

Christmas Message for O.I.C. Guest Speaker: Alistair McKenna
Sunday 19th December 2021.

Matthew 1: v. 18-25.

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.¹⁹ Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.²⁰ But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.²¹ And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."²² So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ²³ "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."²⁴ Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife,²⁵ and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

Introduction

On the 25th December all over the world, millions of Christians will be celebrating a festival which we call Christmas.

However the commercial side of Christmas starts in September in some countries.

In England the shops were selling Christmas decorations and other products relating to Christmas on the 20th of October.

For many people Christmas is all about the lights, and visiting places where you can see lights displayed.

In Kyoto, one of the most attractive light shows is walking through the Bamboo Forest at Arashiyama. Then there is the Kobe "Illuminaire" festival, and many shopping Malls all over Japan will display wonderful lights.

For other people, especially children, Christmas is all about the presents.

Some businesses sell 40% of their years sales in the month leading up to Christmas.

People usually over spend at Christmas, using their credit cards. Then they take a long time to repay their debts. This is not a good idea.

Then there is the Christmas food, visiting family, romantic evenings if you have an important date, and many other celebrations at this time of year.

Although there is nothing wrong with these things, they are not what Christmas is really all about.

In fact the Bible never tells Christians to celebrate Christmas.

What you see in the world at this time of year is a man- made commercial enterprise, designed to make money for businesses, and provide a feel good factor for a short period.

However it is a good time in the Christian Calendar to discover from the Bible about the first coming of Jesus.

It is good to remind ourselves **who Jesus is and why He came to this earth.**

It is also a good time to remind ourselves that **Jesus is coming again, very soon.**

So my Christmas message is in two halves.

We will explore from the Bible text about the first coming of Jesus, which is the biggest section of my message. Then for a short time we will be challenged about the second coming of Jesus.

In the passage that I read, about the first coming of Jesus, from Matthew Chapter 1: v. 18-25, we discover who Jesus is, and why He came to this earth.

1. Who is Jesus ? – v. 23.

Most people, at some time in their lives study History.

In Japan it starts in the 5th grade with Japanese history.

When students go to high school they start to learn about world history, and some of this is European history which includes Rome.

In England, in the 5th grade they learn about Roman History.

Much of what we know about the Roman Empire comes from history books, and through archaeology. There is much evidence in England of Roman settlements and cities.

In fact I live only 12 miles from an old walled Roman city, called Exeter.

The original road past my house was first built by the Roman soldiers.

Why do I know all of this?

The reason I know this is that we have lots of historical documents that have been copied and passed down through the centuries. Also there are still many buildings, like the Roman Baths in a city near my home which is called "Bath".

The reliability of these historical documents is based upon 4 things.

1. When the documents were written
2. The oldest manuscripts that we have today.
3. The time span between the event and the oldest manuscript available today.
4. The number of copies we have today of this manuscript.

The same is true of the Bible and especially the New Testament.

There is also much physical evidence in Israel that proves the Bible's accuracy.

The New Testament part of the Bible has 5,7000 Greek manuscripts and 10,000 in the old written language of Latin.

The time span between the events recorded in the New Testament and when they were written down is 50 years.

The nearest historical documents we have to include the time when Jesus was on this earth was written 280 years after the event, and there are only 27 copies in existence.

Therefore the most accurate historical record that we have of the time when Jesus lived on this earth is actually the **New Testament**.

We can't deny the existence of the person of Jesus, who once walked on this earth. It is a known historical fact.

The greatest history book of the life of Jesus are the Gospels of Matthew , Mark, Luke and John . These are accurate records of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

The challenge for all of us is **who was that person they called Jesus?**

The answer comes from our Bible text in **Matthew Chapter 1: v. 23**.

The writer Matthew quotes from a prophecy made 800 years before the event of the birth of Jesus.

Isaiah the Jewish prophet predicted that a virgin would bear a son and his name would be called "Immanuel" which is translated, "God with us".

Matthew is very clear to inform us that God became a man in the person of Jesus. So the creator of our universe, and the world that we live in, became a man in the person of Jesus.

John 1: v. 1-3 "In the beginning the Word already existed.

The Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He existed in the beginning with God.

³ God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him.

John 1: v.14

^{1:14} So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

It is winter now in Japan. You have recently witnessed the beautiful colours of the Autumn leaves. However in just over three months, you will be celebrating the beautiful Cherry Blossom season. All of this beauty was created by the God of the Bible, who came to earth, 2,000 years ago, in the person of Jesus.

The evidence of purposeful design, by the God of the Bible, can be seen everywhere in nature.

If you turn left outside O.I.C. and walk down the road, past the side of the school in the Summer you will notice several Ginkgo Trees. This type of tree was discovered in Japan in the 17th century. It was brought to Europe in the early 18th century.

These trees can be seen now in many countries.

It is a very popular tree in Japan because it has leaves shaped like a fan.

The Ginkgo tree is the only known living tree to have fan-shaped leaves.

In fact there is no evidence of there being any intermediate leaf that has gone on to produce this shape.

In fact fossil evidence of Ginkgo Trees that some people claim are millions of years old, are in fact exactly the same design.

This proves God purposeful design. It also challenges the theory of evolution to be incorrect.

Another fact about the Ginkgo tree is that a male Ginkgo Tree must be growing in the presence of a female tree in order for their seeds to be fertilised.

The Ginkgo Tree is what you would expect from a Designer who wanted to produce extreme diversity.

Then there is a bird called the "Arctic Tern". It is a very small bird.

It spends the short summer in the Arctic, where it rears its young chicks.

Then it flies over 15,000 km to the Antarctic for their summer.

In this birds life time of 30 years it will travel nearly a million km.

This is just one of 10,000 different species of birds, all with their amazing purposeful design.

God has created so many amazing plants, birds and animals, and every beautiful thing we can see in creation. It is amazing to reflect on the beauty of God through His creation.

The God of the Bible is also "all powerful", He knows everything, and yet He humbled Himself to come to this world as a human being.

God left the Glory of a wonderful Heavenly Place to come to this earth.

The big question we must ask at Christmas time is why did the creator of this world, and everything in it, become a man and enter it through a supernatural birth, coming into the womb of a young virgin girl called Mary.

2. Why did Jesus come to this earth?

The answer is contained in our text, in Matthew Chapter 1.v. 21.

“ And she shall bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

So God became a man for the purpose of being a Saviour from sins.

To understand why the world needs a Saviour, we need to go back to the very beginning, when God created the world and the first man and woman.

Before we begin to understand why we need a Saviour, we need to know something very important about the God of the Bible.

This is so important, that I don't want you to forget it.

The most important thing never to forget about the God of the Bible is that He is 100% Holy, and that He can't tolerate sin in His presence.

Holiness is something that is very difficult to describe or illustrate.

The only 100% Holy person that has ever lived on this earth was Jesus Christ, because He was God in human form.

However we get a little understanding about Holiness from the Old Testament part of the Bible.

Quote Isaiah 6 : v. 1-7 in the New Living Translation.

It was in the year King Uzziah died that I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple. ² Attending him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³ They were calling out to each other, “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Heaven's Armies! The whole earth is filled with his glory!” ⁴ Their voices shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire building was filled with smoke. ⁵ Then I said, “It's all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man. I have filthy lips, and I live among a people with filthy lips. Yet I have seen the King, the LORD of Heaven's Armies.” ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷ He touched my lips with it and said, “See, this coal has touched your lips. Now your guilt is removed, and your sins are forgiven.”

When the Prophet Isaiah met with a Holy God, he felt doomed, he acknowledged his sinfulness, and God forgave his sins.

Until you meet with the God of the Bible, through His Holy Spirit, you will not realise fully how wonderful it is that Jesus Christ came into this world to be your Saviour and mine.

So let us discover from the first book in the Bible, what went wrong, and why we have an inherited sinful nature, and why we must die one day.

We will also discover that death is the penalty of our sin.

After God created the physical world, He created a man, and a woman from that man. The world was perfect and God had a perfect relationship with His created people. (Genesis Chapter 1-2)

God placed his created people into a beautiful garden. He gave them a free will to choose what to do.

God only placed one restriction upon their lives, and He informed them of the penalty for disobedience to His command.

Quote Genesis Chapter 2: v. 15-17 in N.L.T.

¹⁵ The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. ¹⁶ But the LORD God warned him, “You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden—
¹⁷ except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.”

Adam and Eve knew clearly the penalty for disobedience to a Holy God.

The penalty was death.

God had created two perfect people to live forever.

Sadly one of God’s fallen Angels, whom the Bible calls Satan, or the devil, came into the garden to tempt Eve to disobey God’s instructions.

Eve eat the forbidden fruit, and tempted her husband Adam to follow her.

God discovered their disobedience.

Then God removed Adam and Eve from His presence in the beautiful garden, and the punishment of death, promised by God was introduced into their lives

(Genesis Chapter 3)

Adam and Eve didn’t die immediately, but they did die later in time.

You might ask the question, why do I have to die, when I wasn’t responsible for their sin?

Quote Romans 5: v. 12 – 21 in the N.L.T.

¹² When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam’s sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned. ¹³ Yes, people sinned even before the law was given. But it was not counted as sin because there was not yet any law to break. ¹⁴ Still, everyone died—from the time of Adam to the time of Moses—even those who did not disobey an explicit commandment of God, as Adam did. Now Adam is a symbol, a representation of Christ, who was yet to come. ¹⁵ But there is a great difference between Adam’s sin and God’s gracious gift. For the sin of this one man, Adam, brought death to many. But even greater is God’s wonderful grace and his gift of forgiveness to many through this other man, Jesus Christ. ¹⁶ And the result of God’s gracious gift is very different from the result of that one man’s sin. For Adam’s sin led to condemnation, but God’s free gift leads to our being made right with God, even though we are guilty of many sins. ¹⁷ For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God’s wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ Yes, Adam’s one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ’s one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone. ¹⁹ Because one person disobeyed God, many became sinners. But because one other person obeyed God, many will be made righteous. ²⁰ God’s law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God’s wonderful grace became more abundant.

²¹ So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I hope these verses explain why we need a Saviour from our sin.

After the events of Genesis Chapter three God promised to send a **Saviour**, to rescue mankind from the punishment of their sin.

It took a long time for God to fulfil His promise.

The world became so violent and sinful that God decided to start again and destroy mankind, **except for Noah and His family**.

God flooded the world, but saved Noah and his family because Noah was a "**Righteous man**" (Quote Genesis Chapter 6: v. 9-10 in N.L.T.)

⁹ This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God. ¹⁰ Noah was the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

After the flood, God made a covenant with Noah.

Quote Genesis 9: v. 1-16. In the N.L.T.

Then God blessed Noah and his sons and told them, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth."² All the animals of the earth, all the birds of the sky, all the small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the fish in the sea will look on you with fear and terror. I have placed them in your power. ³ I have given them to you for food, just as I have given you grain and vegetables. ⁴ But you must never eat any meat that still has the lifeblood in it. ⁵ "And I will require the blood of anyone who takes another person's life. If a wild animal kills a person, it must die. And anyone who murders a fellow human must die. ⁶ If anyone takes a human life, that person's life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings^[a] in his own image. ⁷ Now be fruitful and multiply, and repopulate the earth."⁸ Then God told Noah and his sons, ⁹ "I hereby confirm my covenant with you and your descendants, ¹⁰ and with all the animals that were on the boat with you—the birds, the livestock, and all the wild animals—every living creature on earth. ¹¹ Yes, I am confirming my covenant with you. Never again will floodwaters kill all living creatures; never again will a flood destroy the earth."¹² Then God said, "I am giving you a sign of my covenant with you and with all living creatures, for all generations to come. ¹³ I have placed my rainbow in the clouds. It is the sign of my covenant with you and with all the earth. ¹⁴ When I send clouds over the earth, the rainbow will appear in the clouds, ¹⁵ and I will remember my covenant with you and with all living creatures. Never again will the floodwaters destroy all life. ¹⁶ When I see the rainbow in the clouds, I will remember the eternal covenant between God and every living creature on earth."

In the process of time, God selected a man called Abraham to represent Him on the earth. He promised to make a great nation from this one man.

Quote Genesis 12: v. 1-3 in the N.L.T.

The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you."² I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. ³ I will

bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”

Forty two generations went by from Abraham to the birth of Jesus Christ. During this time God had many problems with his chosen people.

He gave them **10 Laws to live by** which are called the **10 Commandments**, but many times they failed to obey them.

Nevertheless God always preserved a large number of His people to represent Him and His Laws. **From Abraham’s family line came Jesus**. He was born through a virgin because He was **Holy**, and He **didn’t have an inherited sinful nature**.

When Jesus grew up, He performed many miracles to prove that He was God.

He healed the sick, made blind people see again, raised dead people to live again, walked on water and fed 5,000 people with a small boys bento box.

In spite of all these miracles, he was not accepted by the Jewish Religious leaders. They didn’t accept Jesus as their promised Messiah and Saviour.

Eventually Jesus was put to death on a cross for the charge of Blasphemy.

Even though Jesus was God in human form, the people did not believe His claim.

It was only after Jesus was raised from the dead that His disciples fully believed in all that Jesus taught them during their 3 years with Him.

From the 12 disciples of Jesus, a Church was started with mainly Jewish believers.

Today there are about 2.5 billion professing believers in Jesus.

True Christians believe that Jesus Christ died for their sins, and that their Salvation is based on **Grace, and Faith**, and has nothing to do with any works for God.

(Quote Ephesians 2: v. 1-10. In the N.L.T.)

Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. ² You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. ^[a] He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. ³ All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God’s anger, just like everyone else. ⁴ But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, ⁵ that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s grace that you have been saved!) ⁶ For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. ⁷ So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus. ⁸ God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. ⁹ Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. ¹⁰ For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Today you can join God’s family, if you put your faith and trust in Jesus, and believe that **He died for your sins.**

The Christmas story is a wonderful truth if you fully understand **who Jesus is** and **why He came to be your Saviour and mine.**

May God help us to fully understand and appreciate all these things in our hearts.

The next thing we need to learn is that Jesus is coming back one day.

Jesus came the first time, in humility, to show us God's love and to offer us Salvation by Grace through faith in Him.

However Jesus is returning one day to **judge the nations**, to **judge individuals**, and to **rescue His chosen people from destruction.**

I would like to expose you to the signs of the return of Jesus and the purpose of His return. Let me first of all read some verses from Matthews's Gospel.

Quote Matthew 24: v. 1-14 in the N.K.J.

Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ² And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these *are* the beginning of sorrows. ⁹ "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. ¹⁰ And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

A. The signs of the second coming of Jesus.

There are many prophecies in the Old Testament that refer to the second coming of Jesus. They are all related to God's chosen people, the Jewish Nation. The first prophecy is in Deuteronomy Chapter 30: v. 1-8.

This is about the re-gathering of Israel, and a heart change of the Jewish people. Prior to 1948, Israel was practically a barren country.

However now there are 9.2 Million people living in Israel today.

29,000 Jewish people are returning to Israel every year.

What is important for us is that one of the signs of the second coming of Jesus relates to the regathering of His people back to the land of Israel.

This sign is that the Jewish nation will be hated by all nations because of Jesus. (Matthew 24 v. 9 in N.K.J.)

It is well documented about Hitler and his hatred of the Jewish nation.

Hitler ordered the **murder of 6 million Jewish people during the second world war.**

However Hitler only represented the Nazi movement. Jesus said **ALL nations** will hate His chosen people. We are getting very close to this sign being fulfilled.

Today all Muslim nations hate Israel. Muslims are taught that big satan is the U.S.A. and little satan is Israel. Iran have declared that they want to destroy Israel. They are presently developing weapons of mass destruction.

There are presently 50 Muslim majority countries in the world today.

We are not quite there yet, but when America decides not to support Israel, the second coming is very close.

We have just been through one of the signs of the second coming recently, and that is Covid 19. The Bible calls this type of disease "**pestilence**" (v. 7)

Yes we have always had diseases but Covid 19 has affected every country in the world due to foreign travel.

Another sign is the **false claims that Jesus has already returned**.

The text tells us that many people will come and say that they are Jesus.

These people will actually deceive many. Although this deception has been going on for many years in isolated places around the world, I first experienced it personally when I was in Japan.

At O.I.C. a few years ago we had an attempt by Chinese students to influence members that Jesus was making personal appearances everywhere.

They taught that Jesus was appearing, and then disappearing.

These Chinese students who professed to be Christian believers, were teaching false doctrine.

Some members of O.I.C. were influenced by this teaching and I had to tell the Chinese student not to attend O.I.C. and that her teaching was false because it contradicted the Bible. The way that it was all presented was very deceptive and we must be warned about deception in the last days.

There are plenty of false prophets deceiving people today, so please beware. of these people. **Test these people by the truth of the Bible and their life-style, and not by their claims or apparent miracles.**

These are only signs but they are signs that the second coming of Jesus is very near.

These signs will get stronger and more powerful as we get nearer to the return of Jesus.

Finally it says that **sin will be rampant everywhere.**

Today the LGBT movement is making sure that sexual sin is socially acceptable in the world's society, **but to a Holy God it is not acceptable.**

In fact the God of the Bible says that these sins are an **abomination to Him.**

(Leviticus Chapter 18 clearly teaches God's laws for sexual morality)

Watch carefully the nations and there attitude to the nation of Israel.

Israel are especially concerned about Iran who have made clear their desire to destroy Israel. When we were in Israel as a Church group, I remember one evening standing out near lake Galilee. Some Israeli fighter planes flew over us.

It wasn't until a few weeks later that I discovered that they had just returned from a night raid to bomb specific targets. These targets were military sites that were being built with money and resources from Iran to destroy Israel.

Yes Israel is the key to the return of Jesus.

Although we need to be **alive to the signs of the second coming of Jesus, we must be educated about the reason for His return.**

B. The reason for the return of Jesus is to rescue Israel, judge the Nations, and Judge individual lives.

Read Matthew 25: v. 31-46.

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the ^[d]holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats. ³³ And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ³⁶ I *was* naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ ³⁷ “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed *You*, or thirsty and give *You* drink? ³⁸ When did we see You a stranger and take *You* in, or naked and clothe *You*? ³⁹ Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.’ ⁴¹ “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: ⁴² for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ ⁴⁴ “Then they also will answer ^[d]Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ ⁴⁵ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.’ ⁴⁶ And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

I haven't got time to explain the details of the rescue of Israel by Jesus and His return, but I do want to mention the most important thing.

The return of Jesus will involve “ **Judgement for all individuals** “

In 2 Corinthians Chapter 5: v. 10 it teaches us that we are all going to stand before the judgement seat of Christ.

However if we have put our faith and trust in Jesus, we will not be judged for our sin because Jesus died for that.

But we will be judged for our lives, and for the way in which we have treated God's chosen people.

In v. 40 Jesus takes a personal interest in how we treat His chosen people.

In v. 46 it tells us that there will be **everlasting punishment** for those people **who have rejected Jesus.**

May I appeal to you at this Christmas time to put your faith and trust in Jesus today, while there is time.

The Bible says that **Today is the day of Salvation.** You may never get another chance. If you feel that God has spoken to your heart today, you need to respond by speaking to somebody and praying with them.

Amen.