

The Christmas Story

ST. LUKE'S CHRISTMAS STORY
(Luke 2:1-20)

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 this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

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 first born 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 man.

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 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.

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.



TALK TO SANTA - Three and four-year-old dancing students at the Dance Academy gave their Christmas requests to Santa Claus during Saint Nick's annual visit to the dance studio last week. Children with Santa include, front row, left to right, Joey Edwards, Summer Crisp, Kelly Goforth, Elizabeth Dilling and

Laura Beth Smith. Second row, Letta Widemare, Chrissy Johnsonbaugh, April Allison and Angie Farris. Back row, Sloan Goforth, Molly McRae, Cassie Dowda, Leigh Anne Jackson, Sheldon Lynn and Dennisha Edwards.

Handel's "Messiah"

Each Christmas, music-lovers throughout the country are once again enraptured by the most popular choral work of all time, Handel's "Messiah."

Since its first performance in Dublin in 1742, this beloved oratorio has been performed countless times in concert halls as well as churches.

Although it was originally intended as an Easter work, "Messiah" has become synonymous with the Christmas season for English-speaking peoples. However, the entire oratorio is not usually performed at Christmastime, but is limited to those sections relating to the Nativity.

The reason for the popularity of this magnificent work is not difficult to determine. Based on texts from the Scriptures, the music for "Messiah" is both melodic and moving. Tradition has it that when the oratorio was performed in London before King George, he was so inspired by the "Hallelujah" chorus that he spontaneously rose. Since subjects do not remain seated while the monarch stands, the rest of the audience promptly rose as well. Since then, audiences traditionally rise to their feet at the beginning of this magnificent chorus.

Handel, it is said, claimed to have received divine inspiration in the writing of his greatest masterpiece. Certainly, he wrote "Messiah" in record time — he started the work on August 22, 1742 and completed it on September 14, approximately two weeks later. Scholars, in studying the original manuscript, note that Handel wrote so furiously, he sometimes neglected to put stems on the notes and scratched or blotted out changes instead of erasing. The manuscript reveals a composer working at a fever pitch and would seem to support Handel's claim.

Whether presented on a grandiose scale or with smaller ensembles, all will agree that listening to Handel's "Messiah" is both a spiritual and a musical experience.

Christmas * Blessings

Belk Stevens



CLEVELAND MALL - SHELBY, N.C.



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

The sounds of Santa's sleigh-bells fill the air with music, and every home is kindled with the warmth of good cheer. May you and your family enjoy all the blessings of this happy holiday season. Heartfelt thanks for your trust and support. We greatly enjoy the privilege of serving you.

**We Will Close Friday, December 24th
At 6:00 P.M. And Reopen Monday, December 27th
At 10:00 A.M.**

**These Sales Start Monday, December 27th
BABY SALE, WHITE SALE, FOUNDATION SALE,
COSMETIC SALE**