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and

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## Christmas, 1947

## HARK!

Whence is that music? (There are no juke boxes here!)

It seems to come from above . . . (Yet no airplane motor drones up there!) It **does!**

It cannot be . . . (No radio could be in the clouds!)

Surely . . . It is!

The herald angels sing . . . !

But what are the mords? Quiet now; listen closely!

"Peace", it seems to say. (Peace! ah, yes! Peace in the heavens, perhaps!)

But there it is again; clear, distinct:

"Peace on earth . . . (Have the angels a sense of humor, then?)

There is a pause. Perhaps the singers will tell us, now, why and how peace may come.

There it is again, filling the skies:

"Good will . . . toward men."

(But that, one sighs regretfully, was two thousand years ago!)

A beautiful story, yes. But that was two thousand years ago, and this is the twentieth century, the complicated, mechanized twentieth century.

This is the age of intellect, of cause and effect; this is the era of applied science.

For cannot man today hurl himself through space faster than sound? Does he not make rain at his pleasure, and to suit his need? Has he not learned to refrigerate the source of life, so that he may create new life, at will, though the male and female be hundreds or thousands of miles apart? Has he not long since harnessed the cataract and transformed it into chained lightning? And today is he not master of the undreamed of power that lies within the atom?

This is the atomic age. Everything is changed.

Yes, this is the atomic age, an age of marvels. But what have those marvels gained us?

Have our two world wars destroyed dictatorship or brought peace? Does our reliance on the might of the atomic bomb bring us a sense of security? Are we sure that all this vast store of scientific knowledge is the end of knowledge, the final truth?

Are we happy?

Is everything changed? No; not quite.

The conditions that surround men are changed, yes; completely changed. But that is all; men's hearts remain the same. And we today, inside, are not greatly different from those simple shepherds who heard the angels sing.

We find peace and serenity, even as they, in solitude, out under the stars . . . those same stars that shone across the sky that first Christmas morning.

Most of us, this Christmas, will find our chief joy in the delight of children. We bring them gifts . . . even as the Wise Men of old.

And, at Christmas and throughout the year, we pursue happiness—only to find it in service to others; the formula for happiness He stated so simply nineteen hundred years ago.

Whether it be the first century or the twentieth, it is man's heart that determines his fate and his happiness. That secret was understood by Him whose sandaled feet trod the country roads that led through the hills of Galilee, and so His words were addressed to men's hearts.

And his simple rules for finding peace and happiness—so simple they seem mysterious—remain unchanged; as true, as effective, as universal as they were the day they were spoken.

Largely, too, they remain untried.

## Now The Birth Of Jesus Christ Was On This Wise

AND there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting.

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

THE angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women."

And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

And the angel said unto her, "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Then said Mary unto the angel, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"

And the angel answered and said unto her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible."

And Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." And the angel departed from her.

NOW the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. . . . Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: and knew her not till she had brought forth his firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. . . . And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 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."

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which has 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. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, "In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, 'And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.'"

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, "Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also."

When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their country another way. And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him."

When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. . . .

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life". And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. . . . And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth.

## Others' Opinions'

## Mountain Hospitals

Gift of a tract of land to the Highlands Community hospital by Miss Eva G. Cleaveland of Bridgeport, Conn., and Highlands brings this Macon county community nearer to a realization of its splendid hospital building program. Further, it is the kind of wedding of private funds with the public interest which is so necessary for the progress of hospital care in North Carolina.

Macon county already enjoys an enviable position statistically in hospital facilities. It is one of a very few counties without a deficit of hospital beds in proportion to population. The February report of the North Carolina Hospital and Medical Care Commission credits Macon, through its two hospitals at Franklin, with 5.4 beds per 1,000 white population and 4.3 beds per 1,000 Negro population. Both of these figures are substantially in excess of the national average of 3.4 beds per 1,000 population.

Miss Cleaveland's gift of a two-acre building site will enable the Highlands community to prepare for its own special needs and those of adjoining sections. As The Citizen understands it, the hospital project is to be financed largely with private funds. Highlands has not waited for Federal and State aid in pushing forward toward better hospitalization and medical care.

Mountain communities which are not as well situated in this respect can avail themselves of certain advantages under Federal and State programs. In a recent list of approved North Carolina projects, however, all nine applicants were in Eastern North Carolina. Appropriations under the Hill-Burton hospital construction act provide North Carolina with a share of \$3.3 million. There should be many claimants to these aid funds.

Western North Carolina needs more hospitals, more hospital beds, more doctors, more nurses—more of everything to bring better health to its people. Highlands has provided a splendid example of local initiative at work for progress.—Asheville Citizen.

To ALL OF YOU . . . our readers, far and near.  
FROM ALL OF US at The Press . . . Carl P. Cabe, Donald C. Carr, Annie Lou Huscusson, Weimar Jones, Herrell Ledford, Howard Reece, Bob Sloan, and Walter A. Steele.

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