

Meditations

For the Days of

Advent

Rev Mario Schoenmaker



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December 1

The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above all wild animals; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

Genesis 3:14-15

The Promise of a Redeemer

The promise of the first Christmas, that is, of the birth of a Redeemer, was given in those early prehistoric days when it was still possible for us to communicate with the Gods. When we went against the direct purposes of the Gods for us, the promise was given that a God would descend from the heavens and incarnate in a human body to redeem us.

Ever since that fall there has been a struggle between the soul of the human race and the devil, or the Luciferic beings. But from the seed of Adam, from the seed of the human being, which means the human body, a Saviour would be born who would bruise the head of Satan.

Meditation

Light your candle and sit upright in a chair for a few moments. Close your eyes and relax the body through means of three deep breaths. Then concentrate your thoughts on the beginning of salvation, the promise that you would be freed from the curse of Lucifer and from primal karma through the mediation and the power of the Christ, who entered human flesh for us.

Prayer

I thank you, Father,
That I, a human spirit enclosed with flesh and blood,
Am here in this physical world.
I thank you that the promise was given
At the dawn of this your creation.
I will now gladly go forward
With the assurance and certainty that the Christ,
Who incarnated into a body of flesh and blood,
Will assist me to become free of the burdens of the flesh
And the bondage of this world,
And enable me to reign with him in spiritual places.
This I pray, through Jesus Christ our Lord,

So shall it be.

December 2

But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

Galatians 4:4-6

The Promise Fulfilled

The promise given in Genesis was fulfilled in Christ Jesus. St Paul makes clear that Christ was born under normal human conditions and circumstances. The purpose of this birth was to redeem us – that is, to buy us back from the bondage of matter and free us from the laws of nature with its rhythmic and seasonal changes, and so make us the sons and daughters of God, as he, our Father, originally intended us to be.

Meditation

As you sit silently before your candle, meditate for a moment on the wonder and miracle of the birth of a new human being into this world. Try to imagine that our Lord was born precisely the same way, and that through the event of his birth you are becoming his beloved offspring.

Prayer

I thank you, Father,
That in your great love
You have given your Son for my redemption and freedom,
That through him,
I can be part of you and know that I am your child
And have within me your divine nature and love.
Grant unto me to accept the grace of your love,
And may I be able to express the Christ through my being.
Through his name and power I pray.

So shall it be.

—

December 3

Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Isaiah 9:7

A King will be Born

Certain qualities of the Saviour are described here. He will be a king, for he comes from the royal line of David, which symbolises love supreme and powerful. He will create peace and his kingdom will have no end. What is more, the very might of the Lord will make sure that this indeed happens.

This Saviour will give us the content of love. Where the Buddha preached love and compassion, the Christ fills us with this love and compassion. Love is no longer a theoretical concept, but a living organism within our own heart and being.

Meditation

As you sit in front of your candle, let its light become part of you in your imagination. While in this contemplative mood see the Christ as the ruler of the universe, but also of your heart, and feel your heart being filled with light and love. After a short time pray this prayer:

Prayer

May I, who have entered
Into the all-pervading love and compassion of God,
Emptied of all self-love,
Diffuse that boundless love to all beings.
May the love of God be radiated over the entire world
In benediction, peace and joy.

So shall it be.

—

December 4

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

Micah 5:2

The Place of his Birth Foretold

It may seem remarkable to us that the prophet of old could pinpoint the place where Jesus would be born, but to those who know something about atavistic clairvoyance it is not such a surprise. For the people of old lived closer to the origin of their being than we are able to in our modern times.

The geographical place of Jesus' birth may no longer be important today. What is important, however, is that you know within your being that this Christ is going to be born within your heart, soul and mind, that your name is written in the annals of the heavens, and that you will be the recipient of this great and wondrous miracle: *Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

Meditation

Affirm to yourself that the Christ is going to be born within your soul, that you are the chosen vessel and the place wherein he wants to dwell and reign forever. In this affirmation feel the very power and love of Christ welling up within you, until you are full to overflowing.

Prayer

Come to my heart, O Christ, my Lord.
I know that my name is written in the palm of your hands,
And that you have chosen me to be your dwelling place.
Let nothing hinder me from preparing this place for you.
Assist me to remove the obstacles and the debris
Which are not worthy of your home.
Cleanse me and make me whole.
This I pray in the wondrous name of him
Who has called me to himself,
The precious name of Jesus the Christ,

So shall it be.

—

December 5

The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Psalm 110: 4

He is the High Priest of the Order of Melchizedek

The name Melchizedek appears only a few times in Holy Scripture, and the Order has ever been a puzzlement to many seekers. But Melchizedek is always associated with blessing, sacrifice, giving, caring and uplifting.

The Christ is indeed our High Priest according to the Order of Melchizedek; in fact he is Melchizedek. This ministry he imparts to us, so that we can participate in the great and wonderful office which he fulfils.

The blessing, power and strength available to you because he is our High Priest must not be underestimated. What is more, he understands your weakness and human failings, because he was born of a maiden, entered the flesh and became fully associated with human existence.

Meditation

In the stillness that must now surround you, perceive the Christ in your mind as a priest. See him standing at that great and high altar with the host and chalice in his hands. He looks at you and invites you to partake of the wondrous heavenly food which he gives. See yourself kneeling before him in adoration, love and surrender.

Prayer

Father, to you I raise my whole being,
A vessel emptied of self;
Accept, O Lord, this my emptiness, and so fill me with yourself,
Your life, your light, your love,
That these your gracious gifts may radiate through me,
And overflow the chalice of my heart,
Into the hearts of all with whom I come in contact,
Revealing unto them, the beauty of your joy and wholeness,
And the serenity of your peace
Which nothing can destroy.

So shall it be.

—

December 6

For these nations, which you are about to dispossess, give heed to soothsayers and to diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not allowed you so to do. The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren, him you shall heed.

Deuteronomy 18:14-15

He is a Prophet

Because he is the prophet, priest and king, we do not need to, nor may we, seek guidance, help or comfort from the dead or other channels, be they persons, tarot cards, astrology or the like. Tarot cards and astrology used as symbols and signs may be good for the soul, but to know our direction in life and to find guidance in difficult circumstances we must seek the aid and help of the great prophet who has been given to us and whose body was born at Bethlehem.

Meditation

While you sit before your Advent candle, it would be good to sing softly to yourself the following words:

Guide me, O thou Christed spirit,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak but thou art mighty,
Hold me with thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more,
Feed me till I want no more.

While singing or repeating these words to yourself, feel his spirit giving you guidance in those problems or questions which are before you at this moment.

Prayer

Elevate and penetrate my mind and heart
so that I may know your will in all things.
Guide me in the decisions that I have to make,
and lead me in the path which makes for peace, joy and love.
May your guidance and insight never depart from me.
This I pray in the name of him,
who is my prophet, priest and king.
So shall it be.

—

December 7

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold a young woman (virgin) shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14

His Name is Immanuel

The sign, indeed, was the virgin birth, as has been held by all true Christians down the centuries and all over the world. What we tend to forget is the rest of this verse - that his name is Immanuel: God with us.

In sunshine and joy, in clouds and pain, God is with you. In all your dreary days, God is with you. In your associations, in your relationships, in your understandings and misunderstandings, God is with you.

At all times realise that, because of Christmas, this presence of God, this miracle-working power, is with you, within you, above you and beneath you.

Meditation

Feel his presence flowing over you. Quietly and peacefully imagine a cloud of light above you which slowly envelops you and, while you experience the power, might and guidance of this presence, repeat the following prayer softly to yourself.

Prayer

Christ with me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me, Christ in me,
Christ under me, Christ over me,
Christ to the right of me,
Christ to the left of me,
Christ in lying down, Christ in sitting,
Christ in rising up.
Christ in the heart of every person
who may think of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone
who may speak to me,
Christ in every eye which may look at me,
Christ in every ear which may hear me.

So shall it be.

—

December 8

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins.

Isaiah 11:1-5

His Character

Jesus the Christ was the prototype of what the human being will eventually become. The spirit of the Lord, the spirit of God, was completely and fully integrated within the being of Jesus the man. This brought about certain characteristics which have their roots in wisdom, understanding, power, knowledge and love for God and the kingdom of the heavens.

The spirit of the Lord we call the real individual, the real self. We, who are participators in this great drama of redemption and who are being freed from the bonds of the past, have received a portion of his spirit. We may pray and ask for this spirit of Christ to work within and upon us in fuller measure from day to day, so that we may become fully integrated, expressing our individual spirit through our full humanity.

Meditation

Take a few deep breaths and relax your body completely. Focus your eyes on the candle before you and see in your mind the light of the candle flowing through your eyes into your being. Imagine that this light is actually the very spirit, the very essence, of the Christ which will make you an individual with all the characteristics that belong to a fully Christed person.

Prayer

God of my heart,
I open myself to the power, wisdom,
knowledge and love of the Christ.
As he was anointed to bring to me the fullness of my real self,
so anoint me too, that I may be the bringer
of that plan of redemption which enables other souls
to find you and to merge with your spirit,
in the fullness of love, freedom, grace and self-expression.
This I pray, in and through the name and the power
of Jesus the Christ.
So shall it be.

—

December 9

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; the uneven ground shall become level and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Isaiah 40: 1-5

The Glory of the Lord shall be Revealed

Two important issues come out of this passage from Isaiah. First, we are pardoned. Our karma is taken away. Our initial struggle for self-realisation is over, thus there is peace of mind and heart. Secondly, we who are still in the wilderness, this earth, must prepare a way so that the glory of the Lord, the glory of the heavens, can be revealed through us.

These words were eminently fulfilled in Jesus Christ, but must now be fulfilled in our own hearts and souls. In our aloneness, our separation, our struggle to keep equilibrium, we must prepare this way so that, indeed, the glory of the heavens can be revealed within us and through us to others.

Meditation

Look back for a moment and acknowledge in what ways you have failed to be a highway for the Gods, and in what ways you have cooperated with the Gods in order to make the path of your life a highway for the Lord so that his glory can shine through you.

Prayer

I acknowledge and confess that my life on earth
has not always been a path through which your spirit could flow
and your glory become manifest
I accept your forgiveness
and in this realisation I shall go forward,
with the knowledge that you will, with my assistance,
prepare the way and let your glory, love and power
flow through me to others.
In the name of Christ I pray,

So shall it be.

—

December 10

Behold, I send my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, till they present right offerings to the Lord.

Malachi 3: 1-3

He is like a Refiner's Fire

The temple is your body, and just as the Christ inhabited the body of a man called Jesus, so this same Christ has now entered into you. But this coming of the spirit of the Christ is not always a delight. The purpose, at first, is to cleanse you and make you whole and complete.

This often referred to as being cleansed by fire. St Paul uses the same metaphor: "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? Each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done."

When the fire has done its work, and we are cleansed and made complete, then peace and joy, power and might will be our portion, for then indeed we shall fully reveal the inner messenger, the true Christed self.

Meditation

Look into the candle. Perceive this candle to be the Christ. Hold your hand close to the flame until you feel its searing heat. Then sit back and imagine this heat going through you, burning all the dross and imperfection within you. Then open yourself up to the Christ and pray to be a temple of the living spirit of God.

Prayer

Make this my body dear Lord,
the temple of your indwelling spirit.
Cleanse me, purify me
and so envelop me with your love, grace and mercy,
that I may be a living temple,
where I can worship you in the spirit of holiness and freedom.
Through Jesus Christ I pray,

So shall it be.

—

December 11

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

Isaiah 60:2 & 9:2

The Lord will Arise upon You

St John the great mystic, wrote, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." The coming of the Christ into the flesh brought life and light into the darkness of this world.

The question is not whether the light is there; it is. The question is whether we can see this light and make it our own. We must not fight the darkness. We must let the light of Christ and that of our being flow into it. Then the darkness cannot comprehend it, it cannot fight it, it must melt away, as shadows flee when a light is turned on.

This light of the Christ is also the very light of our being. Reflect upon this as often as possible, for in the perception of our own light, there lies the completeness of life, here and in the future.

Meditation

Make the room dark. See and feel the darkness around you. Then light the candle and see how this little Advent candle drives away all darkness from the room. Meditate in silence on the wonder of light and how you as a light being bring light wherever you are, no matter in what circumstance you may find yourself. And even though it seems at times that the spiritual darkness is stronger than the light, the opposite is in fact true. Immerse yourself in the knowledge that your light, together with the light of Christ, is always stronger, brighter and greater.

Prayer

May the light of your presence, dear Lord,
become a living flame within me.
May I, the bearer of your light, exude this power to such a degree
that I may be able to illuminate others with the light
of your life, grace, power and inner strength.
Let this light be the expression of my spiritual self
and individuality.
In the name of Christ I pray,

So shall it be.

—

December 12

For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called “Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Of the increase of his government and of peace, there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Isaiah 9:6-7

To us a Child is Born

The promise and the reality: the Christ was promised and became a human being, which we celebrate now as the first Christmas.

This great spiritual power that descended from on high and penetrated the earth with its light and love bears some awesome names, and it would be good for us to contemplate for a moment the meaning of these words, for they signify that a power is available to us that nothing else can withstand.

We know that his rule can never be challenged, for it is without end. It is and shall be a rule of peace, first for our tormented souls, which will be freed and cleansed and made still, and also for the rest of this world, when the glory and the rule of Christ is established and the dragon of the book of Revelation is slain by the power of Michael, the archangel.

Meditation

Let Christ speak to you as you sit in stillness and quietness. Call upon his counsel if you need this. Perceive him as your mighty God when you cannot do it alone. See him as the Father who has begotten you and see yourself as his child. Finally accept him as the Prince of Peace who will still the storms of your mind and emotions, and exude the wonder of his everlasting presence within you.

Prayer

Not in my striving, dear Lord,
Nor in my wilfulness,
Can I overcome,
But in the stillness of my being
And in the knowledge of your wisdom and peace.
Grant this to me at this very moment.
In your powerful name I pray,

So shall it be.

—

*Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors!
That the King of glory may come in.
Who is the King of glory?
The Lord, strong and mighty,
The Lord mighty in battle!
Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors!
That the King of glory may come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The Lord of hosts,
He is the King of glory.*

Psalm 24:7-10

That the King of Glory may Enter In

There is no need for me to enter into an interpretation of this glorious psalm which has been immortalised through Handel's Messiah. No, I think it is of more importance that we acknowledge, first and foremost, that we are bound and imprisoned within ourselves, within our senses, by our astral body, and, in most cases, even by our mind and star sign. But there is also within us the longing to be free from the bondage that ensnares and holds us. This bondage is symbolised by the ancient doors and this longing by the lifting up of our head.

Now let us, indeed, lift up our heads, our hearts, our souls and know that the King of glory is coming to break down the doors and set us upon our feet, upon the path towards freedom, joy and laughter. For he who has redeemed this whole earth will now live within our souls and fill us with his spirit and power.

Meditation

Do not light the candle immediately. Darken the room and feel the darkness closing in and making you feel limited and helpless. Then light the candle and repeat the words of the psalm. Reflect on it for a few moments, and feel light, joy and freedom becoming part of you. This light is the Christ, and he is the one who, at Christmas time, came to bring that light to the world and to your being.

Prayer

Release me, O lord, from the bondage I am still suffering.
Suffuse me with your light and break the chains
of the door to my heart.
May I indeed lift up my head, my intelligence,
my inner individuality, to show to myself and to the world
that I am able to live and move within your being and love.
In the name of him who freed me I pray.

So shall it be.

—

December 14

In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. Now while he was serving as priest before God ...there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense ... The angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer is heard, and your wife, Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John ... And he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

Luke 1: 5-17 (selected verses)

The Birth of John the Baptist

It would be good for you to read the whole of this chapter, for it will give you an understanding of what was needed in order to make the birth of Jesus possible and of the workings of the spiritual forces, even before Jesus was born.

If we think we serve God, perhaps it needs to be brought to our attention that we should listen to his voice, which often comes to us in the form of intuition. If we do not listen then, like Zechariah, we may well become deaf and dumb towards higher spiritual expressions.

In metaphysical terms the name John means divine love and this passage indicates that divine love was making a way for the Christ to come to this earth to bestow his gift of divine love on our hearts and souls.

Meditation

Reflect for a few moments, firstly, on obeying the inner impulse of spirit as it reveals itself through intuition, and secondly, on the love of God who prepared the heavens and the earth for the completeness of love which became apparent on that first Christmas morning.

Prayer

Make me the bearer of your love,
So that wherever I touch other souls
They may feel and know
That the love flowing from me is but a preparation
For the love they may experience
As a direct result of the birth of Christ within their own souls.
In Christ's name, I pray.

So shall it be.

—

December 15

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favoured one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you, therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God." ... And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word."

Luke 1: 26-35, 38

I am the Handmaid of the Lord

Availability is important. Mary was available. Is our soul, which is symbolised here by Mary, ready and available? The angel, of course, is but a token of inner intuition, the inner soft and gentle voice that at time speaks within our bosom. To listen to it is important, to act upon it imperative, and to express it means that Christ is born within our soul.

Meditation

Be still now. Ban thoughts, feelings and emotions from your being, but let the inner ear be open, for in expectation you may hear the soft voice of your angel. It speaks through intuition. It whispers through the inner spiritual organ of your perception. It is there; do not doubt it. And in this knowingness let the impact of the message of the angel to you be fully comprehended and understood. Then you are impregnated with the spirit, and from you the Most High will arise.

Prayer

I have opened my inner ear,
and I am at your disposal.
Speak to me, and I will be your channel.
Let gentleness, goodness and grace flow from me,
as it did from Mary.
Fill me with your spirit
and let the fruits thereof be seen and expressed
in my day to day living in this world.
Let Christmas be a reality for me this year
and in the years to come.
In the precious name of Jesus I pray,

So shall it be.

—

December 16

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ... When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

Matthew 1:18-21, 24-25

God is with Us

There are two essential principles at work for the Christ to be born within your soul. The first one is Joseph, which means wisdom, and the second is Mary, which is the longing of the soul to express love. These two principles together bring about the birth of the Christ within your soul.

Of course we can go deeper than that and examine the differences between the birth as described by Matthew and as described by Luke, but that serves at this moment no purpose. What is important for you is to realise that the longing to love within itself is not enough. One must also express and extend the quality of wisdom, which is often seen in silence and thoughtful understanding, as indeed it was with Joseph.

Meditation

As you light your candle, recall certain events and experiences which you would have handled differently if you had thought about them and not reacted so quickly. See within your soul that silence and compassionate thinking ought to be a prelude to loving expression. After this self examination, repeat the following prayer.

Prayer

Grant me the serenity to be quiet and calm
even when my emotions and mind are stirred.

Assist me to join wisdom and love
so as to bring about the birth and expression
of the Christ within my soul.

In his name I pray,

So shall it be.

—

December 17

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrolment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Luke 2:1-7

No Room at the Inn

The problem may well be that, after everything has been done and all has been prepared, the Christ may find no room in your soul. There are too many other things occupying your heart and soul. What they are is up to you to find out, but you must rid yourself of those things which hinder him finding entrance within your being. Remember the old saying: "If he is not king of all, he is not king at all."

Meditation

Before you light your candle and sit down for meditation, walk through your house and look at the things you value so much. Ask yourself if you would do away with some of those things in order to make room for the Christ. Then sit down, light your candle and in thought look at your acquaintances and activities and ask yourself whether these areas also hinder you from receiving the Christ fully within yourself. After you have answered these questions truthfully, repeat or sing the following lines.

Prayer

Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown
When thou camest to earth for me,
But in Bethlehem's home there was found no room
For thy holy nativity;
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
There is room in my heart for thee.

So shall it be

—

December 18

And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"

Luke 2:8-14

The Angel's Song

We know from our esoteric studies that these angels contained within them the spirit of Buddha. The song is therefore a Buddhist song, a mantra, which ought to be sung by everyone. It is the glory song of an earth filled with souls who are at peace with God, themselves and each other.

It is in fact a result of Christmas. The real Christmas is always peace and joy, not just for the two days when we celebrate this event, but for all time. To have this peace marks you as a person of goodwill towards all creation and towards God.

Meditation

While you sit for a moment in reflection, listen to some Christmas carols. To listen to them in quietness and aloneness is a balm for the soul and a joy to the mind. Let the glory song fill you, and realise that you, too, are destined to play a part in creating this peace and joy for all who are of goodwill.

Prayer

A song was heard at Christmas
To wake the midnight sky:
A Saviour's birth, and peace on earth,
And praise to God on high.
The angels sang at Christmas
With all the hosts above,
And still we sing the newborn king,
His glory and his love.

So shall it be.

—

December 19

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this he was troubled ... Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him. Then opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Matthew 2:1-3, 7-12

The Visit of the Three Wise Men

Your will, signified here by the wise men, ought to bring offerings to the Christ within you. And what are the gifts he desires? Gold, or the eternal value of your soul; frankincense, the beauty and fragrance of your being; and myrrh, which was used for embalming, signifying the immortality and eternity of your spirit.

Meditation

Create a nativity scene in your room, no matter how humble, and as you light your candle, offer the gifts mentioned above. Offer them with wilfulness, offer them with dedication, and the Christ who accepts these gifts will reward you with blessing untold.

Prayer

I offer you the beauty and loveliness of my life.
I give you what I value most in my being,
and I also give you my immortal spirit,
to do with as you will.
Use my will to serve yours,
and may the gift which you give
bloom within me for evermore.
Let this gift of love be sustained by your strength and power.
In your precious name I pray,

So shall it be

—

December 20

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod ... When Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel ... And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth.

Matthew 2:13-15, 19-21, 23

The Flight into Egypt

The spiritual point of view of this story warns us to be careful with the Herod within us, so that this wilful element does not destroy the new-born spirit within our soul.

It is so wonderful to have the first experience of Christ and to be conscious of it, but eventually, like everything else, you may get used to it, and then self-will may well take over and try to destroy that most precious element and power within your heart. Protect it well. Let both wisdom and love nurture the new-born Christ within your soul.

Meditation

While you are quietly reflecting upon this story and the need to protect this new and wonderful Christ experience, remember the means by which you are able to protect yourself. St Paul gives these means in Ephesians 6:

Put the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breast-plate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance.

Prayer

Tell God in prayer that you will use these means to protect and shield the new-born Christ from your own self-will.

—

December 21

But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So through God you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir.

Galatians 4:4-7

His Spirit in our Hearts

St Paul wrote to a church which was divided on the issue of the law. Should a Christian keep the Old Testament law or not? Paul points to the reason why Jesus Christ was born, and why in fact he was born under the law. The reason was so that you and I could become free of the oppressiveness of the law. And once we are free of this law, we can become the sons and daughters of God by means of spiritual adoption, by means of accepting the gift given.

Since, then, we are free spiritual beings, adopted into the divine family of God, we must no longer live in slavery, no matter what type of slavery this may be. Paul meant religious slavery, but any type of bondage is included which does not assist us to be free children of God.

Meditation

In silence and restfulness of body and heart, light the candle and realise, as fully as possible, that you are a child of the Almighty, part of the kingdom of God, an heir or heiress of the riches of this kingdom, and, above all, a co-creator with the Gods in heavenly places. For all these things are the gifts that the first Christmas brought.

Prayer

I thank you, O father of my being,
That I have been accepted into the family of God
because Jesus Christ was born of a woman
and born under the slavery of the law.
I thank you that I am now free of that law,
and that in freedom I can reach out to you with love.
Assist me to make this freedom more real.
May I use this freedom, this power of creation,
to assist and help others to find this wonderful experience
and beingness.
In the precious name of Christ I pray,

So shall it be.

—

December 22

Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow; in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11

Every Knee should Bow

Have this in mind, Paul admonishes, the same mind, the same soul, the same spirit which was in the man called Jesus. Then he describes what the contents of such a mind are, which we need to emulate. Perhaps it seems contradictory to what we meditated upon yesterday, where it was clearly stated that we should not be slaves, but free beings. But there is no contradiction. After we have become free beings then, like the Christ, we must humble ourselves and become servants of God, of the kingdom of the Gods, and of others. Then, like Jesus the Christ, we shall be exalted and our names shall be like stars in the firmament of the heavens. God will do this. All we need to do is serve with love, freedom and contentment.

Meditation

Years ago I asked the members of our community to take on a task for a week which they disliked doing and to do this for the sake of Christ and for their brothers and sisters. Thinking back to that episode I think it was artificial, for one does not learn nor train oneself in divine service in that manner.

While you sit in the quietness of your room, determine in what way you can dedicate some of your time to serving others, and through that strengthen and reinforce your soul.

Prayer

Make me captive, Lord, and then I shall be free;
Force me to render up my sword, and then I shall conqueror be.
I sink in life's alarms when by myself I stand;
Imprison me within your arms, and strong shall be my hand.

So shall it be.

—

December 23

Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

Come to Me

Well-known words. Millions of souls down the centuries have comforted and strengthened themselves with these words. And to think that this rest, this peace, this strength was given to us through a babe born two thousand years ago!

There are two things we need to do. The first, of course, is to come to him, and in approaching him with our burdens, not to shy away. The second is to take on the yoke that he gives. It is the ignorance of what this yoke is that often makes us hesitate, but to trust that his yoke is easier and gentler than the burdens we now bear is to know the fullness of love and redemption.

Meditation

This verse from a well-known carol should be meditated upon, for its truth stands throughout all ages:

Oh may we keep and ponder in our mind
God's wondrous love in saving lost mankind;
Trace we the babe who has retrieved our loss,
From his poor manger to his bitter cross;
Tread in his steps, assisted by his grace,
Till man's first heavenly state again takes place.

Prayer

Come, fill my heart with inward strength,
Make my enlarged soul possess
And learn the height and breadth and length
Of your immeasurable grace.

So shall it be.

—

December 24

He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities – all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven making peace by the blood of his cross.

Colossians 1:15-20

The Fullness of God

No earthly tongue or mind can ever fully extol the divine being that came to earth to share with us our humanity. He is the beginning of all things and he will be the end of all that exists when time shall be no more.

Christmas is the time when we rejoice in that incomprehensible miracle, the entering of the flesh by a being who opened the way and who, by himself, conquered not only the furore of death, but reconciled the whole of the universe, the whole of this world, including you and me, with the heavens. No longer are the heavens closed. They are open for any of us who dares to enter into communion and communication with him who made Christmas such a joyful festivity.

Meditation

It is Christmas Eve, and no doubt you will be busy preparing for tomorrow, but take a few moments to relax and think of the creator of this universe, whose birthday we will celebrate tomorrow. See in your mind the little baby in the manger and perceive the wonder of his love for you and me. Then sing the following carol softly to yourself.

Prayer

Silent night! Holy night! All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

So shall it be

—

December 25

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it ...and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

John 1:1-5, 14

The Mystery of Christmas

The Word, the Logos, the Christ, became flesh. That is what we celebrate today. We want to celebrate this unique wonder, that he, the creator, the light of the world, became flesh. He lived with us in a human body and shared with us his divine nature.

Christmas is therefore the festival of light. Light triumphed over darkness, and the darkness could not understand that it had been invaded by this glorious light. Darkness no longer exists in its finality, for light is the ultimate answer. This is why we wish each other a happy, fulfilled, beautiful and blessed Christmas filled with light, peace and love. May this be your portion this day and for evermore.

Meditation

Take a few moments in this busy day to be alone and light the candle. Repeat the words from John 1 and let them sink into you like oil for the wounded soul. They will heal you and energise you. They will fill you with wonder and joy. Then repeat or sing the following words with deep elation in your being.

Prayer

Joy to the world; the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love.

So shall it be.

—