



the JOY
and SORROW
of Christmas

REV DR TAN ENG LEE | 10 DEC 2017

The Joy and Sorrow of Christmas

A voice is heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they are no more.

(Matt. 2: 18)

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. (John 1: 9-11)

One day as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple courts and proclaiming the good news, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders, came up to him.

2“Tell us by what authority you are doing these things,” they said. “Who gave you this authority?”

3He replied, “I will also ask you a question. Tell me: 4John’s baptism—was it from heaven, or of human origin?”

7 So they answered, “We don’t know where it was from.”

8 Jesus said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

5 They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Why didn’t you believe him?’

6 But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ all the people will stone us, because they are persuaded that John was a prophet.”

What are 'these things'?

"I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him."

And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'

"I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One." (John 1: 32-34)

The Parable of the Tenants

⁹ He went on to tell the people this parable:
“A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time.

¹⁰ At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. ¹¹ He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. ¹² He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out.

13 “Then the owner of the vineyard said,
‘What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I
love; perhaps they will respect him.’

14 “But when the tenants saw him, they talked the
matter over. ‘This is the heir,’ they said. ‘Let’s kill him,
and the inheritance will be ours.’

15 So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

“What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them?

16 He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others.”

When the people heard this, they said, “God forbid!”

¹⁷ Jesus looked directly at them and asked, “Then what is the meaning of that which is written:

“The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone”?

18 Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it *falls will be crushed.*”

19 The teachers of the law and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people.

Let me sing now for my well-beloved A song of my beloved concerning His vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill.

2 He dug it all around, removed its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. And He built a tower in the middle of it And also hewed out a wine vat in it; Then He expected it to produce good grapes, But it produced only worthless ones....

Isaiah 5: 1-2

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. ² My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going.”

John14:1-3