

that our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world 2,000 years ago, and it will be at such an hour that Jesus Christ comes back to this earth.

The angel on that first Christmas night said, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."¹ If we believe this, then life takes on a new dimension for us. This means that God has a plan in history and that God has a plan for our lives.

One passage of Scripture that I often turn to, not only during the Christmas season but at other times in the year, is Isaiah 9:2: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light

Isaiah, declared with certainty the calamity which was soon to fall upon Judah as a judgment with evil and her departure from God called forth predictions of dreadful disaster. Isaiah proclaimed with accuracy the Assyrian invasion. All around him were clouds of wrath and desolating darkness."²

darkness

But he also saw far away upon the horizon a rift in the clouds and a clear light shining from heaven. He said that while the people were walking in darkness, a light also shined upon them. He looked down through time and talked about the "garments rolled in blood."³ Then

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King would come and set up his Kingdom. God's covenant with David will stand, and a King shall some day sit upon that throne. Centuries later when Jesus asked the religious leaders this question, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They [said to] him, The son of David."⁷

He answered back, "How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?"⁸

bewildered

As often happened, the religious leaders were baffled and bewildered and silenced. They were not "able to answer him a word."⁹ *What is the answer to the question?*

The Child born establishes the fact of Christ's humanity. The Son given establishes the fact of his deity. Jesus Christ is the God-man. The Child born and the Son given is called "Wonderful," because he is wonderful. He was a Child, born with reference to his human nature, born of the virgin. But he is also a Son, given with reference to the fact that God has given his own Son.

The government is to be placed upon the shoulder of the Infinite Man, not a finite man. We see in the Child born an infant, but also the Son given. And so we see in the manger at Bethlehem an Infinite Infant.

The Bible says, "Being in the form of God, [Christ] thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."¹⁰ Here is the New Testament counterpart of the Old Testament revelation of the Messiah. This is the Child born and the Son given.

"But made himself of no reputation . . ."¹¹ That little word "but" is of tremendous significance for it introduces us to the fact of our Lord Jesus Christ. The personal pronoun "himself" is emphatic, bringing before us the voluntary aspect of Jesus' condescension: "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham."¹²

Christ swept through the realm of angels to lay hold upon the nature of man.

He "took upon [himself] the form of a servant."¹¹ When Paul says

Then the Bible teaches that "he became poor."¹⁷ He shared in man's hunger, thirst, weariness and pain. In this way he gave evidence to the reality of his manhood.

The Bible says, "He was crucified through weakness."¹⁸ But this weakness must not be thought of as implying any incapacity such as ours when we are unable to withstand the onslaught of death. His was the weakness of a voluntarily accepted capacity for suffering. Our weakness is a condition of our frailty. His weakness was voluntarily taken when he came to that cradle in Bethlehem.

"Unto us a child is born . . ." He was not born according to the laws and processes of natural generations. The nature of his birth was supernatural. *The Child born was born to a virgin, according to Isaiah: "A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."*¹⁹

"Unto us a son is given . . ."⁴ Because he was the God-man, he was able to bear our sins on the cross, and God raised him from the dead as an indication that he had accepted his atoning work on the cross. He was the only One in the whole universe who was qualified to bear our sins, and he did it voluntarily.

assurance

A Child was born and a Son was given for our salvation. We have the assurance that Jesus Christ is not only the Son of man, but he is the Son of God. God has accepted what he did on the cross for our salvation. We trust in him and him alone for our forgiveness and for eternal life.

Are you in a place of difficulty? Are you on a sickbed in a hospital or at home? Are you in a place of discouragement? Have you lost a loved one? Are you in a time of depression today? With your trust and faith placed in Jesus Christ you can appropriate the words in Scriptures: "Fear not: for I am with thee."²⁰

You can apply these words to your heart at this very moment, because for you a Child has been born and a Son has been given. ☉

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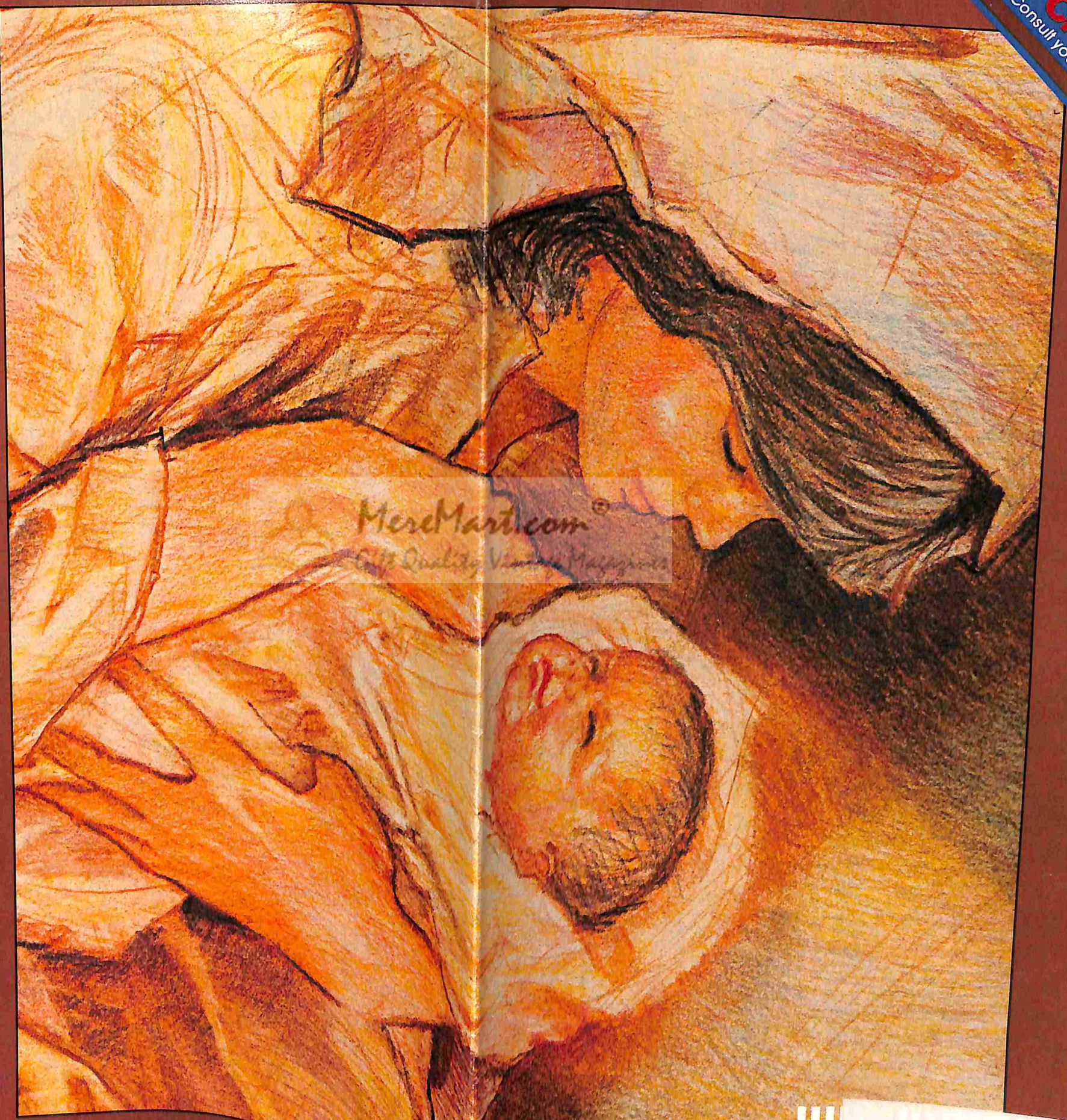
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DECISION

December 1981



A Child Is Born... A Son Is Given

by Billy Graham

What is there to be merry about this Christmas? With wars abroad, terrorism stalking countries, crime at an all-time high, marriages breaking, drug usage increasing, a high inflation rate, no wonder some people are questioning whether we should say, "Merry Christmas!" Yet it was in just such an hour

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