**R776\_Rumination for 22 Dec. 2019**

The **T**heme: **The Child of Christmas** [[berita-bethel-ung.com](http://www.berita-bethel-ung.com/)](http://www.berita-bethel-ung.com/)

The **T**ext:  *Behold, a virgin shall be with* ***Child****.* Mt. 1:23

The **T**hots:

1. **The Child and His Counter-part**
2. The **F**oreshadow: *a virgin shall conceive.* Isa. 7:14, 16
3. The **S**ign*: Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold,* *a virgin shall conceive…*
4. The **S**on*: and bear a son…before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good…*

The *child* referred to here is Isaiah's young child, "Shear-jahub" whom God ordered Isaiah

to take with him when he went to see Ahaz(Isaiah 7:3). Butler

1. The **F**inal **F**ulfilment:Mt. 1:21-23
2. The **S**cripture **F**irst **F**ulfilled historically (#1 above), now prophetically **F**ulfilled in Jesus.
3. *All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet.* 1:22
4. *The Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son* Cf. Isa. 7:14
5. The **S**on to come **F**orth:  *Behold, a virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son,* 1:21a, 23a
6. His **M**anifestation:

*and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.* 1:23b

1. His **M**ission:

*And thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.* 1:21a, 25

1. **The Child Conceived of the Holy Spirit Mt. 1:18**
2. The **F**acts of the **C**ase: Mt. 1:18, NKJV

*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph,*

*before they came together, she was found with Child of the Holy Spirit.*

1. The **F**ear of **C**arpenter Joseph: Mt. 13:55
2. Joseph was a **C**arpenter: *Is not this the carpenter's Son? is not His mother called Mary?*
3. Joseph’s **C**aution: *her husband Joseph, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly,*

*decided to divorce her secretly.*  Mt. 1:19, HCSB

1. The **C**ontemplation and Assurance: *But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph…fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife:* Mt. 1:20a
2. The **F**eatures of the **C**onception: *for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.* Mt. 1:20b, NKJV
3. Jesus was God **M**anifested in the Flesh – I Tim. 3:16

*Without controversy great is the* ***M****ystery of godliness: God was* ***M****anifest in the flesh…*

1. Jesus was **M**ade *a little lower than the angels…* Heb. 2:9, NKJV
2. Jesus was God **M**ade **M**anPhil. 2:6-8, HCSB

*Who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be used for His own advantage. Instead He emptied Himself…taking on the likeness of men…*

1. **The Child in the Crib (*manger*)** **Lk. 2:12, NRSV**
2. The **S**hepherds: Luke 2:8

*There were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.*

1. The **S**ign given to the **S**hepherds *– a Child in the Manger*!Lk. 2:12, NRSV
2. *This will be a sign for you: you will find a Child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.*
3. *So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Child lying in the manger.* Lk. 2:16, NRSV
4. **The Child and His Cross**
5. His Growth unto **M**aturity – *For he shall grow up* Isa. 53:2-3

*when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men…*

1. He was *a* ***M****an of sorrows, and acquainted with grief…he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

*He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* Phil. 2:8

1. **The Child and His Crown**
2. He was **B**orn to be King: Jn. 18:37
3. *Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king.*

*To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.*

1. *When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea…behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have…come to worship Him.* Mt. 2:1, 2
2. Thus, He **B**ecame King when He completed His Mission:

*…when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.* Heb. 1:3

**And this Child is Coming again** ***as KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS***, **Rev. 19:16**

*The Prince of Peace on earth is found, The child is born, the son is giv’n;*

 *Tell it to all the nations round, Jehovah is come down from Heav’n!* Charles Wesley

**REFLECTIONS FOR THE WEEK R. 776**

***Are we allowed to say Merry Christmas anymore?***

1. This is the title in an article that appeared in

<https://this.deakin.edu.au/society/are-we-allowed-to-say-merry-christmas-anymore>

It goes on to say:

*We wish you a Merry Christmas. Or do we? As the year rapidly comes to a close and the deadline to bake a Christmas pudding has long passed, the words Merry Christmas have become laced with controversy.*

*Consider [this headline from the Sunshine Daily](https://www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au/news/no-christ-in-christmas-next-school-jesus-ban-spark/3205543/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank): ‘No Christ in Christmas Next? School Jesus ban sparks fury’. The article covers a Queensland education department report that warns students in religious instruction classes against ‘evangelising’ to other pupils. The examples of evangelising included exchanging Christmas cards, referring to Jesus’s birth and making Christmas tree decorations.*

*The world’s biggest brands like [Starbucks](http://fortune.com/2016/11/04/starbucks-cup-red-controversy-christmas/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) and [Tesco](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/nov/13/threats-boycott-tesco-muslim-family-christmas-ad%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) are eschewing Christmas greetings in favour of more inclusive messages like ‘[everyone’s welcome](https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/tesco-everyones-welcome-bartle-bogle-hegarty/1449445%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)’. And the ‘Happy Holidays’ or ‘War in Christmas’ debate even hit the 2016 US Presidential election when the then candidate Donald Trump declared at a rally: ‘I told my first crowd in Wisconsin that we are going to come back here some day and we are going to say “Merry Christmas” again,’ he said. ‘Merry Christmas. So, Merry Christmas everyone. Happy New Year, but Merry Christmas.’*

*The debate around Christmas greetings reflects our increasingly pluralistic society. But is this trend a response to growing sensitivity for other cultures, a growing disinterest in organised religion or a culture war between liberals and conservatives?*

*According to Deakin lecturer in Politics and Policy, Dr Maria Rae, there’s evidence that supports the case for both a growing acceptance of different cultures as well as the use of Christmas as a ‘political tool’ by government and media. The latest ABS Census shows Christianity remains the most common religion, Dr Rae explains, but also evidences how Australia is becoming more diverse, and more people are identifying as non-religious.*

We do not need to go far into the southern atmosphere or to the western world to find this aggressive antagonism against the Christmas greeting. Right at our door step we have religious leaders forbidding their adherents to greet Christians “Merry Christmas” if the *Christmas* annotation has any association with Christianity. In other words, the world wants the “Christmas” Celebrations with its merry-making, fun and frolicking, drinking and dancing but without the Christ in CHRISTmas – therefore, “axe” (X) CHRIST out of CHRISTMAS to have “X-mas” –

and its celebration will be well-accepted, so long as it is not linked to the Christ of Christians.

In the first place, do true Christians celebrate and associate the Biblical Christmas with the way it is celebrated today, as we see in recent years – with Christmas parties, Santa Claus and his reindeer, Christmas trees and their yuletide logs with stockings to boot, etc. etc.? Is this, what Christmas is? Is this the reason for Christmas? Is it not time for Christians to return to the true reason for the season (if we may call it so)? Is Christmas all about merry-making?

What must Christians do to put CHRIST back in CHRISTmas this season?

What would you personally do to pass on the CHRISTmas message –

**Luke 2:10-11**
***F****ear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*

***F****or unto you is born this day in the city of David* ***a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord***.

 **REFLECT**

1. Today many schools in the so-called Christian world prohibit the mention of Christ in their schools (see #1 above) - *Consider this headline from the Sunshine Daily: ‘No Christ in Christmas Next? School Jesus ban sparks fury’…The examples of evangelising included exchanging Christmas*

*cards, referring to Jesus’s birth and making Christmas tree decorations.*

Consider also this Headline in [*https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/brunei-cancels-christmas-sultan-warns-those-celebrating-could-face-up-to-five-years-in-jail-a6782561.html*](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/brunei-cancels-christmas-sultan-warns-those-celebrating-could-face-up-to-five-years-in-jail-a6782561.html) *-*

Brunei bans Christmas: Sultan warns those celebrating could face up to five years in jail

**Points To Ponder:** Why is there Fear of the CHRISTmas message which says:

***Fear not****: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*

**REFLECT**

**My Wife and I take this Opportunity and Occasion to wish all Prayer-Partners**

**AN ADVANCED BLESSED AND JOYFUL CHRISTMAS**

**AND A BOUNTIFUL NEW YEAR.**