

The Men Who Missed Christmas

Isaiah 53.1-6

*Who has believed our message
and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?*

*We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53.1-6*

Many people in life have missed significant opportunities. But of all those experiences perhaps none has been more tragic than that of the men who missed Christmas. When I speak of the men who missed Christmas I am speaking, naturally, of the men who missed the first Christmas, who missed the birth of the Jesus Christ. Yet, in another sense, I am also speaking of many who miss Christmas today. They miss the most important thing in life, and yet – here is the tragedy – there is no good reason why they should miss it.

THE “INNKEEPER”

*So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the **inn**. Luke 2.4-7*

Luke 22.11-12; 10.34; 9.58

HEROD AND THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, ‘Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.’

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. ‘In Bethlehem in Judea,’ they replied, ‘for this is what the prophet has written:’

*‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.’ Micah 5.2*

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, ‘Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.’ Matthew 2.1-12

HOWEVER, THERE WERE THOSE WHO FOUND IT

It would be entirely wrong not to point out that although there were many who did not find Christmas, there were nevertheless some who did find it. They were not the kings of this world. They were not the religious leaders. We can think of several of them. There were the **shepherds**. The **wise men** also found Christmas.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. Luke 2.25-26

There was also a prophetess, Anna. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. Luke 2.36-38