

Celebrating Christmas According to Scripture

When I think of the meaning of Christmas, the word Advent comes into focus. Each year, beginning four Sundays preceding Christmas Day, I celebrate afresh the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

My joy is renewed as I reflect on the scriptural basis for observing and celebration during the Christmas Season. I am in awe when I think about the fact that the Prophet Isaiah saw the coming of the glory of the Lord 700 years before the manifestation or fulfillment of the Prophecy on “Bethlehem morning”.

It is written in Isaiah 9:6 **“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given”**. It is significant that the present tense is used in Isaiah’s prophecy. The significance is that God’s Word was spoken. He spoke from eternity into time and the natural manifestation occurred at the appointed time. The fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy is recorded in Matthew 1:22-23 where it is written, **“Now all this was done, that is might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying; behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us.”**

To know the true meaning of Christmas is to understand the basis of Jesus’ coming, the purpose of His coming and the impact of His coming. The meaning of Christmas is reflected in the coming of light by the Word. In my earlier reference to the advent and Isaiah’s prophecy, I referred to Jesus’ coming. My reference to light is based on the gospel of John 1:4-5 where it is written that **“In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”**

The purpose for Jesus’ coming was to **“fulfill the law and the prophets”** (Matthew 5:17) – and to **“seek and save the lost”**. (Luke 19:10) the impact of His coming is the bringing of joy, peace and liberty to a world that was under the power of darkness with no means of deliverance. (Colossians 1:13)

The third segment of the meaning of Christmas is the coming of the Word in the Flesh, (John 1:14), **“And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth”**.

When we come to know the meaning of Christmas based on the scripture and practice what we know, the giving of gifts will be based on the unconditional love that God showed towards us in the giving of His son. Additionally, we will be able to sing with the new meaning **“Joy to the world, the Lord is come!”**

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Written in 2001