# Merry Christmas 2015 **[1]**

Submitted by Wessel on Wednesday, 23 December 2015 - 14:12



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It is Christmas time again: a time of goodwill, charity and, of course, gifts. These all simbolise (at least in part, whether one realises it or not) what God *gave* humanity: that is, Jesus Christ.

The coming of Jesus was an unwarranted gift, and of incomprehensible value: something that His family, disciples, and the rest of humanity would only fully understand after His resurrection. The gift that we received in Jesus was certainly not what was expected, but was far more valuable than anyone could have imagined. Many were expecting something else from God: a military leader to smite enemies and a grandiose king. Others simply were not expecting anything: four hundred years had passed since God last spoke, and the Jewish canon (the Tanakh or Old Testament) was sealed up.

This brings us to another aspect of Christmas which is often overlooked: that of promise. More specifically, that of promises fulfilled. Nothing about Jesus's life was incidental or accidental: everything was calculated and foretold hundreds of years earlier. Jesus would be the "the way, the truth, and the life," through whom we can be reconciled with our creator God (John 14:6)—which is the single greatest end of any person.

> When the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, they brought him [Jesus] up to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord ... Behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. He came in the Spirit into the temple. When the parents brought in the child, Jesus, that they might do concerning him according to the custom of the law, then he received him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,
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> "Now you are releasing your servant, Master,
> according to your word, in peace;
> for my eyes have seen your salvation,
> which you have prepared before the face of all peoples;
> a light for revelation to the nations,
> and the glory of your people Israel."

> Joseph and his mother were marvelling at the things which were spoken concerning him, and Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary, his mother, "Behold, this child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which is spoken against. Yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."
>
> — Luke 2:22,25-35

Have a blessed Christmas, and enjoy gifts: both in receiving as well as what you give others. And also be reminded that the story did not begin with a baby in a manger, but long, long before that!

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him. Without him was not anything made that has been made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. — John 1:1–4

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