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EARTH'S RIGHTFUL GOVERNOR

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isaiah 9: 6.

WITH the coming of the Christmas season all Christians have something to say about Jesus. That is supposed to be the time of his birth. Most of the professed Christians at this season of the year give the three wise men wide advertisement by highly colored cards picturing them, by cantatas, and by divers and numerous other ways. Satan has ever been on the alert to see to it that he and his agents are to the fore and get plenty of advertisement. By this means he turns the minds of the people away from the Lord. He has deceived most of the people about Christmas as well as about many other things. Students of the Bible know that the wise men were not representatives of the Lord but were tools of Satan, used by him to carry out his conspiracy.

² The Scriptural account of the wise men is set forth in Matthew 2: 1-16. This record, together with corroborative facts, shows that the vision had by the wise men, and the light which they followed, were approximately two years after the birth of the child Jesus. Satan seized upon the incident and has worked it over-time for the purpose of turning the minds of men away from God and his beloved Son and from the true facts concerning the birth of the Savior and God's great plan of redemption.

³ Students of the Scriptures also know that the birth of the babe Jesus did not take place in December; yet because of the general belief upon this point by most people, it seems to be an appropriate time to speak the truth concerning his birth and the purpose thereof. The Scriptural testimony, supported by extraneous facts, shows that the birth of Jesus occurred approximately October 1st. The event is so important that it is always appropriate to call it to the minds of the people, regardless of the date.

HIS LOVING KINDNESS

⁴ It is written: "God is love." Few of earth's creatures have ever understood the full import of that statement. Love is the perfect expression of unselfish-

ness. God's love for man has been made manifest in many marked ways. The Scriptures were written for the benefit of men who love God, that all such may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3: 17) God desires his people to learn and to have their hearts comforted by a knowledge of his plan, and for this reason he caused the Scriptures to be written. (Romans 15: 4) Unselfishness prompted the Lord God to do this. The making of the record is no profit to him. He did it for man's benefit. After having written his Word he then makes man acquainted with it, and permits the light from his countenance to shine upon that Word with increased brilliancy for man's benefit as man makes progress in the narrow way.—Prov. 4: 18.

⁵ In the early days of man's experience God provided that his beloved Son should eventually come to earth and be born of a woman in order to become man's Redeemer. It has been his loving kindness for man that has caused God to unfold his purposes gradually and to show man the outworking of his plan to redeem and bless him. As man comes to understand the Word of the Lord his faith in God increases and his desire also grows to be unselfish and to be devoted wholly to the Lord.

A PROPHECY

⁶ When Isaiah wrote the above text, "Unto us a child is born," the Child had not been born. The words he wrote applied to a future time; hence these words constituted a prophecy. Isaiah could not understand the full meaning or import of his own words, nor could any man prior to the giving of the holy spirit. Isaiah did not know about that. Why then did the prophet say, "Unto us a child is born"? Whom did he mean by "us"? Primarily he meant the natural house of Israel, which house constituted God's chosen people, whom God had selected and set aside for his own purposes. Israel after the flesh foreshadowed spiritual Israel, and the prophecy had more particular reference to the latter.

⁷ Certain faithful Jews before the birth of the Child

his purpose, Satan and his instrument Herod were willing to destroy all the babes in and about Bethlehem, with the hope of destroying the one that was to be the King and Savior of the world. Jehovah saved the babe Jesus from this slaughter by directing his mother and Joseph to take the young child and flee into Egypt, which they did.—Matthew 2:13.

¹⁵⁷We would not be justified, then, in presuming that God was using these devil worshipers, the “wise men”—“Magians,” Magicians—for the purpose of being his witnesses to the birth of his beloved Son. But on the contrary, the facts show that it pleased him to reveal this great truth to the shepherds and to use them as his witnesses.—Luke 2:8-18.

¹⁵⁸There is nothing whatsoever in the account of this experience of the wise men to indicate that their mission was in any wise beneficial to mankind; but the most charitable view we can take of it is that they were dupes of a deep-laid plot by Satan, the arch conspirator, to destroy the seed of promise; and that Jehovah let the conspiracy proceed to the point where it would fully demonstrate the wickedness on the part of Satan and his instrument, and then demonstrated his great protecting power. Without a doubt Satan has attempted to deceive and has deceived multitudes of honest people into believing that these wise men were the witnesses of the Lord, and hid from their minds the fact that they in truth and in fact represented Satan.

¹⁵⁹All the wicked persecution that came upon the Lord Jesus afterward, and upon his followers to this day, has been because of the influence of Satan the devil. And yet at all times the Lord has protected his own at the very critical moment, just as promised: “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear [reverence] him, and delivereth them”.—Psalm 34:7.