

seeing whom Benjamin had clapped his hands, exclaiming :

" It is Jesus, mother ! I told you He was my friend."

And Jesus ran to the little cripple and sat beside him, saying : " I like sick people better than well ones, so I have come to play with thee."

Ever since He had been there often, sometimes bringing sweet wild flowers, or a little cake His mother had baked for the invalid. Somehow He had always come when His little friend was in great pain, or lonely and cross, and when He went away Benjamin was smiling happily, and a great peace and joy sang in his mother's heart.

Benjamin worked all the afternoon at his toy, afraid each time he heard a step on the hardened snow without, that Jesus had come and would see it before it was finished. When at last it was ready he was all eagerness to send it to Him, so his mother, tired though she was, took it at once to Joseph's humble home.

" Jesus has gone with His father to help him carry some work he has just finished, but wilt thou not come in to rest ?" his mother said.

The interior of the little house was neat and clean, though very poor, but Miriam saw nothing but Mary's beautiful face as she listened to her words of gentle kindness. She noticed that in speaking of her Son there was something more than a mother's love in all that she said; there was reverence and awe and a love surpassing that of earth.

Miriam walked home oblivious of the cold she had found so biting but half an hour before. She was puzzled. She had always felt that Jesus was not like other children, and now that she had seen His mother and heard her speak of Him she was sure of it. " Could He be—? Oh, no, for was He not to be a king, a ruler ?"

Reaching home she found Benjamin in great pain, and as she watched by him during the long night, the thought came again and again, " Could it be—could it be ?" and when she put the idea from her because He was to be a mighty king stray texts from the Holy Scriptures which she had often heard in their context but without thinking of their meaning, then came to her mind persistently :

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