

A lit candle in a glass jar sits on a dark wooden surface. The candle is lit, casting a warm, yellow glow. In the background, there are dark evergreen branches with some small red berries. The overall mood is cozy and festive.

# Christmas Musings

From Pastor Tommy Nelson



## A Christmas Delight

Y'all,

May I give a Christmas yuletide suggestion? If you get a chance, watch "The Bishop's Wife." Not the new one. (with Denzel Washington and Whitney Houston) but the Cary Grant, Loretta Young, David Niven old one in black and white from 1948. It's about an angel sent to earth in response to a prayer.

You'll see a little bit of "It's A Wonderful Life" (Clarence), "Star Wars" (Jedi mind control), and "Men In Black." (instant amnesia). Now, I'm not a big fan of movies majoring on biblical ideas. I can't think of one that I didn't walk away with. "Oh brother." But this oldie was wonderfully entertaining. Yea inspiring. Yea Truthful.

Cary Grant is very believable as Dudley the angel. He is more than sweet like Clarence. He is literally charming. Cary Grant looks like you would imagine an angel to look. Perfect, conservative, immaculately tailored and handsome. He is overwhelmingly confident, positive, unafraid, and smiling without being overdone. He is constantly in control of the creation. All things obey his slightest movements. He is never introduced because he knows your name before you speak. He is never surprised because he knows everything as it happens. He is charming and warm to everyone he meets. From young boys to Zuzu, (remember her?) to beautiful women, to secretaries, to maids, to atheists, to taxi drivers, to wealthy widows. All hearts are open before him. All weakness and false attitudes are laid bare. But he is wonderfully patient. His ways are above all other's ways. He speaks of things only an immortal ancient being could speak, and yet no one catches on. He is almost playful and amused at humans. He operates in a sphere above all mortals. You can at times sense an almost frightening, immense power in Dudley that he keeps in constant control. He is beyond fear, doubt, and intimidation.

But the most amazing thing is that when anyone meets him, they cannot look away from him. Little boys, little girls, scholars, the wealthy, and common folk find him intriguing at first glance. Even the bishop's Saint Bernard is drawn to him.

Some can be questioning, but none can be phony because he can see right through them and in seconds challenge their deepest pain. A wealthy woman's deepest secret and regret are literally locked away from human sight. But "Dudley" lifts the lid on her heart in seconds. He converses with a scholar on ancient history and yet charms a household as he

sits on the floor with a little girl telling a story. And everyone's life is radically changed by the shortest contact as Dudley opens men's eyes to God.

Only one person has a problem with him - David Niven, the bishop. And yet the bishop is the only person to whom Dudley reveals himself, as he is the one that most needs change. Change toward the ministry, toward his wife, toward his congregation. But like all of us, he is broken in the end.

There is even a reference to the idea of Genesis 6: 1-7 and Jude verse 6 where angels crossed the line of their "own abode" by desiring women. Dudley sensed an attraction to the idea of being mortal, the only thing that scared him. As the movie ends and Dudley walks away, look closely and see if you see the shadow of an outline in the snow.

Intriguing. Now mind you, the movie is not meant to be a gospel presentation, so you won't hear it, but you will be fascinated as one of Hollywood's greatest actors seeks to portray what an angel would look like among us. "The Bishop's Wife" is not one of the most heralded Christmas movies, but to me it is the most interesting.

A "thumbs up."

Enjoy.

Sincerely,

H. Thomas Nelson, famous critic of the arts.

## Complete in Him

Jesus

In Him God speaks “humanese.” I behold Him, listen to Him and I know who God is...how He acts, what He likes.

In Him I know man. I see “The Eternal Life that was with the Father and manifested to us.” I “Behold the man.” I need to be inspired by none other. Here is perfect humanity.

In Him I see the Creator. “In Him were all things created.” Here is the standard and the source of all that is.

In Him I have truth from He who is the Word of God. He endorsed the Old Testament, claimed truth for Himself, and inspired the New Testament writings. In Him I have One whom I can trust emphatically. In Him I can evaluate and judge all other claims to truth.

In Him I can interpret all of history. From Him I can look back and see what called for His life. I can look from Him forward and see how the world will respond to Him and how God will respond to the world.

In Him I am loved. He transferred me from the sin and alienation of the world and adopted me into the family of God. “As the Father has loved me so I have loved you.”

In Him my purpose is complete. I have found why I am created. Jesus was in perfect step with the Father. In Him I also am called to the eternal purposes of God. He alone has given me meaning.

In Him I am clean. I am forgiven and washed from all sins. I need do nothing to improve upon His forgiveness because it is perfect. There is nothing I can do to besmear His forgiveness because it is wrought through His blood and perfect sacrifice. Every spot and wrinkle is forgiven.

In Him I know what is right from the law of God in my heart. I have an inner moral compass through His rebirth. His New Covenant has given me a conscience that is alive to God. I have the heart of a mature son.

In Him I am clothed in the righteousness of God. I am as clean and as holy in God's sight as divine justice demands. Nothing need be done to improve upon it. Nothing can take away from it.

In Him I have the key to the meaning of the Bible. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." In Him who is the Light of the World all the Bible is mine.

In Him I am secure within the hand of God and thus whatever may befall me will work for God's purpose for me.

In Him I am enabled completely and sufficiently to carry out the will of God. If I should do it I can because of God's enabling grace that Jesus brought to my soul, the rebirth. I am empowered to serve God.

There is nothing Jesus has left undone or come short of. The world, education, science, politics, wealth, psychology, or philosophy have nothing essential that I can't do without.

All I need is Jesus.

"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift."  
A Merry Christmas indeed.

Tommy

## If There Were No Christmas

Did anyone else see the atheist's billboard?

"Christmas is fake news."

Have you ever wondered what the world would have been like without Christmas?

There would be no Bible because the whole of the Bible is the anticipation and fulfillment of Jesus Christ.

There would be no sanctity of the nation of Israel, the nation of the scriptures.

There would be no means of the possibility of grace and salvation with no cross.

There would be no assurance or claim of certainty about heaven without the death and resurrection of Christ.

Without a Bible there would be no certainty of a revelation from God. No creation, divine nature of man, understanding of the nature of evil and the fall of man.

There would be no prophecy nor enlightenment of the future of man.

There would be no final standard for the dignity of woman. No tenderness toward the weaker sex...

... nor the handicapped nor children in the womb.

There would be no final definition of love without John 3:16.

There would be no Ten Commandments nor Golden Rule.

Without the divine image in man, "mind" and "reason" are no longer objective possibilities outside of the machine of nature that can draw reasonable "common sense" conclusions. There can be no possibility of truth or even *the search* for the truth.

Without a biblical view of nature there would be no "creation mandate" to gain dominion over nature and subdue nature and thus no modern science, industry, technology or medicine. Man would have no hopes of his curiosity being satisfied because of a reasonable creation being searched out.

Thus there would be no western civilization. Nor western constitutional government with its truths "self-evident" and men "created equal." Nor a justice system, "so help me God."

Without the infinite personal triune God of Christ and Christmas there would be no reasonable standard outside of man for absolute morality.

There would be no reasonable dignity of marriage, nor morality governing sexuality.

Nothing would dignify "man" as above the animal realm. Terms like "mankind", "human being" and such would be semantically mystic terms with no true meaning. "Man" would be nothing but a complex mammal, an animal. Any dignifying term would be essentially empty.

Without Christ, God is not God and man is an orphan.

Without Christmas there can be no Easter, nor a resurrection, nor victory over death, or an assurance of heaven, or life after death.

Death is the end. All else is chance. If God is dead, man is dead. All just and good is dead, yea, never have lived.

In short, if Christmas is fake news,  
all of life is dis-integrated, is meaning-less,  
love-less and hope-less.

But because there is a Christmas the horror is lifted. The horror of a godless dark existence. A jungle, an insane asylum, a horrid joke played on man by man.

All of history the mad laughter of a cold dark universe mocking the fools and jesters stumbling in the black vacuum for what exists only in their groping imaginations.

“Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace...”

He lives.

Tommy

## A Christmas Meditation

His was splendor.  
Unbroken, imperfectable union in  
Triune Council.  
Angelic adoration  
of The Word which spoke into being all  
about.

### When

Blinding light!!  
Cascades of might rushing past the  
bounds of being. His  
glory dispelled as infinite power  
pulled Him down.

### Down

to that sole, blue, warm, bright,  
breathing spot in the dark  
where the Creator found His  
womb.

### Down

Vast chasms of darkness to  
His tiny residence.  
Omnipotence restrained.  
Eternity bounded by cells.  
Divinity wed to growing limbs.

### Down

To carpenter's wages, meals, growth,  
questions, and learning.

### Down

to the rude limits of men.

### Down

that God's face should be seen.  
Truth blaring through a Life.  
Renounced, rejected, refused  
by the objects of His love.

### Down

to betrayals, lies, trials, beatings, whips,  
thorns, thirst, prison,  
spittle, mockings.

### Down

to the carrying of a rack of death.  
To blackness as the jaws of evil  
enclosed, crushed, constricted.  
Favor, communion, and a divine  
pleasure forever known  
gone – like warmth from the Arctic.  
Familiar eyes, forever bright,  
narrow in hate at the lonesome,  
loathsome thing “made sin”.

### Down

into the black heart of death.  
Misery who loved no company.

### Up!

As death no sin could grasp to hold its  
prey. Its absense His sword.

### Up

grasping thieves at arms length  
and women at His feet in the echo of the  
chant of His worshipping killer. Over



**Up**

into glory  
pressing to His gaping side a bride  
grasped through a now freed Hand.  
Reaching through the ages to every place.  
Forcing its Love on each selected heart.

**Up**

To the right hand. Enemies,  
forgiven, adopted, exalted, restored.  
Wearing His despised perfection  
forever, their glory.

**Up**

the Shepherd, the Groom, the Stone,  
the Vine, Last Adam, Great Priest,  
Risen Head – to gather and love and  
build, and birth, enliven, and save.

**Up**

Man's last King, sitting,  
waiting with bronzed feet.  
Aching in vengeance  
to crush the grapes patience nurtured  
and then with sudden violence  
to set all things

**-- right.**

O eyes, before whom no deceit can hide.  
Who searches the crypt of all hearts.  
See nothing but Thyself in my hope.  
Be now the light of my joy as  
in that day Thou shalt be  
my eyes' twinkling and delight.

## **A Pastoral Pondering Upon the Similitude of the One True God and Santa Claus**

By Tom Nelson

B.A. MABS

Preacher, Ponderer, Philosopher

Authority of Yuletide Cultic Habits

As I ponder on this Yuletide season, I find myself musing on the similitude of God and Saint Nicholas (aka Santa Claus.)

Myth, though not historical, can often portray man's dreams, ambitions, and fears. It's a short step from myth to superstition to religion.

Behold...

1. God and Santa have all white hair (Rev. 1:14; Dan. 7:9). White hair upon God reflects His holiness and eternity as the "Ancient of Days"
2. They both live in the north. The Old Testament sees the north as the abode of God. In Isaiah 14:15 Satan wanted to "sit on the mount of the assembly in the recesses of the north." So, Santa is far removed from the rabble of human foolishness as is God.
3. They both are surrounded by a sea of glass (Rev. 4:6) or by a sea of snow. Both representing sacred inviolability. By holiness or because it's so dadburned cold!
4. They both are clothed in red ("from his head to his foot") or the purple robe of royalty stained with the blood of His enemies after treading the winepress of the fierce wrath of God the Almighty (Isaiah 63:1)
5. They are both served by their servants, whether elves or angels.
6. They both ride upon the clouds either by reindeer or in God's case borne by sometimes cherubim or sometimes to "come in the clouds."
7. They both know whose been naughty or nice. Both omniscient.
8. They both keep a list (God doesn't need to check it but once)
9. Both God and Santa come and go through fireplaces. God ascends in flames (Judges 13:20) and descends in consuming fire (2 Thess 1:7). Santa descends and ascends through the chimney.
10. Both love children. Santa comes for children. Adults fix his cookies. Heaven belongs to those who receive it as children.
11. Both are omnipresent. Santa will make it to every house. With God, "where can I go to flee from Thy Spirit" (Ps. 139:7)
12. Both are wondrously joyful and pleasant. "God is love" and "in Thy presence is fullness of joy and pleasures forever." Santa is simply "a right jolly old elf"

13. And both bring gifts. One brings gifts of happiness (or then again ashes and switches) and the other the gift of free salvation (or then again ashes and switches!) God and Santa are double-edged.
14. And interestingly enough, you must first go to sleep to behold them; “You’ve got to go to sleep, or Santa won’t come.” “To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.”
15. One is man’s happiest legend. The other is man’s most certain hope.
16. God needs no milk and cookies.
17. You can sit on Santa’s lap and you can kneel at Chris’s feet.

Well, that’s enough to ruminate on.

I look forward to seeing you on our Christmas Eve Service. Remember, “It’s the night before Christmas...”

Tommy

## The Christmas Story

There is no more beautiful story than the birth of Christ. There is no more beautiful music than Christmas music. And there is no subject that is covered by the greatest of art as completely as the subject of the Nativity of the birth of Jesus. It is the most glorified, loved and exalted single event, perhaps other than His death, in all of the history of man.

Although the Christmas story began in the plan of God from before Creation, we will pick up the story 400 years before Christ in the last book of the Old Testament, the prophet Malachi. There the nation of Israel was under the domination of Persia. Israel, who were slaves in their own land, was given a promise that the next word they heard from God would be that of “The Forerunner”, announcing the coming of Israel’s promised King, the Messiah, the Son of David.

Four hundred years after Malachi passed the nation of God was at its lowest point. The Greeks had overpowered the Persians, who were overpowered by the Romans, who then installed as ruler of Israel an Edomite, of the ancient enemies of Israel, named Herod the Great who prided in calling himself “The King of the Jews.” It was the worst of times.

But it was the best of times because in Jerusalem an old priest named Zacharias was serving in the temple. He had been chosen by lot to light the incense before the Holy of Holies symbolizing the nation’s prayers ascending before God for the coming of Messiah; an act so holy that it could only be performed once in the life of a priest.

When suddenly there appeared next to the Altar of Incense an angel, Gabriel, the messenger of God, announcing that the time was fulfilled, the Christ was coming. And that he, Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth would conceive and give birth to the forerunner, one who would come in the spirit and power of Elijah, and his name would be called “John”, which simply means “God’s grace” for that is the age that he would bring. The names “Zacharias” and “Elizabeth”? They mean in Hebrew “God remembers”, “His covenant.” And so He did.

Six months later, in Nazareth, a small city in the hills of the northern region of Galilee was a young woman named Mary. She was busy about her house, because she was preparing to be married. When suddenly Gabriel again appeared and announced that she, a virgin, would give birth to a son, conceived by the Holy Spirit and his name would be “Jesus” meaning “God is salvation”. And that God would give Him the throne of the kingdom of David. The Christ was coming through a virgin just as Isaiah had said six hundred years earlier, *“a virgin shall be with child.”* And a confirming miracle would be that her barren cousin Elizabeth was pregnant and in her 6<sup>th</sup> month. “Nothing,” said Gabriel, “is impossible with God.”

Mary hastened to Judea, and indeed Elizabeth was pregnant, and as Mary approached her and greeted her, Elizabeth's baby leaped in her womb and Elizabeth proclaimed:

<sup>43</sup> *"How has it happened that the mother of my Lord has come to me?"* <sup>44</sup> *For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy.* <sup>45</sup> *And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord."* (Luke 1:43-45).

The last Old Testament prophet –John the Baptist- though still in the womb had recognized the coming of his King and leaped with joy. The promise had arrived. Mary's husband to be was named Joseph, the man who would have been King of Israel, had not the nation fallen into captivity six hundred years earlier. He was the direct descendant of King David, laboring as a poor, unknown carpenter in Nazareth far from Jerusalem. But God knew who he was. When Mary announced that she was pregnant he thought the worst as he knew the child was not his and he planned to end the engagement privately as the penalty for an engaged woman to be unfaithful was stoning. But an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream saying, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife because the child, who has been conceived in her, is of the Holy Spirit and He shall be called "Immanuel" which means "God with us." And once again God was among man, but *as* man.

Joseph immediately arose and took Mary as his wife that night, thus giving their son the legal, hereditary title as the rightful King of Israel. Joseph did not consummate the union, but "*kept her a virgin*" until the Child was born leaving no doubt of His supernatural origin.

The couple stayed in Nazareth for nine months not realizing that the prophet Micah had prophesied that the Christ would be born in Bethlehem, the city of David. But a decree went forth from the Roman emperor that a census was to be taken and that all Jews were to return to the cities of their fathers. Joseph and Mary, both being of Davidic lineage, left for Bethlehem.

They arrived at nightfall in just the nick of time as Mary had gone into labor. Joseph sought a room at an inn. Being full of travelers, it refused him, but offered him and his young wife –the garage- the stable where traveler's beasts were kept; a cave at the base of a hill.

And so began the life of Him of whom it was written "*that the world was made by Him but the world did not know Him. He came to His own and those who were His own did not receive Him.*" And there in the dark... in a cave... in captive land... before none but parents and beasts to be placed in an animals' feeding trough... the central act of human history occurred --- the incarnation of God among man. Immanuel.

As Mary was giving birth, not far away were divinely selected heralds. "*Shepherds, watching over their flocks by night.*" It would be appropriate that shepherds would announce His coming. God was called the Shepherd of Israel, who prophetically someday



in Messiah would come and care for his people as the Good Shepherd. The Christ was the Davidic Shepherd King, who would shepherd his people with the strength and majesty of the Lord. But these were very special shepherds. They were shepherds of the Migdal Eder, the Tower of the Flock in Bethlehem. They were raising sheep to be used for sacrifice in Jerusalem, 10 miles away.

Unblemished sheep, as Christ would be the “*spotless, blameless Lamb of God without blemish, who would bear away the sin of the world.*” And also because shepherds were considered the lowly, living behind sheep, far away from the national religious life; typical of those over the next 20 centuries who would recognize their lowliness and their need for a Savior.

When suddenly an angel of the Lord stood before them and the glory of the Lord shone ‘round about them and they were terribly frightened’. The angel said, “*Do not be afraid for I bring you good news of great joy which shall be for all the people. For unto you this day in the city of David is born a Savior, Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign for you, you shall find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.*” A newborn in a trough! Only God could reach so low.

Then suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the Heavenly Hosts saying, “*Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased.*” The shepherds ran into Bethlehem, hastened from stable to stable looking for babies among beasts until they found the family and they told Mary and Joseph who “wondered” at the angelic message. Then the shepherds told all who would listen what they had heard and they went back to their flocks glorifying God.

Eight days later, according to biblical law, Mary and Joseph took the baby to Jerusalem for His circumcision, for the sacrifices of a burnt offering and a sin offering, and for His dedication to God. Two elderly Jews –a man and a woman- Simeon and Anna, both through the Holy Spirit, recognized the identity of this common baby as Messiah. Simeon spoke a prophecy of the babe that was a remarkable sweep of the life that would lay before Him. “Some in Israel,” Simeon said, “would rise because of this Child. Others, however, would fall in their rejection of Him. He would be killed, executed, pierced by a sword before the watching eyes of His mother. But He would conquer death and be the final judge of all mankind and someday the deepest thoughts of all men would be exposed in this Child’s presence.”

Anna was widowed just seven years after her marriage. She was now eighty-four years of age and she served in the temple, daily praying that the Messiah might come and redeem Israel from its bondage. When she heard Simeon’s prophecy, she knew this was Him and immediately she called all who were looking for the redemption of Israel to behold their King.

Mary and Joseph remained in Bethlehem. Why? Maybe it was because it was the City of David, maybe it was because it was near Jerusalem, the capital, maybe it was because there were rumors in Nazareth about His conception. But in Bethlehem they

moved into a house and nothing is recorded for two years. But events were approaching. Because at the same time the shepherds saw God's glory in Bethlehem, far away to the East, possibly in Persia, among the Gentiles in the cradle of ancient civilization, a group of Gentiles... "Magi"... wise men... scholars... philosophers... astronomers... astrologers... researchers... the scientists of their day, saw a "sign" in the heavens, what they called "His star". Fifteen centuries earlier, in the book of Numbers, Balaam, a Gentile practitioner of divination, was used by God to prophesy to the Eastern world that a "star" would someday arise in Jacob and a "scepter" or a "King" would go forth to rule the world in righteousness and would crush through the heads of sons of disobedience. This prophecy, coupled with Daniel's prophecies in Babylon in Persia, left the Middle East with the knowledge of a coming king.

These men arrived in Jerusalem two years later, looking for the young King of the Jews and were received in Jerusalem as dignitaries. They told King Herod they had seen "the star" of the King of the Jews and had come to worship Him, recognizing His divinity and His heirship to all of the earth. The Bible says, "*All Jerusalem was troubled*" because Herod, the self-styled King of the Jews was paranoid, threatened and violent whenever his position was challenged. His advisors told him that the king was to be born in Bethlehem. In deceitfulness he told the wise men to find the child and then return to him and tell him so that he could go and worship Him also... fully intending to kill this threat to his throne. The wise men continued to Bethlehem and once again the star appeared. As once the glory of God did shine over the tabernacle, the glory of God again rested over God's presence on the earth in a common house.

They entered and they saw the child with his mother and they fell before Him in worship. Then they opened their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. Gifts given by Persians to kings and to deities- and like the lowly shepherds, the Gentile seekers worshiped the king. An angel of God then appeared to them in a dream warning them not to return to the deceitful Herod and they returned a different way than they came. And wise men still do...

When they did not return to Jerusalem, Herod knew that he had been found out and so instead of killing the one child he sought, he would kill the all that he did not. He decreed that every boy, under the age of two, must die. Christ would begin his life as did Moses, another redeemer, in Egypt. Law and grace both were sought to die at their inception at the hands of wicked men.

Mary and Joseph, warned by God in a dream, fled to Egypt until Herod's death and then were told by God to return. But Herod's wicked son Archelaus had been appointed by Rome to govern in his father's place over Judea. Joseph hesitated. And then God, for a 4<sup>th</sup> time, directed Joseph through a dream, sending the holy family back to Nazareth... their original home... where Joseph assumed his original job as a carpenter. He and Mary would have six more children by themselves, four boys and two girls; two of the boys, who would become New Testament authors, Jude and James. Jesus, in time, would become a reader in

the synagogue. He was simply known as “The Carpenter’s Son.” He would show no evidence of His divine nature other than a perfect life, growing in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and in favor with men, and by a singular incident at the age of twelve at Passover where He displayed a passion for the scripture... a longing for worship... a respect for religious leadership, an honoring of his parents, the consciousness that God was his unique father, and a desire to be about God’s business.

He lived as one of us... until the age of 30 when His 2<sup>nd</sup> cousin John the Baptist would arise from the deserts where he had grown up in the area of the Jordan River and began to preach in prophetic power. In a power that had been unheard for 400 years. One in the Spirit and power of Elijah, saying that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, and the King had arrived and One was among them that existed before him whose latchet on his sandal he was not worthy to untie. One among them that they did not know, whom he was to designate. The Child had become a man. He would leave His home, He would head to the forerunner to be baptized and recognized by God the Father “*This is my Son, and in Him I am well pleased.*” And by John the Baptist, the Old Testament voice, “*This is the Lamb of God*” and by the Holy Spirit of God as in the days of Noah, lighting as a dove upon the first of a new world to come. He would begin His preaching. He would call the nation to repentance. He would rebuke its leaders. He would assert miracles as no man had ever seen. He would divide out the faithful, then proceed to the cup the Father had prepared, to die for man and cry out in the dark Emmanuel’s orphaned cry, “*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*” He would rise and conquer Satan and death. And He would bring man back into the fold. And history would never be the same again.

Maybe you would prepare a place in your heart for this One that no man will honor apart from God’s sovereign grace. *Still* He is alive. *Still* He has been exalted to the very right hand of God. And *still* He can save by sending God’s Holy Spirit into the empty room of a heart, into the empty hands of men who know that “I am naught without Him.” Would you do that now?

**Prayer:** We say these words, O God, in no uncommon way. We say to You, our Father and our God, that we were alien to You, we were darkened to You, we were estranged from You, and yet You, who in the beginning, spoke light into the dark, God whose spirit moved over the face of the dark that once again You can move, once again Your Word can speak and once again blind men can see, and lame men can walk, and dead men can live, and fatherless men and women can be adopted into the eternal family. Once again lost men can be found, names can be inscribed on the Book of Life, all because of Him, who lived the life that we could not live and as perfect who died the death that we should have died. We thank You for this Samson, that stretched out His arms like a cross and seized one pillar in one hand, the pillar of our sin, and seized the other pillar in the other hand, the absence of our righteousness. And he bowed himself, and he cried, “God let me perish with my enemies,” and he died among us, numbered among transgressors.



