

the Incarnation! It is the great comfort of our earthly life. How barren would be the world without it!

Sad indeed is it to think that there are those outside the Church calling themselves christians, who have lost all faith in the Divinity, and who are trying by written and spoken word to rob the Savior's birth of its miraculousness. But we who believe in the great truth of the Incarnation as the Rock and Foundation of our Faith, know how vast was the importance, and how great the event of that gracious night in the long ago. If ever miracle might be let lose out of the rigid hand of law, when should it be but now, when the king of all the laws is coming in His personality?

If there are angels, now certainly is the time for them to appear. If the stars can even have a message and lead men, now is the time when their ministry can plead its strongest warrant. To any one who believes in the possibility of miracle at all, and who knows what the meaning of the Incarnation is, the wonder would be if it had no miraculous accompaniment.

Our Emmanuel came girt round with wonders, and He came so gently, so unnoticed save by the few who clustered nearest to His life, that the great surface of the world's existence was hardly rippled by the wonderful touch that had fallen upon it. The choirs of heavenly attendants made the hill-tops ring with their glad anthems of peace and good-will. A set of poor men, engaged in a life of hardship, exposed at that very time to the cold and darkness of the night, watching their flocks, are startled by the radiant presence of an Angel, bidding them, "Fear not." "And then the Angel goes on to tell them what is happening over there in that little town of Bethlehem—the King of the Ages has come before a world of pride in the most abject poverty. "You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger." And so we kneel before the manger and we behold no trappings of royalty, no tokens of divine descent. But we know that the angels are His invisible adorers, and we know that the first moments of this mysterious life are but a prelude of what is to come.

More fortunate than the chosen people, we are permitted to read the lesson which this scene in Bethlehem is