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MEDITATION ON CHRISTMAS WINDOW

Joy to the world, the Lord is Come! Let earth receive her King.

The scene of the Incarnation is one of rich happiness. Persons came from the East and from the West, from the North and from the South to offer their tributes of adoration at the feet of the Son of God who had become the Son of Man.

We wish that we might have known what was in the mind of the artist who conceived, designed and planned these two windows in the church but, since we do not know, we will give our own interpretation of them.

The highest form of art is that which correlates the Bible themes with the skill and imagination of an artist. In both the pictures we find that not just one writer's interpretation was taken, but a composite was made of all the stories of the Incarnation and given to us here for themes of never-ending meditation. For this artist, it was irrelevant that the Wisemen came several days later than the arrival of the shepherds; that the babe is not a helpless new-born infant; that the Virgin Mary is more richly garbed than the humble Mary of Nazareth. Also, the artist has used much symbolism to point out the deeper truths underlying the simple objects themselves.

Let us first consider the frame for our picture: the square, the circle, and triangle are used throughout, both in the side panels and in the upper arch. Through all the spiritual history of mankind, the circle has suggested the never-ending life. The square reminds us of the four-sided life of Jesus (King, Servant, Man and God) and the city which is four-square – the new Jerusalem. The three circles at the extreme top are a constant witness to the Trinity – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (and they are joined.) In the center one, hovering over the scene of the Incarnation, is the six-pointed Star of David (also called the Star of Creation.) It figures in Jewish history and suggests that this lineage was of the House of David.

This star is enhanced by the blue star in the background. It also is six-pointed. The blue and the gold combined in such a way as to point us to the royal significance of the scene below.

Now let us look at the figures in their different attitudes of adoration. The pantomime of each person has been worked out to the finest detail. These represent the people of all time – the wise and the simple, the rich and the poor, the old and the young, persons of various colors, both male and female. I am glad the artist placed the simple country girl in the background at the right. From her coloring, she could represent the Caucasian race, which was in a very primitive stage of civilization at the actual time of this event in history. She had no intimation of this event and so she looks on with wonder at the happenings.

Our gifts are an outward symbol of our heart's devotion. What were the gifts these devotees brought? They were the finest they had and probably cost them something in terms of sacrifice. There is the censer of frankincense, emblematic that His life was fulfillment of prophecy; the chest of myrrh, foreboding His death and suffering; and, at the feet of the Babe, the crown of gold signifying His Lordship. On the right side we see only the lamb – but it is a subject for much meditation. The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world; the Lamb of God slain for the foundation of the world. The shepherds, too, may have brought the pink roses lying on the steps. There are no flowers in the picture, but the simple folk may have picked these out-of-season flowers, which bloomed like the Thorn of Glastonbury at each Christmas season. The rose is the emblem of Life and Beauty. Next our thought goes to the Virgin Mary. She is richly garbed in the blue robe of loyalty and truth. She wears a peaceful expression but, surely, she is pondering all these things in her heart and wondering why this much coveted honor should come to her.

All eyes and all lines converge in the central Figure – the Babe Himself. He is not the cuddly baby we have in our homes. He seems to be vested already with the dignity and strength of His Heavenly mission. The ornate nimbus around His head is beautiful, but it also suggests the untried strength. His eyes are looking out at all mankind, as if to say, "I am the Truth, the Life and the Way – and Lo I am with you always." His fingers are lifted in the gesture of blessing, not only upon those present, but all humanity.

As we gaze upon the scene, we really feel that Heaven has come down to earth, our souls to greet. This picture has universal and eternal meaning in the darkness of the world and its selfishness. The angels with their rosy-tipped feather ruffs suggest Heaven's interest in the scene. The dawn is breaking in the background, but the Light from the Star shining through the arch of the stable points us to the deeper meaning of this event – the Son of Righteousness has come, the Bright and Morning Star has arisen upon the stage of earth, the government shall be upon His shoulders, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.

Used for Methodist Youth Fellowship
Music and Religious Studies in the 1930's.

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edited: 1992, 2019