

## COSMIC COMBAT

### REVELATION 12:1-13:1

“A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.

“Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!’

“And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.

“And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.”<sup>1</sup>

**T**here is one view of Christmas none of us have ever seen on a Christmas card. Perhaps this is because no artist, not even William Blake, could do it justice. In **REVELATION 12**, the Word of God graphically pulls back the curtain separating the present from the past giving us a glimpse of Christmas as it looked from somewhere far beyond Andromeda. It is Christmas from God’s viewpoint. Admittedly, the Book of Revelation is a peculiar place to find an Advent text. Few people imagine that the book speaks of the birth of the Saviour. However, even a casual reading of the Book does reveal that the Book addresses the birth of the Master, even as it points to God’s purpose in sending His Son.

---

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from **The Holy Bible, English Standard Version**, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

The account in the text before us differs radically from the birth stories in the Gospels. John fails to mention shepherds, wise men or an infanticidal king; rather, his account pictures a dragon leading a ferocious struggle in heaven. A woman clothed with the sun and wearing a crown of twelve stars cries out in pain as she is about to give birth. Suddenly, an enormous red dragon enters the picture, his tail sweeping a third of the stars out of the sky and flinging them to the earth. He crouches hungrily before the woman, eager to devour her child the moment it is born. At the last second, the infant is snatched away to safety, the woman flees into a desert, and all-out cosmic war begins.

Revelation is a strange book by any measure, and we need to understand its style to make sense of this extraordinary scene presented in the text before us. In daily life, two parallel histories occur simultaneously—one on earth and one in heaven. Revelation, however, views them together, allowing a look behind the scenes at the cosmic impact of what happens on earth. On earth, a baby was born; a king learned of that birth and ordered an attempt on the child's life. In heaven, the Great Invasion had begun—a daring raid by the ruler of the forces of good into the universe's seat of evil. John Milton expressed this point of view majestically in "Paradise Lost" and again in "Paradise Regained," poems that make heaven and hell the central focus, and Earth a mere battle ground for these cosmic clashes.

The battle began when the cherub assigned to attend the throne of God rebelled against the LORD. Filled with pride, that guardian angel incited rebellion that resulted in one-third of the angels of God being cast out of Heaven. That rebel angel would become known as "Satan," from the Hebrew term meaning "Adversary" or "Enemy," and hence, by implication, "Slanderer." Now, the war rages unseen, though we see the continuing impact of devilish activity and influence. One of the central battles of this cosmic war was fought over a period of perhaps thirty-three years, beginning with the birth of the Master and concluding with His death. Superficially, it appeared that evil had won, conquering righteousness. Though the war continues to this day, the outcome of the battle was fixed when the Master rose from the tomb, conquering death and bringing life to all who look to Him. The final skirmish lies at least one thousand seven years in the future, and the outcome of that engagement is certain.

**IDENTIFYING THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE DRAMA** — In the text before us are a woman, a dragon and a child. The woman is said to be a "great sign." Thus, we know that the woman is not to be understood as literal. Though many have accepted that the woman speaks of Mary, the mother of Jesus our Lord, the fact that she is said to be a "great sign" precludes such a position. Throughout history, other commentators have argued that the woman represents "the church," or even a system of teaching. There have even been women who have arrogated to themselves the identity of this woman.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the woman is to be understood as a sign. Moreover, the sign John saw is "in heaven," but it portrays a reality on earth. We know this to be the case because shortly we will see the woman persecuted by the dragon during the Great Tribulation [REVELATION 12:13-17].

If we will understand the meaning of the great sign that John gives, we should look to Scripture, discovering if any similar scenes have been presented elsewhere in the Word of God. The woman John describes is "clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." Moreover, when she first appears, she is pregnant. The fact that she is "crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth" informs us that she is at term.

---

<sup>2</sup> E.g., Mary Baker Patterson Glover Eddy, the founder of Christian Science; Joanna Southcott, a self-described English prophetess who said she would give birth to the coming Messiah.

In order to positively identify what John is picturing, study the clues that he provides. First, the description of the woman is reminiscent of a dream that Joseph related to his father. That dream is presented in **GENESIS 37:9, 10**. Joseph “dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, ‘Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me.’ But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, ‘What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?’” In the dream he told his father, Joseph saw the sun and the moon, which are identified as his father, Jacob, and his mother, Rachel, together with eleven stars, which are interpreted as his brothers.

John’s vision, however, speaks of twelve stars, linking the woman who serves as the great sign, to the twelve tribes of Israel or the twelve sons of Jacob, the patriarchs of Israel. This woman gives birth to a child who is destined “to rule all the nations with a rod of iron” [**REVELATION 12:5**]. The child can be none other than the Messiah, who as promised in Scripture was from the nation of Israel.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the fact that this woman will be persecuted during the last half of the Tribulation<sup>4</sup> tells us that she is Israel, and neither the church nor a mortal. Therefore, we may be certain that the woman represents the nation Israel—the matrix and source of God’s Messiah.

There are other passages in Scripture that support this position. For instance, we are told that Jesus the Messiah was from the race of the patriarchs [**ROMANS 9:5**] and that Messiah was born out of Israel [see **ROMANS 1:3**]. Moreover, when Isaiah presents the great prophecy concerning the coming Messiah, it is Israel whom he portrays as singing:

“For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given;  
and the government shall be upon His shoulder,  
and His Name shall be called  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

[**ISAIAH 9:6**]

The nation of Israel is frequently compared to a woman in Scripture,<sup>5</sup> and even as a woman travelling in birth to bring forth the Messiah. Among the Scriptures are such well-known passages as that found in Micah’s prophecy.

“But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for Me  
one who is to be Ruler in Israel,  
whose coming forth is from of old,  
from ancient days.”

[**MICAH 5:2**]

Again, writing of Israel, Isaiah pens these words:

---

<sup>3</sup> **MATTHEW 1:1-25; PSALM 2:8, 9; REVELATION 2:27; 19:15**

<sup>4</sup> Verses **6, 13-17**

<sup>5</sup> **ISAIAH 54:5; JEREMIAH 3:6-10; MICAH 4:10; 5:3**

“Before she was in labour  
she gave birth;  
before her pain came upon her  
she delivered a son.”

[ISAIAH 66:7].

The woman whom John described is presented in glorious terms: the reflected glory of the Old Covenant is compared to the reflected light of the moon, and the brilliance of the New Covenant in which she shall appear before God is compared to the sun. All that we have as Christians found its origin in the nation Israel. That nation shall yet be blessed of God, appearing in the glory of her Messiah, even our Master, Jesus the Lord.

John presents a second sign, which he identifies as “a great red dragon.” That John is speaking of the devil should not be in question since he pointedly identifies this dragon in our text. “And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to earth, and his angels were thrown down with him” [REVELATION 12:9].

John describes this dragon in grotesque detail, concluding with the information that this being is crowned with diadems. These are not the victors’ crowns such as the redeemed will wear before the throne of God [REVELATION 4:4]; these are the crowns of a ruler, indicating that the dragon reigns. The dragon is said to have seven heads and ten horns, and is crowned with seven diadems. John’s description is similar to one given in Daniel’s prophecies, where we read: “After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things... As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings” [DANIEL 7:7, 8, 24]. The “little horn” that Daniel describes is identified with the world ruler who is to be raised up during the days of the Great Tribulation and who will reign over a revived Roman Empire.

Though his power to reign is usurped, there is no question but that Satan now reigns over the earth. Moreover, in the person of the Antichrist he shall reign over all the earth in the form of a revived Roman Empire one day. Nevertheless, at this time the devil is called “the prince of the power of the air” [EPHESIANS 2:2] and “the god of this world” [2 CORINTHIANS 4:4]. No less personage than the Master identifies Satan as “the ruler of this world” [JOHN 12:31; 14:30].

Satan masks his true identity today, appearing as “an angel of light” [2 CORINTHIANS 11:4]. However, John sees him in his native form—the true nature that exposes what he has become. He is red, indicating his murderous nature, as the Master stated when confronting the religious leaders of the nation, Satan “was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him” [JOHN 8:44]. He is the ruler of this fallen world, reigning with ruthless power to blind the eyes of those who are lost. He shall ultimately consolidate all power, even compelling the world to worship his masterpiece, that individual whom the Word of God identifies as the Antichrist. He is opposed to all things righteous and godly, seeking glory for himself and seizing the unwary through deception, as he did our first mother.

We learn that “his tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to earth.” The stars describe fallen angels who revolted with Satan at his fall which many Bible expositors, myself included, believe is described in **ISAIAH 14:12-17** and **EZEKIEL 28:12-14**. Angelic beings, and Satan himself, are referred to as “stars” throughout the Word of God.<sup>6</sup> In the context of what John shortly writes, it seems obvious that the stars represent one-third of the angels who joined Satan in rebellion against the Living God, becoming his chief emissaries in the ongoing assault against Israel and against God’s holy purposes.

We read a strange thing about this wicked personage. “War arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him” [**REVELATION 12:7-9**].

The woman? Israel. The dragon? Satan. There remains the “male child.” The identity of this child is what makes this a Christmas text, for the child is identified as the Christ. Echoing the Second Psalm, John writes that He is destined “to rule all the nations with a rod of iron.”

“Why do the nations rage  
and the peoples plot in vain?  
The kings of the earth set themselves,  
and the rulers take counsel together,  
against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,  
‘Let us burst their bonds apart  
and cast away their cords from us.’

“I will tell of the decree:  
The LORD said to me, ‘You are my Son;  
today I have begotten you.  
Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,  
and the ends of the earth your possession.  
You shall break them with a rod of iron  
and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.’”

[**PSALM 2:1-3, 7-9**]

Clearly, the Psalm speaks of the Christ, for when He returns to reign over the earth during the Millennium we read of Him, “He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron” [**REVELATION 19:13-15a**].

Moreover, John sees the birth of this child as integral with His ascension and session, for he sees the child “caught up to God and His throne.” John sees history contracted as the continuum it truly is. We are prone to think of history as a series of events—disjointed and unconnected, never fully understanding that it is a continuum. God, through John’s words, alerts us to the fact that events are never truly independent, distinct and unrelated; rather, there is an unseen conflict behind the physical world that is continually unfolding in time.

---

<sup>6</sup> See **JOB 38:7a**; **ISAIAH 14:12**; **LUKE 10:18**; **REVELATION 9:1**

**THE ONGOING ATTACK ON RIGHTEOUSNESS** — “The dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it” [REVELATION 12:4b]. Having looked back to Satan’s rebellion and fall, the scene sweeps forward thousands of years to the time of the birth of the Master. Hundreds of years are skipped, though the Word records a continuing effort by the wicked one to destroy the prophesied Seed of the Woman.

God promised a deliverer—the Seed of the Woman—who would crush the serpent’s head [GENESIS 3:15]. From that time, the devil sought to circumvent the prophecy and to destroy the lineage of God’s Anointed One. GENESIS 6 records Satan’s attempted to infiltrate the human race by corrupting humanity until it was utterly wicked. GENESIS 10 and 11 details the satanic effort to alter the divine promise through instituting the Babylonian politico-religious system founded on the mother-child cult under Nimrod and Semiramus.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the remainder of the Old Testament, we read of a continuing attack against Israel as Satan attempts to defeat God’s purpose using Pharaoh, Amalek, Balak, Balaam and so forth. Finally, after the birth of the Messiah, Herod was prompted to destroy the infant Jesus by slaughtering all boys two years and under in the region about Bethlehem [see MATTHEW 2:13-18].

I often heard a cautionary statement from my father which I believe it to be true. “Son,” he often said, “the day our nation turns its back on Israel is the day we are finished.” On the other hand, one of his brothers held membership in a fraternal organisation. This group, and consequently, my uncle, held precisely the opposite view. My uncle often railed against Israel and spoke vehemently against Jews as the source of almost all world problems—including acne. The question of which of these two views is correct is settled for the child of God. God promised Abram, “I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonours you I will curse” [GENESIS 12:3].

This promise was iterated when Isaac pronounced a blessing on Jacob.

“Cursed be everyone who curses you,  
and blessed be everyone who blesses you!”

[GENESIS 27:29b]

When Balaam was hired to curse Israel, God intervened to ensure that he pronounced a blessing. The blessing he pronounced echoed that which God had given Abram:

“Blessed are those who bless you,  
and cursed are those who curse you.”

[NUMBERS 24:9b]

Despite the propensity exhibited by leaders from multiple nations to condemn Israel whilst promoting the welfare of her enemies, despite the proclivity and the predisposition of otherwise educated people to curse the Jewish people, despite the predilection among those who should know better who express animosity toward Israel and toward the Jewish people, we must know that hatred toward God’s chosen people invites divine wrath. God commands those who would please Him to “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem,” before appending this promise for those who do pray for Israel: “May they be secure who love you” [PSALM 122:6]! Implicit in that promise is the thought that those who do not love the Jewish people will neither know security nor prosper.

---

<sup>7</sup> For historical details, see Alexander Hislop, **The Two Babylons** (Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., Neptune, NJ 1916)

Those who curse Israel, those who hate Jews, reveal a motivation that can only be described as devilish. Hatred toward the Jews demonstrates that such individuals are not under the control of the Living God, but rather that they are controlled by the evil one. While one should not be surprised at witnessing nations that are under the control of the devil opposed to the welfare of Israel, it is astonishing to see the professed people of God voicing opposition to the Jewish nation. Though I have grown inured to liberal churches assailing Israel at every opportunity, it is shocking to witness evangelical churches actively attacking Jewish interests. The only conclusion I can draw is that it is one more sign that we are nearing the conclusion of this present age, and the Master is already weeding out the tares in preparation of His harvest.

The woman, Israel, flees “into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.” Satan failed to kill Christ, and his effort to defeat God’s purpose through the cross likewise failed. Therefore, he has turned his rage against Israel throughout this present age. However, after the people of God are removed from this earth—raptured into the presence of the Master—Satan will unleash unmitigated fury against the Jews during the second half of the Great Tribulation. This will be a time of the greatest anti-Semitism the world has ever witnessed. There will be horrific persecutions against the people of Israel, until God intervenes. For three and one half years—1,260 days—God will watch over His people, keeping them from annihilation, just as the Master promised [see **MATTHEW 24:6-24**].

**THE OUTCOME OF THE STORY** — The earth will be convulsed with wars and disquieting rumours circulating during this period of the Great Tribulation even as divine judgements are poured out on the inhabitants of the earth. What happens on the earth during that period is in no small measure the result of the unseen war that will be fought in heaven. **VERSES 7 through 17** describe that conflict in some detail, telling us why the persecution against Israel will be so intense and the reason behind what will be occurring on the earth.

Thrown out of heaven, putatively at the mid-point of the Tribulation period, Satan and his angels will assail Israel in a manner that has never been witnessed, nor ever shall be witnessed again. Though many people will turn to faith in the Son of God during that time, unlike this present day they will do so at the cost of their own comfort and even at the cost of their lives. Again, though the dragon slays vast multitudes of the followers of the Risen Saviour, they are actually conquerors. Listen to the exultation of all heaven. “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them” [**REVELATION 12:10-12a**]!

Those who endure throughout this period, demonstrating the reality of their faith, are called victors. These victors during the Tribulation period overcome “by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.” It should be evident that “the blood of the Lamb” points to the sacrifice of Christ the Lord, who poured out His life on Calvary for those who are willing to receive that sacrifice. Do you recall that word which Paul has delivered to all who receive it? “You, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with [Christ], having forgiven us all our trespasses, by cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him” [**COLOSSIANS 2:13-15**].

That message is quite similar to the word that is found in the Letter to Hebrew Christians. “Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people” [HEBREWS 2:14-17].

Through His death, Christ the Lord conquered the devil, freeing those who believe in Him from fear and from all condemnation. In a similar manner, those who hold true to their profession, especially during that Tribulation period, demonstrate God’s power to save because they do not love their lives so much as to recant their faith. John’s statement is that “they loved not their lives even unto death.” Thus, they demonstrate that they are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb of God, and the word of their testimony is that He lives.

There is only one means of salvation, and that is through faith in the Living Son of God. What is sometimes forgotten is that this faith is vibrant and living; it is not senescent and silent. Often it seems that people imagine they can be part of God’s secret service—but that is not possible. God will not permit His people to silently lurk in the shadows. Ever and always He draws us out. God’s Spirit lives in God’s redeemed people, prompting each Christian to provide “a reason for the hope that is in [us]” [see 1 PETER 3:15].

Whenever I draw a message to a conclusion, I turn most frequently to the words Paul wrote in his letter to Roman Christians. There, he stated, “Say the welcoming word to God—‘Jesus is my Master’—embracing, body and soul, God’s work of doing in us what he did in raising Jesus from the dead. That’s it. You’re not ‘doing’ anything; you’re simply calling out to God, trusting him to do it for you. That’s salvation. With your whole being you embrace God setting things right, and then you say it, right out loud: ‘God has set everything right between Him and me!’ Scripture reassures us, ‘No one who trusts God like this—heart and soul—will ever regret it.’ It’s exactly the same no matter what a person’s religious background may be: the same God for all of us, acting the same incredibly generous way to everyone who calls out for help. ‘Everyone who calls, “Help, God!” gets help”’ [ROMANS 10:9-13].<sup>8</sup>

The message of Christmas is the message of hope; it is a message that exudes confidence. It is not confidence in our abilities, nor is it hope that we will somehow benefit only in this life. If Christmas is solely defined by how I feel—by a warm, fuzzy feeling growing out of family tradition, or a glow because I gave generously to those whom I love, or even by a sense of satisfaction because I received things that I really want—it is hardly worth wasting our time. However, if we understand that Christmas points forward to the conquest of evil and the victory of righteousness, then the celebration is eminently worth our while.

From God’s point of view, Christmas revealed a great conflict what would require the death of His Son. A mad king thinking that he acted on his own initiative was a tool in the hands of the arch deceiver. A nation that had degenerated into hopeless sectarianism that deceived the leaders into despising anyone who failed their test for racial purity took little note of the war that was unleashed with the birth of a little child in a sheepcote. A great red dragon sought to destroy hope for all mankind by slaughtering innocent children and setting the stage for the death of the child lying in a manger. However, in that sacrifice lay the conquest of death and the genesis of hope. Do you have that hope? Have you received the greatest gift ever offered to any individual—the gift of life in God’s Beloved Son? Have you believed this message?

---

<sup>8</sup> Eugene H. Peterson, **The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language** (NavPress, Colorado Springs, CO 2002)



The most important truth that I can share with you during this Christmas season is that God offers life in His Son. I would never urge you to be religious, deceiving yourself by believing that you are safe because you attend church, because you say prayers, because you perform religious acts, or for any other reason save that you love Christ the Lord because He has saved you. If you have faith in Him, accepting that He died because of you and believing that He rose from the dead to make you right with God, God promises that you will be forgiven every sin and that you will be adopted into His family. This is a most wonderful gift that is freely offered to each individual.

The Apostle to the Gentiles powerfully presents this Good News when writing to the Christians in Corinth. Listen to **2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-6:3** from one of the newer translations of the Bible. "If anyone belongs to Christ, there is a new creation. The old things have gone; everything is made new! All this is from God. Through Christ, God made peace between us and Himself, and God gave us the work of telling everyone about the peace we can have with Him. God was in Christ, making peace between the world and Himself. In Christ, God did not hold the world guilty of its sins. And he gave us this message of peace. So we have been sent to speak for Christ. It is as if God is calling to you through us. We speak for Christ when we beg you to be at peace with God. Christ had no sin, but God made Him become sin so that in Christ we could become right with God.

"We are workers together with God, so we beg you: Do not let the grace that you received from God be for nothing. God says,

‘At the right time I heard your prayers.  
On the day of salvation I helped you.’

"I tell you that the ‘right time’ is now, and the ‘day of salvation’ is now.”<sup>9</sup>

Our prayer is that this will be a joyous Christmas for you. And it shall be a celebration filled with joy and peace and hope if you know Christ as Master of life. That is our prayer. Amen.

---

<sup>9</sup> **The Everyday Bible: New Century Version** (Thomas Nelson, Inc., Nashville, TN 2005)