

From The Pulpit

by Rev. Donald M. Clark

THE STABLE AND THE STAR

Text: "And the Star, Which They Saw in the East, Went Before Them, Till It Came and Stood Over Where the Young Child Was." Matt. 2:9.

The Star which shone so brilliantly that night was for all men's seeing. Such a star cannot be hid except by the blindness of men. Men whose eyes conceal and reveal wonder; men on quest for greater knowledge; men who seek to worship the Highest will see the Star. Others may see the Star and ignore it. Still others may not see it at all.



REV. D. M. CLARK

But let it be known that whether they see, whether they look, whether they catch meaning and direction from it, or not, the Star shines upon all.

God's light does not shine only upon the wise, nor only upon the good, nor only upon the worthy, as His rain does not discriminate between the just and unjust.

In these days there is much talk about the religious and secular worlds. There are activities such as worship in a church which are considered to be religious while a game on the football field may be considered secular. There are religious places and secular places, religious occupations and secular occupations. Those who are engaged for the most part in church activities are separated in thought from those who are engaged in so-called secular occupations. So we have the clergy and the laity.

There is a new awareness that the Star shines upon both. It would seem that under the light of the Star there is no division such as that made between the sacred and the secular. As Joseph Jefferson once said, "There is no place in my theater where God cannot enter." So there is no place where God's light cannot shine. The commonplace of the market and factory and shop and stable may catch the light of God's favor and become sacramental, even as the bread and the wine upon the altar become sacramental.

The light of God shines upon the evil world. Was there ever a man more wicked than the Herod who was in those days upon the throne at Jerusalem? That Star was shining above the palaces of the city. Above every haunt of sin and shame the Star was shining. It is not only where righteousness reigns that it is God's world, but also where sin is rampant. The light of the Star is sometimes the suffering of God. The Cross shines in the Star.

How vividly the thought of the universality of God's light and of God's love is expressed in the Gospel of John! John writes not of the Star but of the Son, in terms of light. "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 1:9); not that all men received him, but he came to all. "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).

And so above the inn and the stable, above the palace in Jerusalem and the fields of Bethlehem the Star was shining on that first Christmas, symbol of the light and love of God which shines and broods over the lives of all men in the great wide world, for this is indeed God's world. Here, in it, he rejoices; there, he suffers.

God's light and love are universal. They are for all men; they are for each man.

Strange, isn't it, that the Babe should be born in a stable? Even the servant beasts are blessed by his coming.

God's light and love, as revealed in Jesus, as reflected by Him, as channeled through Him, are for each man's reception. "As many as received him, to them he gave power to become 'sons'—each one a son.

We can put this particularization into vivid figurative form by placing halos above the head of all the principal characters in the stable scene. These halos stand as reflections from the Babe, the center of light.

GO to the CHURCH of YOUR CHOICE



DEADline for church news and photographs is Friday noon preceding the next Thursday publication date at the Rev. Mr. Clark's home, 1676 N. 'E' St., telephone 642-1560. All items submitted must be accompanied by the sender's name, address and telephone number.

BAPTIST

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1305 N. "E" St., Las Vegas

Name those who were crowned with light in the stable.

Mary, His mother,
Joseph, who, in the home and in the carpenter shop, would so influence the young child that when He became a man He could and would call God by the name of Father.

The Shepherds. The Child in the stable placed halos above the heads of men of common toil. As Dr. John H. Jowett wrote, "Some of us can see the light resting upon a bishop's crosier, but we cannot see the radiance on the ordinary shepherd's staff. We can discern the hallowedness of a priest's vocation, but we see no sanctity in the calling of a grocer, or of the sweeper in the street.

But the very birth hour of Christianity irradiated the humble doings of humble people.

The Wise Men. These men of old were on a spiritual quest.

In our Christmas pageantry, and most rightly so, each of the three kings of Orient is represented in his own distinctive garb. Tradition says that they came from different parts of the east. The lights of the cradle shines upon each one individually. The light of the Star encircles each man's brow.

It is pleasant to think of them returning each to his own home, carrying the radiance of the stable each to his own family and friends and people. There is a light which given in one place is carried to another, given to one person is made visible to others.

CATHOLIC

ST. JAMES CATHOLIC CHURCH
Mgr. W. J. Devlin, 382-9953
"H" & Morgan Sts., Las Vegas

Sunday Mass--11 a.m. and 5 p.m.
Week Day Mass--7:30 p.m. each evening
Confession--Saturday 4 and 7:30 p.m.

CHURCH of GOD in CHRIST

UPPER ROOM C. of G. in C.
Bishop C. C. Cox, 385-1541
1117 N. "F" St., Las Vegas

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1216 Adams Ave., Las Vegas

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Eld. Willie Rawls, 384-5539
E. Sahara Ave., Fourmyle

PRAYER HOUSE C. of G. in C.
Eld. W. M. Shaw, 382-1743
Blankenship St., Vegas Hts.

(All Churches of God in Christ)

Tuesday 8 pm - - - - - Bible Band
Wednesday 8 pm - - - - - *Young People
Friday 8 pm - - - - - Consecration
Sunday 10 am - - - - - Sunday School
Sunday 12 m - - - - - Morning Service
Sunday 6:30 pm - - - - - YPW
Sunday 8 pm - - - - - Evening Worship
*Progressive - - - - - Inspirational

METHODIST

ZION METHODIST CHURCH
Rev. M. D. Bennett, 382-9900
911 N. "G" St., Las Vegas

PENTECOSTAL

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH
Eld. Hosea Coleman, 642-8741
Bartlett & Lexington Sts., Vegas Hts.

What we are trying to say is that the light and love of God shines in a universal manner, like a star in the sky; at the same time the light and love of God are given to men and women, to boys and girls, in a particular way as to those who visited the stable in Bethlehem.

The visit of the Shepherds and the Wise Men to the Holy Child both were equally blest. Both those who were steeped in the wisdom of that ancient east and the simple minded sons of the desert stood at the shrine of a holy personality as naked souls, divested of all artificial human distinctions. There were no "assigned" pews in that little shrine. All those who came into it by way of the heart received a blessing, and went away praising God. Here we have a fore-gleam of that longed-for Kingdom of God, the home of all aspiring and seeking souls, regardless of rank and station.

Elks Organize Programs For Negro History Week

PERSONS INTERESTED in helping to plan a series of programs for community observance of Negro History Week next February are invited to attend a meeting at Elks Hall, 406 West Bonanza, next Monday (Dec. 14) at 7:30 p.m.

Pran Lodge and Alpha Temple of the IBPOE is sponsoring the project under the direction of Exalted Ruler Willie Neal and Daughter Ruler Myrtle Banks.