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Export date: Fri Mar 29 9:15:02 2024 / +0000 GMT

Crossroads Community Church

The evening was brimming with excitement and anticipation to celebrate the ?Reason for the Season?. The smiles on everyone's faces and the many hugs exchanged ushered us into God's presence. The evening began with the Open Arms Sunday School presentation of Joseph and Mary singing ?Away in a Manger? then the shepherds joined in with ?Oh Come All Ye Faithful?. The festive mood was set and the worship was exuberant with many favorite carols. Pastor Don, Bob and Barb gave us a light hearted drama skit on meeting with an Angel declaring the Birth of Jesus. Pastor Don then proceeded to light the Advent candles of Hope, Faith, Love, Joy and the culminating candle of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World. Our hearts were warm and jubilant ready to receive God's message?.

Pastor Don humbly came forth and prayed; ?Lord open our hearts and minds to the true meaning of Christmas, your Son Jesus and let Him shine through us for the world to see, Amen.?

Then he began, ?Have you ever missed the Bus?? My wife every Christmas Eve picks up her brother from Orangeville, but he takes the bus from Brampton. Last year however he missed the bus, Barb had to go down to Brampton to get him. I think when it comes to Christmas, many of us miss the bus so to speak, amidst all the preparations, shopping and cooking it is quite easy to miss the miracle of Christmas, the Baby in the manger.

Even in the Christmas story, there are some who missed the miracle that is Baby Jesus; the inn keeper who said there was no room because Bethlehem was overcrowded due to the census taking place. Do you think if the inn keeper had known it was God that was about to be born that he would have made room for Mary and Joseph? Other Characters who missed who baby Jesus was are the wise men and King Herod; the wise men who studied signs and prophecies had followed a star that lead them to King Herod and inquired about a New King to be Born, but did they know this Baby was the Son of God? And Herod hearing of this did he even know that this new king was God himself? King Herod was more concerned about losing his throne to a competitor and giving up the life he had. Another group of people who missed who Baby Jesus was are the religious teachers; although they had great knowledge of scripture and upheld the laws of Moses, they missed that Jesus was Immanuel; God with them, the long awaited Messiah. They had read of how the messiah would be born in Bethlehem, they knew he would be special and that he would save them, but their idea of salvation was not through a helpless babe in a manger. They were more concerned about their pious reputations and accomplishments than recognizing baby Jesus as the Son of God, they lacked the humility to see they needed a savior like everyone else.

So let us stop and ponder, Are we like the inn keeper, too busy with worldly things to see Jesus, are we like the wise men who trust in their intellect more than God's wisdom or are we like King Herod afraid of what we have to give up or lose by acknowledging Baby Jesus as the Son of God? Are we like the religious leaders indifferent to our need to be forgiven and ignorant of God's salvation?

Beloved this Christmas let us not miss the bus, let us not shut our ears and eyes to the miracle that is Baby Jesus, He was born to save us all from our own sins, He came to be our light, to guide and lead us. Let us open our hearts so He can make himself at home with us so he can shine His love to a world in desperate need of Him, and receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior, ? For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life,? John 3:16. As we quietly sing Silent Night, let us light our candles symbolizing Jesus, ?For He is light and in Him there is no darkness?.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, Asherey Shalom!