

# DECEMBER DREAM

By

Roger Wright

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“I hate Christmas”!

“Aw, come on Joey; you do not”

“Yes I do. All you and dad do is rush around and fuss and spend too much money on stuff that no one wants. Our relatives come in for a visit that is too short, and then you all talk about the relatives that aren’t here.”

“Aren’t you going to help us at all with these decorations Joey? All you do is sit on the couch and gripe.” Joey’s mom was beginning to look depressed at the thought that maybe he was right about their spirit of Christmas. But she tried again to warm up the conversation. “Grandpa will be here tomorrow. Aren’t you excited about him coming?”

“Sure I am, but then you and dad will get him into talking about politics or business. It’s like you cram all the unpleasantness you can into this short time together, and I’ve had enough of it. I’m going to bed. Tell Santa I didn’t wait up for him with milk and cookies.” He stomped upstairs to let his music put him to sleep, as usual.

Helen just stood there watching her disenchanted child leave the room in a rage that was becoming way too common. Her heart sank with disappointment, wondering what she could do to make his life happier. She had decorated their home so well that it looked like an enchanted village, as the smell of hot cinnamon-apple cider filled the air. But she and Dave would enjoy it alone.

Joey’s room was his own little world, and he isolated himself from his parents there. He tossed around on his bed and finally pulled his earplugs out. He drifted off into a deep sleep. His eyes

began to race back and forth as an unusual scene began to unfold in his subconscious. But this dream immediately seemed more real, and he felt that he was actually there.

He tugged at his cloak to block out the piercing chill. That's when he noticed that his was wearing a robe, an outer cloak, and a turban. 'What is this' he wondered, and where am I? Could this be real?' He looked around and noticed there were animals and small dwellings on the edge of a village or town of some kind. He looked up and noticed stars more brilliant than he had ever seen before in his short life. There was one star that was right overhead that outshined them all. 'What is going on' he wondered again.

He saw a glow of lamplight coming from a humble little enclosure nearby. He heard a baby's cry. Before he realized that he was walking he found himself at the doorway. There was a young bearded man with a look of delight as he gazed at his newborn baby. The mother was gently placing an extra piece of cloth over her child that she nestled in her loving arms. There was a peace in this little room that Joey didn't quite understand, but even the donkey and ox seemed to be smiling. 'This must be a stable' he thought to himself; it certainly smells like one.

Just then the young parents noticed him and looked up at him standing in the doorway. He took a slight step backwards, "I'm sorry; I didn't mean to intrude."

The man spoke softly so as not to startle the baby. "It's wonderful that you are here. Come on in." He hesitated while they both looked back at the baby. "You can witness the miracle of the Christ Child." The young man said with a sense of reverence.

"I can do what?" Joey stepped into the room.

"This is our little baby, Jesus; He has just been born. He was prophesied of by the prophets of old, and angels told us before hand of his coming miraculous birth. We are so blessed."

Joey looked around. They were in a dirty, cold, borrowed stable with animals as roommates. "You are blessed?" They simply smiled their agreement.

Just then he heard murmuring behind him. He turned and saw a crowd of men crowded around the door that he had just come through. Their eyes were wide with awe and excitement. The new father said, "Come in brothers. I am Joseph; this is my wife Mary, and this is Jesus our first born".

I stepped aside to allow the men to come in. As they slowly gathered around the baby I noticed that they really smelled badly of the sheep that had followed them there.

"We are shepherds." One of them began. "And we were in the field keeping watch over our sheep tonight when angels appeared to us in the sky. There was a great light and singing. We all trembled with fear at first until the angel spoke."

"An angel spoke to you too." Joseph asked.

“Oh yes my brother. It was glorious.” He looked up toward the heavens, lifting both hands, and said, “I have never been so blessed before”.

There was that word again. He thought, ‘How could these smelly sheep herders feel that they are so blessed on this cold night.

He continued. “The angel said, ‘Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.’ All the angels were singing ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

Joseph and Mary just sat looking up at the shepherd and then around the room at each of them. No one spoke again for a few moments. Then the shepherd spokesman said, “And here He is, in the manger, the Christ Child just as the angel said”.

We all looked at the baby with a new awareness, and I began to grasp that there was an amazing thing happening here.

They bid us all farewell then slowly they made their way out and we were alone again. “Where are you from young man?” Joseph asked.

I stuttered a couple of times, not knowing how to answer him. This didn’t seem like a dream. It felt so real. “I’m from a great distance. I was brought here to see Him too.” Why did I say that, I wondered.

“You are welcome to stay and share in our joy. Have a seat.” I pulled a stool over closer to the baby, and then felt that I was too close for the comfort of the mother. I started to back off when she touched my cloak and said,

“It’s fine. Stay close to Him. We all need to be close to Him.” I looked at her and then back to Jesus again. I leaned over Him. I peered into His little charcoal eyes that were looking, unblinkingly up at me. How could a newborn baby have wisdom? I don’t know, but that is exactly what I felt coming from Him—wisdom, and love; I just didn’t understand why or how. Time stood still as I gazed into those eyes. I felt so strange thinking that this little baby somehow knew me. My heart stirred within me like no time in my past.

For the first time in my life I felt that my life had meaning. I didn’t even begin to understand why, but there was a newness in my life at that very moment. I felt that my old thinking and my old ways were now passed away. How could these things be? I didn’t know but I was totally at peace with it all.

I didn’t want to take my eyes from His, but I knew it was time to go. The new parents wished me traveling mercies, and I walked outside into the cold night. The stars seemed brighter, the air

was fresher, the countryside more picturesque; everything was more beautiful. For the first time I could remember I found joy in everything around me. The hillside glowed in the light of the bright star; I walked off into the fields feeling a new light in my life.

“Joey, Joey. Time to wake up.” My slumbering eyes slowly came open, but I was refreshed beyond my imagination. But I didn’t want to wake; I wanted to be back in that little stable with Jesus and Joseph and Mary.

“Good morning Mom.” I said with an uncharacteristic smile that she noticed right away.

“How are you son?”

All I could utter was, “I’m blessed.”