

Lesson No. (18)

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

References: Topics for the Christian Youth, by Father Shenouda Anba Bishoy.

Notes for Servants:

Objectives:

General:

Specific:

Instructions:

Bible Verse:

Lesson:

Please, refer to attached sheets.

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas, the birth of Christ, has many spiritual meanings that can be summarized in the following two:

1. Christmas is the ultimate proof of the love of God towards mankind!

God, out of His great love, descended from His Glory in Heaven to dwell on earth among us in order to save us from our sins. Christ, through His Incarnation, carried our sins on the Cross and purified us with His holy blood, to present us as pleasing renewed creation to the Heavenly Father.

He became the Son of Man so that He enables us to become the sons of God. He was born in the flesh to enable us to be born in the spirit. The birth of Christ sanctified all humanity. When Jesus made Himself One with our nature, He saved our nature. When He was incarnate and took our body, He sanctified our body.

The birth of Christ is a reconciliation between God and man. St. Jacob-el-Sourougui said: There was an enmity between God and man. When man failed to be reconciled to God, God descended to man.

For He is our peace, Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby. (Eph 2:14-16)

Therefore, the birth of Christ is the joy and the peace of the whole world, and we sing with St. Mary: *My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.* (Luke 1:47)

2. Christmas means that He is Emmanuel: God is with us.

Christ is with us always, even unto the end of time (Mat 28:20). He is living with us in a real sense, not as a feeling or an imagination. Through His incarnation, God has made us one with Him:

That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me. (John 17:21-23)

