



GIFT OF HEAVEN

BY ANNIE LENT

The condition of man is described by Isaiah as one who from the sole of his foot even to his head lacks all soundness, one who is covered in bruises and sores and raw wounds. A person whose head is sick and whose heart is faint (Isaiah 1:5-6). In Ephesians, Paul reminds us that apart from the gift of God, we are dead in our trespasses we have no hope of salvation. We have inherited a heart full of sin that would eternally separate us from our great and holy God. Because of our sin, this separation is due us. But God, in His great grace, provided for us One whom would bear His wrath and create a way for us to be reconciled to himself.

What an amazing grace that an all-powerful, holy God promised and foretold us of the greatest possible gift that men could receive: Himself. The promise found in Isaiah 7 would be nearly beyond comprehension for the Israelites – their God would personally be among them, with them, as Immanuel. The chasm between our sin and His holiness would be utterly closed, not by our doing or our striving, but by His goodness and His grace. God with us.

“The Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin will conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14)

We look in the past (two thousand years) to the night this Gift was given to us and we look ahead to the fulfillment of the promise that is made possible by the birth of Jesus. The promise that one day, He will wipe away every tear from our eyes and death will be no more. All mourning, crying, and pain will cease. Because of the guarantee that comes through the birth of our Savior we will know and experience the true and full meaning of what God intended when he said, I will be their God, and they will be my people.

On this night, beneath the stars, and surrounded in glory, an angel appeared to shepherds and said to them:

Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.

(Luke 2:10-12)

God gave the world the greatest gift in the form of a giggling, sleeping, crying baby boy. Wrapped in swaddling cloths and tucked in a manger, under the loving gaze of Joseph and Mary, lay our Savior. Jesus, born of a virgin, fully God and fully human is our good news of great joy! The birth of Jesus meant that all of the good news for His children was immediately secured. The only fitting response to this was an explosion from the heavenly hosts praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

In this moment, Jesus made a way to reclaim us from the dead and make us alive in Him. He binds up our broken hearts and heals our raw wounds. He is our Savior, our redeemer, our healer, our hope and faith. Our Christmas story is one that begins and ends with the birth of a baby boy who would be the guarantee for the life and salvation of God’s children. And because of this, we sing unadulterated praises with joyful and grateful hearts that Jesus is our only victory!

Gift of Heaven, our Savior, the word in flesh has come

Precious Jesus, Redeemer, You’ve come to save the world

This baby boy will be

Our only victory

On the cross, on the cross

Sweet Jesus you will be

Our only victory

