

**General Topics :: FIND HIM LAYING IN THE MANGR****FIND HIM LAYING IN THE MANGR - posted by greenasee (), on: 2006/12/14 7:29**

Let me put a heading for my small message. FIND HIM LAYING IN THE MANGER. LUKE 2:8-20.

Santa clause is back again. The very breeze of this season brings joy. All changes in nature the season unfolds add to the party. Advent of December is such. Hymns like "O come, All ye faithful, joyful and Triumphant, Silent night Holy night, all is calm, all is bright, and Joy to the world". Stir up the otherwise frozen souls. It is a time to celebrate and there is every reason to celebrate this God's gift in Jesus. Every one young or old literate or illiterate, rich or poor, has every reason to celebrate. A smile on every face forces heavens down. It is a time of fun and celebration.

BY the way, can all celebrate this season as I call them to now? For those to whom life is a struggle seasons like come and go and nothing matters to them except their struggle to have their ends meet.

On the street of our area while walking back to the exit point my friend, walking with me had to come across a sack bag. When he was to cross over, he saw the sack moving with life. Astonished, he asked me what it is. Image of God under a sackcloth, I responded. For the one with no cloth except that sack picked up from cloak-room what does this Christmas mean? What is Christmas to him?

I remember joining some youngsters when they go for carols. I in my memory still see them dancing, dancing with full of life though they had no livelihood. They used to go delighted as if they were in streets. It has an uncontainable joy bubbling and bursting out in the dances of this young but hungry bodies. These were school drops outs. No employment, no proper clothing freezing winds. Tensing stars up their. Bone-breaking coldness. Hungry stomach. And uncertain tomorrow. Yet they celebrate.

To such belongs Christmas. Let us look of the first ever Christmas as recorded by gospel writers.

The first Christmas was celebrated by three victims of the society. They were- Mary, Joseph and little Jesus. It was a family carrying the cross of poverty. It was celebrated by Joseph who broke his body with hammer all through the day burning himself under the merciless sun just to make ends meet. It was celebrated by a Mary the finance of this poor carpenter, her self-carrying the cross of shame for having become pregnant before marriage. Another celebrant and participant was that little child, Jesus, born with the stigma of being an illegitimate child. It was these who celebrated the first ever Christmas in history.

I see many Joseph even today in our area where one's labour are always extracted but one's personal dignity is never respected. I seeing one such Joseph such in a landowning Pastor's farm with his fingers badly bruised. With his fingers wounded by the pastor bull he came to pastor and asked for permission to go to hospital. Cold-blooded pastor curiously enquired if anything had happened to his bull's leg. He continued, "Go, but no wage for today". I know many such Joseph in my land.

Mary's plight was worst. There was none to understand her. She was surrounded by suspicious looks from all around. Overnight she turned out to be the talk of the town. Here is a one becoming mother before her marriage. If she were to be a member of your church you would ensure by ex-communicating her lest she brings disgrace to the image of your church. No church would find her fit for ministry. She was too young to carry such a stigma. The mocking smiles, probing eyes and dirty looks of people in her community would have had her killed every day of her life.

And imagine this little baby there in the manger wrapped in those bands of cloth. He was born in a society where even a little kid under two is considered a threat to the ruler. He was born in poverty and malnutrition. This little Jesus only inheritance was poverty from his father and shame from his mother. He had to live with these for around thirty-three and half years. This cross inherited at his birth was heavier than one given to him for few hours on that Good Friday. Yet this little Jesus smiled. And that poor family celebrated.

Manger epitomizes pain and poverty. Yet in the hut, there in the manger there, there was a celebration. It is there a liberator is born.

Christmas has come. It is not a question of what and who. It is the matter of where. Where is that Jesus born? It is here in our pain, in our loneliness and in your insecurity and anxiety, a saviour is born. You have every reason to celebrate. Celebrate for the Saviour is born.

Pastor. Yesuratnam