalm 113:17 "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Psalm 88:10-11 "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thou loving kindness be declared in the grave? Or thy faithfulness in destruction? Ecc. 9:10 "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no word, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Isaiah 38:18 "For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth." Psalm 119:175 "Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me."

The term soul is usually referring to the life or whole being in the Bible, not something that has life in itself. Psalm 146:4 "His breath goeth forth, he returned to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Ecc. 9:5-6 "For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun." Isaiah 38:19 "The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day; thy father to the children shall make known thy truth."

Notice that usually the Bible refers to the soul as being an entire entity, not as something apart from man. Can a soul sin? The wages of sin is death. We are one whole being. Lev. 4:2 "Speak unto the children of Israel saying if a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the com-

mandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them." Psalm 78:50 "he made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence." Psalm 88:3 "For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave." Psalm 35:7 "For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul." I Samuel 26:21 "Then aid Saul, I have sinned, return my son David; for I will no more do thee harm because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day; behold, I have played the fool and have erred exceedingly." Joshua 11:11 "And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them; there was not any left to breathe; and he burnt Hazor with fire." Psalm 40:14 "Let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil." Psalm 54:3 "For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul; they have not set God before them." Acts 2:41 "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Acts 27:37 "And we were all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls." I Thessalonians 5:23 "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I hope that one can see from the above passages that God thinks of us as one

entire being, a whole unit as it were. Ex. If one were to have a light bulb screwed into a light socket and then turned on he switch that controlled the flow of electricity to that bulb, what would happen? The light would come on! And what would happen if the switch were turned off? The light would go out, but where did the light go? Did it go somewhere else to exist? Did it somehow go up the line to where the electricity comes from? Or did it simply cease to exist? Let's consider a

pile of boards, some nails and a hammer. We have nothing else in the room, but ourselves. We then decide to drive the nails into the wood in such a way that a box is formed. Did the box exist prior to being formed? Clearly it did not! And what happens to the box should we decide to remove the nails? Once again we have a pile of boards.

some nails, and a hammer, but where did the box go? It's existence discontinues. It did not have to go anywhere. The box had no existence before it was formed, and after we took it apart, it simply went back into parts (Elements) from which it came. So it is with God's creation of Man. He formed us, and made us live.

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