**The Sweetest Name I Know**

(Matthew 1:23 KJV)

*And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*

H

ow important are names? What kinds of images are created when we hear names like: Rosa Parks, Nate King Cole, George Washington Carver, Martin Luther King Jr., Harriet Tubman, Jackie Robinson, Sugar Ray Leonard, or Barack Hussein Obama?

Obviously there is great power in names; they reflect a myriad of images and ideas in our minds. They identify certain traits or characteristics when they are names of people, groups or nations because they connect us to the past through our histories.

Here in our text the angel mentions the name of Jesus (Matthew 1:21-23). There is something special about the name Jesus for the angel said, He will save His people from their sins. It is a name given to Him by heaven (Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:31). The name Jesus is a name that has been exalted by God the Father:

“*Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*” (Philippians 2:9-11).

In fulfillment of this long-promised event concerning the birth of Jesus over two thousand years ago, many Christians throughout the world will once again celebrate God’s most wonderful gift to mankind on December 25th called Christmas Day. Jesus had been born into the world to save humanity, God’s masterpiece, from the inherited ravages of sin and death inherited byway of Adam. The true meaning of Jesus earthly ministry will be made plain to all men in God’s own time and characteristics.

The annual Christmas holiday is a very special and festive occasion in many ways, and there is a general feeling of joy in the atmosphere and a deep sense of anticipation throughout the weeks leading up to the grand celebration. More than any other time of the year, men attention is directed toward thoughts of peace, love and goodwill toward all men. It serves as a time to be reminded of the miraculous birth of our Savior, his earthly ministry, sacrificial death on the cruel cross, and his ultimate resurrection as the firstborn which slept from the dead. He was the only perfect life that had ever lived, and without doubt. His name will forever be the sweetest name I know.

If He had not come, there would be no story of his gruesome crucifixion. We would not sing “ Joy to the World the Lord has Come” or “Rock of Ages” or “Beneath the Cross of Jesus” or “The Old Rugged Cross” nor could we ever sang “ Jesus Paid it All.” If Jesus had not come, there would be no Church, no Pastors, no Deacons, no Sunday school, and no Youth programs.

In our modern world there is less interest and attention given to the true meaning of our Lord and Savior that knew no sin but yet conquered sin that we might live. The holiday season has thus become a hectic and busy time of the year in preparation for worldly pursuits and happiness.