

dec 24

today is christmas eve. i think we all feel the excitement in the air. it's almost as if our Savior was being born again. you know, He is in a way. every time someone opens their heart up to Him and all the possibilities, He is really being born again in their hearts.

i think that's what it's really all about. do we not all seek to propagate and have an inheritance in our image and after our likeness? how often does someone else remark about how similar your offspring is to you? the Father in heaven wants the same thing. as we see the Father in Jesus, He wants to see the Son in all of us.

the way for that to happen is for His first born to be born again and again in the hearts of those who let Him in. as we continue our walk with Him, we are all being transformed into His image. what a precious Lord we serve. i pray that others will see Jesus in you today.

By Jewell Hill

Long ago, Issachar, an innkeeper in Bethlehem found it necessary to travel to the city of Jerusalem on business for his inn.

Upon his arrival there, he discovered the city was in a tremendous uproar. There was much talk—much excitement. Everyone was hurrying about.

Issachar inquired what was happening and was told that the Romans were crucifying three men. The one about whom most talk was being made was named Jesus.

He was a different sort of man. He had been going about the countryside teaching and preaching. And he had many followers. It was said that he healed people, too. Others were saying that he was the promised Messiah, long promised to redeem all.

Issachar finished his business for the day. Having a few more hours of daylight, he went to the hill called Golgotha. He was interested to see why all the people were so excited and wanted especially to see this man whose name was Jesus.

And there on the hill were three men on three crosses being crucified by the Romans.

The man in the center was Jesus, they said, but strangely there were no curses on his lips. He did not seem angry or resentful toward those who were killing him. He was rather quiet, but when he said anything it appeared to be more like a prayer than talking. It was such a strange sight.

There were a small group of people about the foot of the cross of Jesus and Issachar asked who they were. Someone said that one of the women was his mother, and her name was Mary. There was something about this Mary that caught Issachar's attention; maybe her eyes. She seemed familiar to him in a remote sort of way.

Issachar turned to one of at his side and said, "Tell me more about this man in the center cross_ "

The bystander said his name was Jesus and that he was from Nazareth, but he was born in Bethlehem.

"Bethlehem?" questioned Issachar.

"Yes, Bethlehem," came the reply.

"When was he born, do you know?" Issachar asked.

"Let me see," said the bystander, "it was during the enrollment of Caesar Augustus, and that would make him thirty-two or thirty-three years old.'

Suddenly Issachar did remember why this Mary woman looked familiar to him. For this woman came to his inn one night these many years ago! She and her husband. She was so tired looking and weary of traveling; yet her eyes were filled of love even when he said, he had no room. His inn was filled with people who had come to Bethlehem for the enrollment. He did the best he could when he saw May was heavy with child; he told them they could have the stable and they went there. He had heard a boy child had been born to Mary that night. He remembered that some shepherds came to the stable. He thought they were relatives. Some of his guests at the inn said there was beautiful singing in the stable that night.

Issachar stayed at Golgotha longer than he had planned and the sun was already low in the sky as he returned to the city to take his lodging for the night.

But Issachar could not sleep. The thought kept coming to him over and over – They had knocked at his door. He had not let them in.

The next morning found Issachar in the temple praying for forgiveness for his being “too busy.” And a peace came to him as he determined to be the most considerate innkeeper in Bethlehem from then on.

The third morning Issachar awoke early, for he was eager to be on his way home to tell his family what he had seen. He was about to ready to set out for home when he heard the news.

It was whispered news. It was spreading with lightning speed. This man Jesus was no longer dead. He was alive! Issachar couldn't believe it. It didn't seem possible for he had seen Him hanging on the cross just two days before, and yet that is what they said.

It was reported that some of His friends went out very early in the morning, about the break of day, and when they came into the garden to the tomb, they found the stone had been rolled away. They said two angels were there. The angels told them He was alive. He had risen from the dead as he said he would.

They had hurried back to the city, then two of his followers, Peter and John, ran all the way to the garden to see – and it was true. He had arisen! And they saw Him. He was alive! It was true!

“He is risen! He is risen! He is alive!” Issachar took

the good news back to Bethlehem to his family and friends at the inn.

Issachar felt he must add something else to the good. "There is something else I must tell you – I did not let Him in when He came to my inn, I did not know He was coming. If only someone had told me Joseph and Mary were coming to Bethlehem, that here the Christ Child would be born, that angels would announce His coming. But I did not know –"

And yet, this is always the way it is. We never know when the great possibilities of God stand at our own door. We see only a stranger and we say, "There is no room for you," or "I am too busy."

Pray that He will come to you. Perhaps on this very day. Look for him. Wait for Him. Do not be too busy or say "I have no room."

are you too busy today? one does not have to be really bad to miss their opportunity. remember the parable about the sower? "and as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. but when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. and some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. but others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." matt 13:4-8.

there are many ways to miss Him when He comes. i beg you, please don't let anything in life detract you from you appointed goal ... to be like Him.

linda